



# Mental Health First Aid

Sometimes, first aid is more than a bandage, CPR or the Heimlich Maneuver

## What is mental illness?

Mental illness includes a wide range of disorders and symptoms, from substance use to eating disorders and depression, that can affect a person's ability to work, succeed in school and maintain healthy relationships.

## What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a public education program that teaches participants how to recognize and respond to the signs of a mental health challenge. Mental Health First Aid is help for a person experiencing a mental health challenge, mental disorder or a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

## Who should take Mental Health First Aid?

The course is designed for anyone interested in learning how to properly support people showing early or worsening signs of a mental health challenge.

## 4 Reasons to Become a Mental Health First Aider

**1. Mental illnesses are common**  
**1 in 5** US adults experience mental illness in any given year

**Half of all chronic mental illness** begins by age 14 and three-quarters begin by age 24

**2. Be prepared**

When a mental health crisis happens, you will know what to do

**3. You can help**

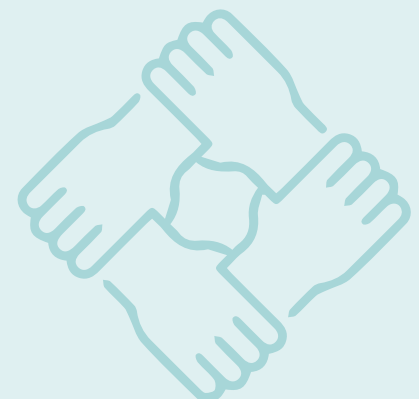
People with mental illnesses often suffer alone

**4. You care**

Be there for a friend, family member or colleague

## During the MHFA course, you will learn:

- A 5-step action plan to identify, understand and respond to an individual experiencing a mental health challenge
- Facts about mental illness and substance use disorders
- How to talk to someone in crisis
- Information about resources in our community for people experiencing a mental health challenge



# Mental Health First Aid Course Delivery Options

## Building healthy minds and strong communities

At Atrium Health, we strive to support the growth of healthy and vibrant communities, and we believe this takes everyone working together. In this light, we offer Mental Health First Aid as a vital tool to educate and empower members of our community with the ability to reach out and help those around them manage mental illnesses or substance use disorders. Below are some ways the MHFA course is offered:

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| <b>In-Person</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8-hour in-person course</li><li>• 15-30 participants</li></ul>                               | <b>Host Partner Responsibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the interactive Mental Health First Aid course to your audience</li><li>• Provide space, tables and chairs to accommodate up to 30 participants (5 to 6 small groups)</li><li>• Provide equipment to view PowerPoint presentations and videos</li><li>• Consider providing audience with light refreshments and lunch</li></ul>  |
| <b>Blended</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2-hour self-paced and 5.5-hour blended in-person course</li><li>• 15-30 participants</li></ul> | <b>Host Partner Responsibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the interactive Mental Health First Aid course to your audience</li><li>• Submit class roster (name and email) 30 days prior to finalizing a class date</li><li>• Explain to your audience that they must complete the 2-hour self-paced session prior to attending the instructor-led in-person session</li><li>• Provide equipment to view PowerPoint presentations and videos</li><li>• Consider providing audience with light refreshments</li><li>• Provide space, tables and chairs to accommodate up to 30 participants (5 to 6 small groups)</li></ul> |
| <b>Virtual</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2-hour self-paced and 5.5-hour virtual course</li><li>• 10-20 participants</li></ul>           | <b>Host Partner Responsibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the interactive Mental Health First Aid course to your audience</li><li>• Submit class roster (name and email) 30 days prior to finalizing a class date</li><li>• Explain to your audience that they must complete the 2-hour self-paced session prior to attending the instructor-led virtual session</li></ul>   |

All Mental Health First Aid courses must be scheduled at a minimum 30 days in advance. Atrium Health will provide:

- 2 Mental Health First Aid instructors
- Course-related materials
- Supplies for the activities
- Community resources
- Toolkits to assist in promoting the course

## Call to Action!

To learn more or to sign up for the course, contact us at [MHFA@AtriumHealth.org](mailto:MHFA@AtriumHealth.org) or call 704-631-1000.

This course was developed by the National Council on Behavioral Health along with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Missouri Department of Mental Health.

**[AtriumHealth.org/MentalHealth](https://AtriumHealth.org/MentalHealth)**