

Zero Suicide Academy: Guide for Applying

Planning to apply for a Zero Suicide Academy? We can help!

This document provides guidance on completing the Zero Suicide Academy application, including tips on using the Zero Suicide Toolkit™ to build your narrative.

Zero Suicide Academy®

The Zero Suicide Academy is EDC's signature training for health and behavioral health organizations seeking to dramatically reduce suicides among those in their care by using the Zero Suicide framework.

Academy Formats

Zero Suicide Institute offers the [Zero Suicide Academy](#) signature training event in three formats. We recommend teams of 4 members from care providing organizations who have decided to implement Zero Suicide attend the Academy. This training will teach the core implementation team the Zero Suicide framework, as well as provide consultation on creating the organization's action plan for implementation.

We offer multiple Zero Suicide Academy experiences:

- The [National Zero Suicide Academy](#) training workshop is an online version of the Zero Suicide Academy offered a few times each year. It is an excellent opportunity for smaller systems to send an implementation team or for larger system to register multiple teams. This training event is ideal for systems who want to reinvigorate their Zero Suicide implementation as well.
- Organizations can sponsor their own [In-Person Zero Suicide Academy](#) or [Online Zero Suicide Academy](#). These are events for large systems, communities, and states. These events are tailored for your Zero Suicide implementation and include up to six months of consultation and planning with Zero Suicide Institute.

Connect with Us

We are happy to meet with you as you prepare your Zero Suicide Academy application. Feel free to schedule a time with [Zero Suicide Institute Associate Director Barb Gay](#). Reach out by [email](#) if you don't see a time that will work.

Zero Suicide Academy Application

Apply for a Zero Suicide Academy in six steps.

1. Find a Zero Suicide Academy event

If you've already been issued an invitation to a particular Zero Suicide Academy, follow the registration link provided to you.

If you're looking for an available opportunity, upcoming [Zero Suicide Academies](#) are listed on the Zero Suicide Institute event page. National Zero Suicide Academies are open to all. Sponsored Zero Suicide Academies may be only open to certain states or systems, so double check that you're eligible before applying.

2. Sign in on the Registration Portal

The registration portal will prompt you to indicate whether you are registering for a Zero Suicide Academy as yourself, the Team Lead (choose "Register"), or on behalf of a colleague who will be acting as the lead applicant for the team (choose "Someone Else").

The Team Lead will receive all correspondence and must be one of the team members who will participate in the Zero Suicide Academy.

You will then be asked to sign in or create an account. This is so that you may come back at any time to alter your existing registration and register even faster for the next event you sign up for. Signing in also ensures your account data is secured.

Once you are logged in, press "Continue" to complete the "Personal Information" Section.

3. Upload Application Files

The Zero Suicide Academy application consists of:

- A **cover sheet** or cover letter summarizing your organization information and intent.
- A **letter of commitment** written by the organization's CEO/Senior Executive Leader. The CEO/Senior Executive Leader should review and approve the submission and agree to the strategy proposed.
- A **narrative** that, in two to four pages, responds to the following:
 - Briefly describe the members of your team and the relevant skills, knowledge, and experience they bring to the Zero Suicide Academy.

- What are your team’s goals for participating in the Zero Suicide Academy and what does the team hope to learn during the training?

Later in this document, we will provide suggestions and resources for completing each of part of the application.

Click “Add File” to upload each part individually. We recommend PDF or Word files clearly labeled with your organization name and, if in separate documents, the part (Cover, Letter, Narrative).

Once you are finished uploading your documents, press “Continue” to complete the “Files & Photo Uploads” section.

4. Add Attendee Information

Attendees are those who will participate in the Zero Suicide Academy. Later in this document, we will provide tips on selecting team members to participate.

A team of 4 members is the optimum team size for the Zero Suicide Academy, though up to 6 may attend the National Zero Suicide Academy. The system will prompt you to confirm that you are applying with a team of *at least* 3 members, including the Team Lead.

For at least 3 members, you will be prompted to provide the following information:

- Full Name
- Job Title
- Email
- Phone Number

You will also be prompted to provide information about your organization:

- Name
- Work Address
- Work City
- Work State

You will be asked to indicate “Yes” or “No” to the question: **“Is your organization an Indian Health Service Site Tribal Health Program or Urban Indian Health Program?”**

Once you have entered the required information, press “Continue” to complete the “A Few Details We Need” section.

5. Complete Registration

In the “Make Your Selection” section, confirm that you are applying to the correct Zero Suicide Academy. Add any coupons you may have and acknowledge and agree to the terms of service.

If you are applying for the National Zero Suicide Academy, payment is required to register the team. You may pay with a credit card or select “Finish & Pay Later” to request an invoice.

Click “Finish” to submit your application. You will see a confirmation page upon submission.

6. Submit an Organizational Self-Study

To prepare your team for the Zero Suicide Academy, we ask that you complete a Zero Suicide [Organizational Self-Study](#) on the Zero Suicide Toolkit website. The Zero Suicide Organizational Self-Study will allow you to evaluate the core elements of safer suicide care at your organization.

We offer four versions of the Organizational Self-Study. Organizations can choose to take one or all that are appropriate for its setting. Typically, Zero Suicide Academy participants take the General Organizational Self-Study. If you would like to review the questions before taking the General Self-Study, you can [review the PDF here](#).

Tips for how to approach an Organizational Self-Study can be found in [the Lead section](#) of the Zero Suicide Toolkit.

Once you are ready, [create a new account or log in](#) to access the [online portal](#) for the four versions of the Organizational Self-Study. Please note, making an account on the Zero Suicide Toolkit website is separate from making an account on the registration platform.

When you have finished the Organizational Self-Study, all you have to do is submit and our team will take it from there.

Expect to be contacted about the status of your application soon after the application cycle has closed.

Application Content

Tips for writing the application.

1. Cover Sheet

The cover sheet or cover letter is a one or a few paragraphs that summarize your organization information and intent to implement Zero Suicide. Teams typically place this on their organization letterhead and sign it from the Team Lead, system wide Zero Suicide implementation manager, or another leader.

2. Letter of Commitment

The second part of the application is a letter of commitment written by your organization's CEO or Senior Executive Leader. The CEO or Senior Executive Leader should review and approve the submission and agree to the strategy proposed. We suggest using the company letterhead.

As part of this conversation, you may want to provide information about Zero Suicide and results from implementers. We suggest the following resources:

- About Zero Suicide ([webpage](#) & [PDF](#))
- Zero Suicide Results ([webpage](#) & [PDF](#))
- Zero Suicide Collaborative ([webpage](#) & [PDF](#))

The letter itself need not be long and in fact may borrow and adapt language from this sample letter:

- [Sample Letter to Staff](#)

Your team may also may borrow and adapt from the suggested language below:

Dear Zero Suicide,

I am pleased to support the efforts of [insert organization name] to improve suicide care for the individuals we serve through the work of the Zero Suicide framework. As a leader of [organization], I am committed to:

- Helping to build internal capacity for the work on this project.
- Working to change the necessary organizational policies and procedures to support the work of Zero Suicide.
- Working to align our organizational culture with Just Culture philosophy.
- Actively assisting the implementation team to break the barriers to implementation of the processes and procedures related to improving suicide care.

3. Narrative

The third, final, and most significant part of the application is a narrative that, in two to four pages, responds to the following:

- Briefly describe the members of your team and the relevant skills, knowledge, and experience they bring to the Zero Suicide Academy.
- What are your team's goals for participating in the Zero Suicide Academy and what does the team hope to learn during the training?

Team Members

Zero Suicide implementation team members should include team members who can champion Zero Suicide with passion and who have some power and influence in your system.

This can include clinical directors, senior clinical staff with coordination over a certain area or department, and information technology, risk management, or quality improvement specialists. It is essential that people with [lived experience](#) of suicide be included on the implementation team and in all aspects of Zero Suicide implementation.

The Lead section of the Zero Suicide Toolkit provides in-depth details on the tasks, roles, and responsibilities of an implementation team and provides recommendations on who should be on the team. We encourage you to refer to this information as you're describing your team.

- [Zero Suicide Toolkit: Lead](#)

Team Goals

On the [Zero Suicide Toolkit](#), we offer tons of free resources to help you on your Zero Suicide implementation journey—and craft a successful Zero Suicide Academy application.

- **Getting Started with Zero Suicide**

You can use the [Getting Started with Zero Suicide](#) resource as a sketch for describing how your implementation of Zero Suicide might look.

- **Organizational Self-Study**

Using the PDF version of the General [Organizational Self Study](#) can provide an overview of the comprehensive Zero Suicide approach. We suggest using aspects of the Organizational Self-Study to speak to your system's current strengths and weaknesses.

Before the Zero Suicide Academy, your implementation team will need to complete the Organizational Self Study. Completing it prior to submitting your application means you can discuss the results in your narrative, using it as a baseline measure and to assist in creating your action steps.

Future use of the Organizational Self-Study is also encouraged, such as annually, to check for fidelity and to identify areas for improvement. We recommend you use the free portal to fill out your Organizational Self-Study so you can access your data any time and get yearly reminders to update your information.

- **Zero Suicide Toolkit Adaptation for Indian Country**

The [Zero Suicide Toolkit Adaptation for Indian Country](#) offers best and promising practices for the implementation of Zero Suicide in Indian Country.