

# FIRST AID

(See also: [Risk Assessment](#) (68); [AIDS/HIV & Hepatitis B](#)(7))

## INTRODUCTION

First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones. First aid at work covers the **initial management** of any injury or illness suffered at work. Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 all workplaces must make provision for first aid, to be readily available at all times.

## DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS

1. To provide adequate and appropriate first aid **equipment and facilities**
2. To provide an adequate and appropriate number of first aid **personnel** (either qualified First Aiders or Appointed Persons, as appropriate)
3. To **inform employees** of first aid arrangements. (eg first aid notices; coverage in induction training)

## ASSESSMENT OF NEED

How much first aid provision an employer has to make depends on the circumstances in each workplace. It is useful if employers record the results of their **assessment of first aid needs**, which might include consideration of the following:

- Nature of the work - if risk assessments (under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) indicate a comparatively low risk to health and safety, a first aid kit and an appointed person may suffice. With increasing levels of risk the greater the need for qualified first aiders, first aid rooms etc.
- Size of the organisation.
- Past history and consequences of accidents.
- Nature and distribution of the workforce - e.g. employees at greater risk (young workers, trainees etc); shift working; location of work groups.
- Needs of travelling, remote and lone workers (e.g. may need a personal first aid kit; means for emergency communication etc.)
- Cover for leave/absence of First Aiders.

An 'Assessment of First Aid Needs' checklist is contained as Appendix A in the First Aid Code of Practice and Guidance. (See References/Further Details)

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## **FIRST AID MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

- **First Aid containers** - suitably stocked and properly identified
- easily accessible, near to hand washing facilities if possible
- not to contain tablets or medicines
- minimum contents (where no special risk arises in the workplace) suggested as follows:-

ITEM	First Aid Containers	Personal (Travelling) First Aid Kits
A leaflet giving general guidance on first aid (e.g. HSE leaflet - Basic Advice on First Aid at work)	1	1
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes)	20	6
Sterile eye pads, with attachment	2	-
Individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile)	4	2
Safety pins	6	2
Medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings (approx. 12cm x 12cm)	6	-
Large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings (approx. 18cm x 18cm)	2	1
Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes	-	Yes
Disposable gloves	1 pair	1 pair

### NB

1. This is suggested contents list only; equivalent but different items will be considered acceptable.
2. Stock levels must be maintained
3. All first aid containers must be identified by a white cross on a green background.
4. Additional materials that might be identified as necessary could include scissors, adhesive tape, wipes, disposable aprons etc.

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5. Where mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, at least one litre of sterile water or saline (0.9%) in sealed, disposable containers should be provided.
6. It is good practice to record all incidents attended by first aid personnel.

- **First Aid Rooms** - Usually only necessary for establishments with high risks. Detailed advice is contained in the First Aid Approved Code of Practice and Guidance.

## **FIRST AID PERSONNEL**

1. **First Aiders** - Where assessed as necessary at least one First Aider should be provided where there are more than 50 employees. First Aiders should be selected carefully for required skills/attributes. First Aiders must hold a current and valid certificate of competence in first aid issued by an organisation approved by the HSE (Contact HSE' Northampton Office 01604 738300 for local approved training organisations). Refresher training is required, currently, every 3 years.

2. **Appointed Persons** - To be responsible for taking immediate action, such as calling an ambulance. Appointed Persons are not First Aiders and so should not attempt to give first aid for which they have not been trained. Employers are strongly advised to consider the need for emergency first aid training (lasting approx. 4 hours) for Appointed Persons.

The following table contains suggested (minimum) numbers of first aid personnel in certain types of local authority enforced premises. Such numbers should be available at all times that people are at work.

<b>Category of Risk</b>	<b>Numbers employed at any location</b>	<b>Suggested number of first aid personnel</b>
LOWER RISK e.g. Shops, Offices	Fewer than 50	At least one Appointed Person
	50 - 100	At least one First Aider
	More than 100	One additional First Aider for every 100 employed
MEDIUM RISK eg. Food Processing, Warehousing	Fewer than 20	At least one Appointed Person
	20 - 100	At least one First Aider
	More than 100	One additional First Aider for every 100 employed
HIGHER RISK e.g. Extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments	Fewer than 5	At least one Appointed Person
	5 - 50	At least one First Aider
	More than 50	One additional First Aider for every 50 employed

**NB**

**These numbers will need to be increased to cover situations arising from absences or special circumstances that may apply**

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**DUTIES OF SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS**

A self employed person must ensure that adequate and appropriate first aid equipment is provided to enable him/her to render first aid to himself or herself whilst at work.

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## **CHECKLIST - FIRST AID**

1. Have you assessed the first aid needs of your workplace, taking into account:
  - identified risks (e.g. hazardous substances, dangerous tools/machinery/loads etc) YES NO
  - numbers employed on site YES NO
  - your accident/ill-health record YES NO
  - inexperienced employees at greater risk YES NO
  - extent/distribution of workplaces YES NO
  - patterns of working (e.g. shifts) YES NO
  - travelling workers YES NO
  - work at sites occupied by other employers YES NO
2. Have you consequently established an appropriate and adequate provision of:
  - first aid equipment, suitably stocked YES NO
  - first aid personnel YES NO
  - information for employees on first aid arrangements YES NO
3. Do you maintain the validity/currency of your employees' first aid qualifications and the contents of your first aid containers? YES NO
4. Do you maintain records of all first aid incidents/treatments? YES NO

## **REFERENCE / FURTHER DETAILS**

- \*1. Booklet L74 - First Aid at Work Approved Code of Practice and Guidance (HSE) ISBN 0 7176 1050 0.
- \*\*2. Leaflet INDG 214 - 'First Aid at Work - your questions answered' (HSE). ISBN 0 7176 1074 8.  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.htm)
- \*3. Leaflet INDG 215 - Basic advice on first aid at work. (HSE). ISBN 0 7176 2423 4. [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf)

\* Available to view by prior arrangement at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Environmental Health Services, Council House, Coton Road, Nuneaton. CV11 5AA

\*\* Free copy available from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council at the above address.

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