

First Aid Risk Assessment



1 What the Law Says

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 states:

"An employer shall provide or ensure that there are provided such equipment and facilities as are adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for enabling first aid to be rendered to his employees if they are injured or become ill at work"

Employers have an obligation under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and guidance documents to make adequate and appropriate first aid provision for their workforce. It is recommended that someone is able to undertake first aid duties at all times when people are at work. What is 'adequate and appropriate' will depend on the circumstances in your workplace and you should assess what your first-aid needs are.

2 What is First Aid at Work?

People at work can suffer injuries or be taken ill. It doesn't matter whether the injury or illness is caused by the work they do or not, it is important to give them immediate attention and call an ambulance in serious cases. You should make arrangements to ensure this happens. It can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones.

3 How do I Assess the Risks in my Workplace?

As part of managing the health and safety of your business, you must control the risks in your workplace. To do this you need to think about what might cause harm to people and decide whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm. This is known as a risk assessment and it is something you are required by law to carry out.

A good starting point is to walk around your workplace and think about the hazards. What is it about the activities, processes or substances used that could injure your employees or harm their health? Think about the risk, which is the chance, high or low, of somebody being harmed by the hazard, and how serious the harm could be. Think about how employees or others, who may be present, might be harmed. Ask your employees what they think the hazards are, as they may notice things that are not obvious to you or have good ideas on how to control the risks.

Once you have identified the risks and what you need to do to control them, you should put the appropriate measures in place. Record your findings, any paperwork you produce should help you to manage the risks in your business and tell people what they need to know.

A risk assessment must show suitable and sufficient information, for example:

- A proper check was made.
- You asked who might be affected.
- You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be affected.
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low.
- You involved your employees or their representatives in the process.

Where the nature of your work changes fairly frequently or the workplace changes and develops, or where your workers move from site to site, your risk assessment may have to concentrate more on a broad range of risks.

If your risk assessment identifies a number of hazards, you need to put them in order of importance and address the most serious risks first. Identify long-term solutions for the risks with the biggest consequences, as well as those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health. You should also establish whether there are improvements that can be implemented quickly, even if temporarily, until more reliable controls can be put in place.

Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date. If you are unsure about the risks or hazards within your business seek further advice.

4

Choosing the Right First Aid Kit

The results of your risk assessment will determine the number and type of first aid kits that you need to have in your workplace. The guide below will help you choose the right kit depending on the category of hazard and number of employees.

Category of Hazard	Number of Employees	Number and Size of First Aid Kits
Low Hazard e.g. shops, offices, libraries, etc	Fewer than 25 25 - 100 More than 100	1 Small Kit 1 Medium Kit 1 Large Kit per 100 Employees
High Hazard e.g. light engineering and assembly work, food Employees processing, warehousing, extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments, construction, chemical manufacture, etc	Fewer than 5 5 - 25 More than 25	1 Small Kit 1 Medium Kit 1 Large Kit per 100



5

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a person be left alone at the workplace?

It will often be safe to work alone. However, the law requires employers to think about and deal with any health and safety risks before people are allowed to do so.

How many first-aiders do I need?

The findings of your first-aid needs assessment will help you decide how many first-aiders are required. There are no hard and fast rules on exact numbers and you will need to take into account all the relevant circumstances of your particular workplace. Refer to your Risk Assessment.

What is a first-aider?

A first-aider is someone who has undertaken training and has a qualification that HSE approves. This means that they must hold a valid certificate of competence.

Do I have to do anything else?

You have to inform your employees of the first-aid arrangements. Putting up notices telling staff who and where the first-aiders or appointed persons are and where the first-aid box is will usually be enough. You will need to make special arrangements to give first-aid information to employees with reading or language difficulties.

How do I report an incident to RIDDOR?

All incidents can be reported online[1] but a telephone service remains for reporting fatal and major injuries only - call the Incident Contact Centre on 0345 300 9923.

6

Useful Information

For more information on carrying out a workplace risk assessment, please see:

Wallace Cameron website and visit the Advice and Guides section - www.wallacecameron.com

Health and Safety Executive website - www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid