

First Aid at Work: Management Briefing

What Is First-Aid?

The HSE says: "In the event of injury or sudden illness, failure to provide first aid could result in a casualty's death. The employer should ensure that an employee who is injured or taken ill at work receives immediate attention." The basic need is to provide suitable first-aid personnel and first aid materials for employees.

Legal duties

- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 (as amended)
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Size, nature and distribution of the workplaces and workforce

Recommendations for employers

- Arrange for a needs assessments of first aid needs in business locations and wherever employees work and travel
- ensure that suitable first aiders are trained, and that their training and certification is maintained, or where first aiders are not required, there is an appointed person
- appoint a coordinator to manage first aid and maintain the provisions and information
- ensure that public liability insurance covers the provision of first aid to non-employees, if this is to be allowed
- arrange for first aid materials to be provided and maintained
- ensure effective cooperation and coordination with managers of sites not controlled by the employer, but where employees may work
- provide first aid rooms if the risk assessment highlights a need
- provide information for employees on first aiders and materials.

Key considerations for the risk assessment

- nature of the work
- whether appointed persons are sufficient in some cases, and the level of training required for first aiders and emergency first aiders
- the numbers of appointed persons and first aiders required, and the provision of reserve first aiders in case of absence, or to cater for shifts
- whether first aid rooms are required
- whether workers are remote, travelling or working alone
- shared occupancy buildings, customer sites and other locations not controlled by the employer.

Specific management actions

- Carry out assessments to identify first aid needs, including personnel, materials and first aid rooms (if necessary)
- coordinate first aiders so that they receive appropriate training which is refreshed at least every three years to remain valid with interim refresher training every 12 months
- provide first aid materials according to the needs assessment
- coordinate with managers of sites where employees may work, such as customer sites
- provide tools for first aiders to record first aid treatment
- implement a system to ensure that first aid materials are monitored and kept fully stocked and within date
- provide signs or other information on the first aiders and location of first aid materials
- maintain first aid information and signs to keep it up to date.

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