

FIRST AID

Introduction

With effect from 1 October 2013, The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 have been amended to remove the requirement for HSE to approve first aid training and qualifications.

The change is part of HSE's work to reduce the burden on businesses and put common sense back in to health and safety, while maintaining standards.

The new approach applies to businesses of all sizes and from all sectors

For training providers currently approved by HSE, regardless of the date of expiry that appears on their approval certificate, their approval to undertake first training will expire and will no longer be valid.

An employer will still need to make an assessment of their first-aid needs to establish what provision for first aid is required. This will depend upon the workplace, taking into account, among other things, the number of employees, size, location and work activity.

HSE has also produced guidance on 'selecting a first-aid training provider: A guide for employers' (please see further guidance section)

What an employer must do

All employers have a responsibility to provide first aid cover to their employees. There is no set criteria for what sort of measures should be provided as each workplace is different. The measures can range from simply a first aid kit, to an appointed person, a first aider who is trained in EFAW or a first aider who is trained in FAW. It is important to regularly review your arrangements. Please refer to the First aid checklist in the document library.

Assessment of risks

To identify what measures you need in place for first aid, you need to look at your workplace, identify how accidents could happen and what sort of injuries or ill health could be sustained by employees.

The following points should be considered in your assessment:

Do you work with:

- hazardous substances;
- dangerous tools;
- dangerous machinery;
- dangerous loads or animals?

You will also need to take into account the following:

- number of employees
- history of accidents
- travelling workers and remote workers
- is the work spread across the workplace
- proximity to emergency medical services

If from the questions above, you have identified that there is little risk (this could be due to the fact that you do not work with any hazardous substances, dangerous tools/machinery etc. and that you have very few employees), it may be enough for you to provide an appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements and a clearly identified and suitably stocked first aid kit. The role of this appointed person includes looking after the first-aid equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required. It is important to remember appointed persons are NOT first aiders and should not attempt to give first aid for which they have not been trained.

In some circumstances where your assessment indicates the risk being higher, (eg working with some dangerous tools/machinery, have a history of injuries from this work, employees spread across the workplace and far away from a hospital with a casualty department), you may need to appoint a first aider (EFAW or FAW)

The new one day course will in effect mean that there will be two tiers of first aider, one with the emergency first aid training (EFAW) and one with the first aid at work training (FAW). The appointed person's role will stay the same as before and no formal training is required for this role.

Training providers and refresher training

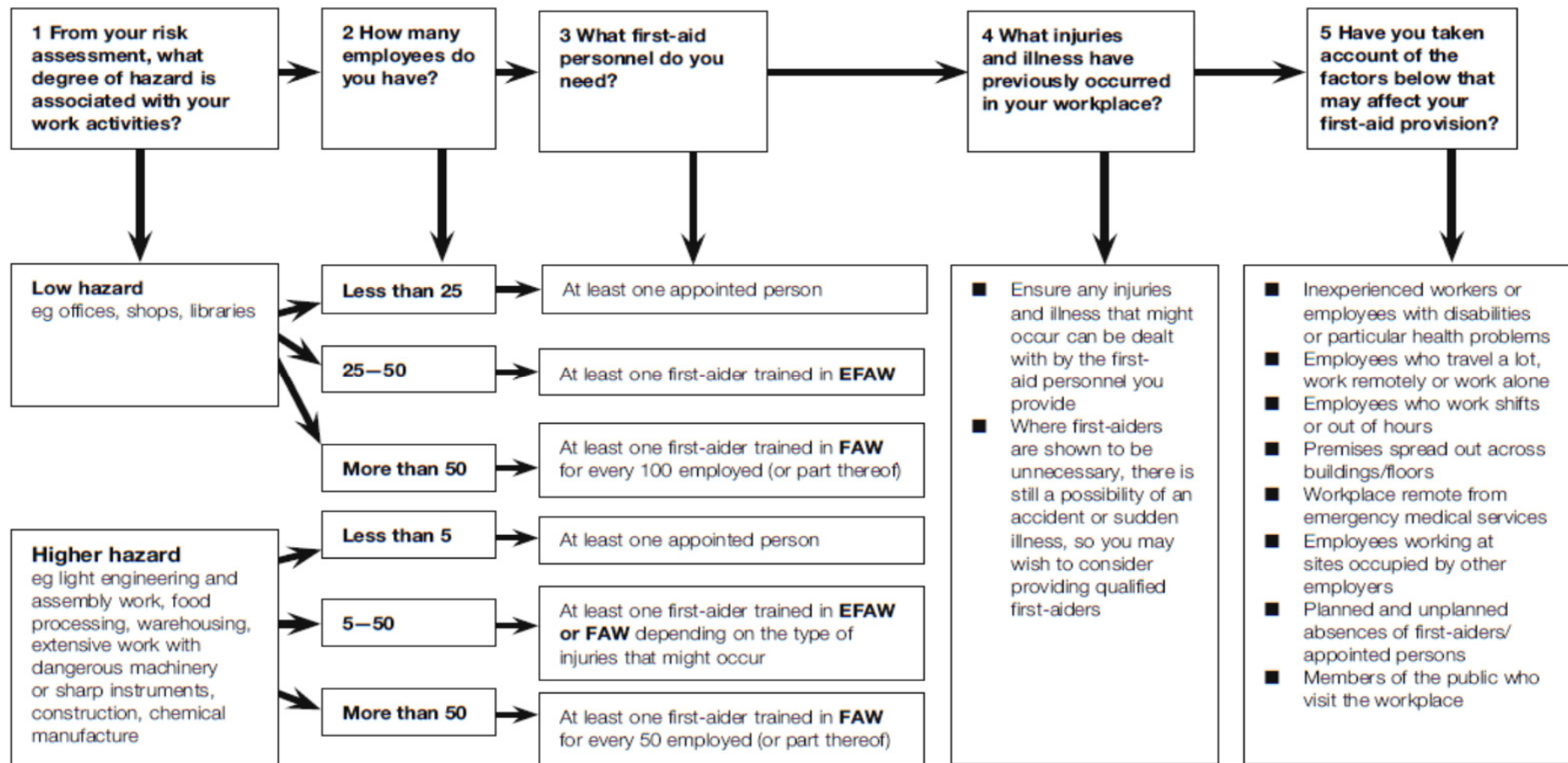
On successful completion of an FAW or EFAW course, candidates are issued with a certificate for three years. They then need to undertake an FAW requalification course or EFAW course, as appropriate, to obtain another three year certificate. Employers should make every effort to ensure that first aiders attend the relevant course within the three month period prior to certificate expiry date. The new certificate will then take effect from the date of expiry.

HSE strongly recommends that it is good practice for first aiders to complete annual 'refresher' courses during any three year FAW/ EFAW certification period. It is not mandatory and any training provider offering annual refresher training should not state that it is a legal requirement.

Please contact the Health and Safety Helpline for assistance in locating an appropriate training organisation.

Suggested numbers of first aid personnel

The findings of the assessment can be used to help employers decide whether their first aiders should be trained in FAW or EFAW. If the assessment indicates that first aiders should be trained to FAW standard, it is not acceptable to provide first aiders that possess an EFAW certificate instead. As a guide, the flow chart below suggests the category of first-aid personnel to provide under different circumstances.



Appendix 3 - Suggested numbers of first-aid personnel to be available at all times people are at work.

Reference: Guidance L74, First aid at Work – The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981: Approved Code of Practice and Guidance.

First Aid Boxes

There is no mandatory list of items that should be included in a first-aid container. Employers should decide what to include in the first-aid container from information gathered during their assessment of first-aid needs. As a guide, where no special risk arises in the workplace, a minimum stock of first-aid items would normally be:

- First aid guidance card
- 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes);
- Two sterile eye pads;
- Four individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile);
- Six safety pins;
- Six medium sized (approximately 12 cm x 12 cm) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings;
- Two large (approximately 18 cm x 18 cm) sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings;
- One pair of disposable gloves.
- You should not keep tablets or medicines in the first-aid box.

With regards to members of the public being present on the site, these Regulations do not oblige employers to provide for first aid for anyone other than their own employees.

However, many undertakings, for example educational establishments, health authority premises, places of entertainment, fairgrounds and shops provide a service for others, and employers may wish to include members of the public in their assessment of needs and make provision for them. Employers should be aware that the compulsory element of employers' liability insurance does not cover litigation resulting from first aid given to non-employees. However, many public liability insurance policies do cover this aspect and employers may wish to check their public liability insurance policy on this point.

It is vital that first aid provision is in place for all of your employees whilst they are at work. As a minimum all employees should know how to obtain first aid should the need arise. It may be appropriate to have signs up identifying where first aid boxes are kept and who the first aid trained staff are. If you are totally reliant upon others, for example a Principal Contractor then you must satisfy yourself that your staff are properly catered for and sufficient provision of both first aid personnel and facilities is being provided.

In lower risk environments for example multi tenanted office buildings, it will usually be sufficient to have access, with their permission, to the names and telephone numbers of other employers' (ie tenants), trained first aiders. This information must be updated regularly and should be held at a convenient location accessible to all personnel. Cooperation and coordination of information and activities is vital in these circumstances.

First Aid Rooms

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for first aid rooms to be provided. They can be a useful addition, but in smaller organisations or where the response time of the emergency services is short, it is less likely to be necessary to have a dedicated first aid room. The provision will ultimately depend upon the risk assessment. The

appropriate equipment required in a first aid room is contained in the guidance to the regulations.

Records

It is also good practice for employers to provide first aiders and appointed persons with a book in which to record any incidents which require their assistance. This information can help employers identify accident trends and possible areas for improvement. It can also be used for reference in future first aid need assessments and such records may also be useful for insurance and accident investigations.

Overview:

- Assess the first aid needs of your workplace
- Provide a First Aid box(es) ,suitably marked, containing appropriate items
- Provide adequate information to employees on the first aid arrangements – provide signage if appropriate
- Nominate and ensure trained "Appointed Persons" or First Aiders (FAW or EFAW), where appropriate, are available to deal with first aid, whenever staff are in the workplace
- Maintain the validity/currency of your employees' first aid qualifications and the contents of your first aid containers
- Maintain records of all first aid incidents/treatments
- Keep your assessment and arrangements under regular review

Further Guidance

L74, First aid at Work – The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981: Approved Code of Practice and Guidance ISBN 9780 717 662609

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/l74.pdf>

INDG 214: First aid at work, free for a single copy.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf>

INDG 347: Basic advice on first aid at work, free for a single copy.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf>

Selecting a first-aid training provider: A guide for employers

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis3.pdf>