

# First Aid At Work & what it means

**The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981** set out the essential aspects of first aid that you as an employer need to consider. This paper will be a simple introduction to help you to understand and comply with the Regulations and offers practical advice on what you need to do.

## 1. As an employer you need to make provision for First Aid.

Basically if one of your team, or a visitor injures themselves or becomes ill, you need to have the equipment, facilities (somewhere to go out of public view) and someone to take charge i.e. a first aider or an appointed person.

Taking charge could be dealing with a minor injury (little sick), e.g. a cut, it needs to be cleaned, covered with a plaster and recorded in the accident book. It could be recognising that they are seriously unwell (big sick), calling for an ambulance and doing the very best they can do while waiting.

You will likely need more than one first aider, to cover for holidays and absence, to be a first aider they need to have some basic knowledge and a certificate.

Depending on your workplace, you may need to consider the level of training. Since 2013 the HSE no longer approve training, leaving it up to individuals and organisations to consider their needs, however they recommend levels.

### **Low risk workplace:**

You may decide an appointed person is adequate, no formal training but they check there is appropriate equipment etc. You may decide a one day first aid course is more appropriate to actually administer aid e.g. an Emergency First Aid at Work.

### **High risk workplace:**

You may decide that a three day First Aid At Work is required, or for very high risk environments a five day course. You may consider that additional training is required due to the nature of work. E.g. +Forestry for those working in tree surgery.

**Where staff work in specific environments they may need additional training or a specific qualification. For example: Outdoor Instructors need a 16 Hour Outdoor First Aid Course, those working as a tree surgeon need at least a Emergency First Aid At Work +F (Forestry), those working remotely in high risk environments such as wind turbines would need an advance certificate to factor in the additional hazards.**

## **2. Training**

First aid training companies come in all shapes and sizes, some are their own awarding body and everything is internal e.g. St Johns, others have external awarding bodies to ensure quality and content. When you are selecting a provider you have due diligence to ensure they are legit. There is no need for trainers to be experienced first aider or medics. However they do need to have.

- A first aid certificate, a minimum of a three day First Aid At Work.
- A teaching and assessing qualification.
- A method of ensuring quality assurance.

Most trainers will be using Qualsafe, ProTrainings, Highfield, NUC, REC or other awarding bodies who ensure quality, content and the qualifications of the instructors so you do not need to.

Training companies work with an awarding body will also have their own internal quality controllers.

You need to check they have an awarding body. If they do, they at least meet the minimum standard to deliver training. Some trainers will be healthcare professionals, with experience in emergency care, some trainers will also be specialists in the areas they teach for example as an outdoor first aid instructor they may also be a climbing instructor.

## **3. What's in a First Aid Kit**

There are no specific rules for what is in your first aid kit. However, it needs to be fit for purpose so most off the shelf first aid kits will meet your needs.

You will need to consider additional equipment depending in where you are working, consideration for eye injuries in industry would need an eye station.

The use of chainsaws maybe require the use of a bleed kit. It is important people know what is in one and how to use it. It is also good practice to have the kit prepared for use, not wrapped in plastic as this will delay use. Someone also needs to check the kit and restock if used or out of date.

## 4. Record Keeping

There should also be a way of recording any incidents, if it isn't written down it never happened. Off the shelf first aid record books meet the requirement although some companies opt for an online version.

## What can we do to help?

We understand that first aid often slips between the cracks, however first aid is very important. If someone was not breathing they have five minutes before damage to their brain. If someone had a massive bleed, they may have only three minutes.

At Invenio we offer free consultations to help you ensure you have what you need to ensure compliance and to be able to deliver first aid when it is needed.

Please contact us by phone: 0800 9991064 or email:  
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