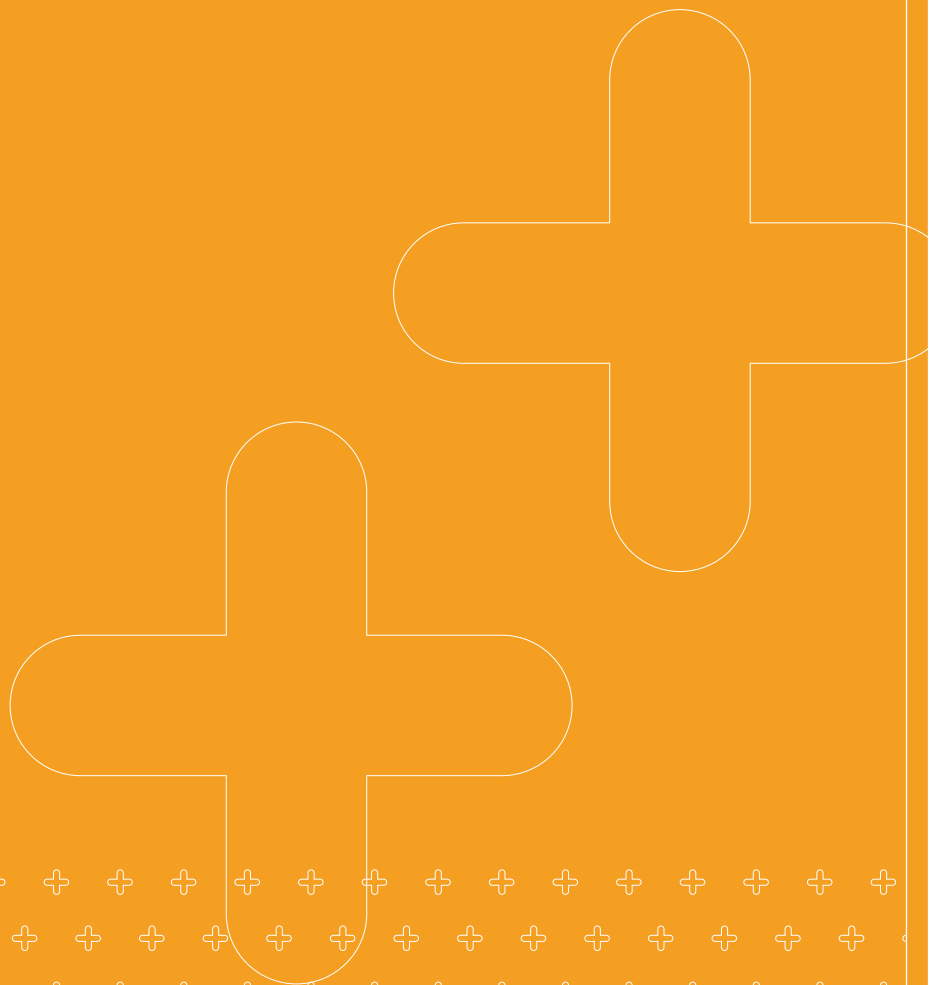




# First Aid for Workplaces – A Good Practice Guide

SEPTEMBER 2009



Published by the Department of Labour  
Po Box 3705  
Wellington 6011  
ISBN 978-0-478-33383-1

## Table of contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WHAT FIRST AID IS NEEDED IN WORKPLACES?.....</b>	<b>5</b>
How do I do a Workplace First Aid Needs Assessment? .....	5
<b>HOW MANY TRAINED FIRST AIDERS DO I NEED?.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>WORKPLACE FIRST AID NEEDS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WHAT FIRST AID EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED? .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Do I need a first aid kit?.....	13
What should be in my first aid kit? .....	13
Suggested minimum contents for a workplace first aid kit .....	15
What signs should I use to identify first aid kits? .....	16
How many kits do I need and where should they be located?.....	16
What personal protective clothing or equipment might I need? .....	16
What other equipment might some employers need? .....	16
How should I get rid of waste material? .....	17
What information should be provided with first aid kits?.....	17
Do I need a first aid room?.....	18
<b>HOW DO I RECORD AND REPORT ACCIDENTS?.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW SHOULD I INFORM EMPLOYEES ABOUT FIRST AID HELP THAT'S AVAILABLE? .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT TRAINING DO FIRST AIDERS NEED?.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW CAN FIRST AID FIT TOGETHER WITH HAZARD MANAGEMENT IN MY WORKPLACE? .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Hazard and First Aid Assessment Register .....	23
<b>APPENDIX 1: VEHICLE OR LONE WORKER FIRST AID KIT - SUGGESTED MINIMUM CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR FIRST AIDERS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3: FIRST AID REGISTER .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>APPENDIX 4: HOW SHOULD A FIRST AID ROOM BE SET UP? .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>APPENDIX 5: WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT THE NEED FOR FIRST AID IN WORKPLACES? .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>29</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

Every year thousands of people are injured or fall sick at work – some seriously.

A quick first aid response can mean the difference between life and death, or can reduce the severity of the injury. First aid can also help protect businesses, by reducing the impact an accident can have on productivity and the cost of employees taking leave.

There is also a legal requirement for workplaces to take all practicable steps to provide first aid facilities under the Health and Safety in Employment Regulations 1995, and to have procedures for dealing with emergencies under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 (HSE Act).

This guide, *First Aid for Workplaces – a Good Practice Guide*, helps identify what first aid is needed in individual workplaces. It was developed following consultation from a wide range of industry experts.

It takes account of recent regulatory changes, including the withdrawal of the Factories and Commercial Premises (First Aid) Regulations 1985. It replaces the Department of Labour's previous guide *Guidance Notes on Providing First Aid Equipment, Facilities and Training (2001)*.

This guide will be useful to employers, the self-employed, and people who hire contractors. It will also be useful to first aiders, first aid trainers and organisations that supply or maintain first aid equipment.

## **WHAT FIRST AID IS NEEDED IN WORKPLACES?**

First aid is the immediate and basic care given to an injured or sick person before a doctor, other health professional or emergency services take over their treatment.

It focuses on preserving life and minimising serious injury by maintaining breathing and circulation, stemming blood, immobilising broken bones etc.

First aid requirements at work fall into three categories:

- suitably stocked first aid kits and facilities
- where needed, an appropriate number of suitably trained first aiders
- information for employees about first aid arrangements.

This guide includes some suggestions to help you organise your first aid kits, facilities, first aiders and information to employees.

Some workplaces have greater risks of injury and illness because of the sort of work they do. These risks are an important factor in deciding first aid requirements, because different first aid facilities may be needed for different activities.

Employers are required to provide first aid that takes into account the individual circumstances of their workplace. Circumstances that can affect your first aid needs include things like hazards common in your industry or workplace, the number of employees you have, and how far away you are from medical help.

One way to identify the first aid needs of your business is to complete a Workplace First Aid Needs Assessment. The section below can help you do that.

### **How do I do a Workplace First Aid Needs Assessment?**

The questions and information below will help you identify what first aid is required in your workplace. Once you've read through them, you can fill in the *Workplace First Aid Needs Assessment Checklist* provided.

#### ***What hazards are there in my workplace and what sort of harm can occur?***

Hazards can be physical (e.g. working at heights etc), chemical, environmental (e.g. sun burn) and biological. Work processes (like cleaning machinery) and changes in work processes can also create hazards.

For more information on identifying and managing hazards see *How can first aid fit together with hazard management in my workplace?*



**Think about:** specific hazards such as potentially hazardous substances, tools, machinery or activities

---

***How many employees and other people are in the workplace and where are they located?***

The number of people you employ will affect the facilities you need, whether you need trained first aiders, and if so, how many first aiders you need.

When thinking about how many trained first aiders you need, take into account things like:

- the number of employees at work at any given time
- the sort of work they do, and the sorts of hazards they face
- the likelihood of people being hurt, and how serious the injuries might be
- the size of your workplace and whether people are working in scattered locations within the site
- the location of your workplace, and the distance from medical services
- whether people other than employees are present

Allow for some of your first aiders to be absent on planned or unplanned leave, such as sick leave.

Your first aid provisions must cover all hours when employees are working, including shifts and overtime. Employees working outside normal working hours need access to first aid.

If you employ people with disabilities or special needs, think about their medical and first aid needs. This is best done in consultation with the employees concerned, and with the consent of the workers, upon medical advice.

---



**Think about:** Seasonal workers, temporary workers, part time workers, shift workers

---

***If employees of more than one employer are working together can they share first aid resources?***

If people employed by different employers are working together and want to avoid duplication, they can arrange to share first aid provisions. For example, the employers might agree that first aid provisions will be made by the employer with the largest number of employees on site.

The agreement should be in writing and a copy kept by each employer involved. Each employer must make sure their employees understand the first aid arrangements.



**Think about:** construction sites, shopping malls, farming co-operatives, working in multi-storey buildings occupied by a number of employers

---

***How does size and layout of my workplace affect first aid needs?***

First aid should be easy for all employees to access, preferably within minutes if there is an emergency. To ensure first aid is easy to access you need to consider:

- the size of your workplace
  - how long it will take for a first aider to reach the injured or ill person
  - whether employees work on several buildings across a worksite
  - whether they work in several floors of one building
  - site security and after-hours requirements
  - how people can communicate in large worksites, and what communications systems are needed, such as radios, telephones, pagers, or public address systems.
- 



**Think about:** large factories, large processing facilities, office blocks

---

***What about employees who work away from the workplace?***

Where employees work away from the main workplace you should ensure they have adequate and portable first aid provisions with them. What they need will vary according to the nature of the work they're doing, the hazards involved, and whether they're working alone or in groups. As noted above, you can arrange for people employed by different employers to share first aid while they are working at the same site. Appendix 1 has a suggested list of content for work vehicle first aid kits.

---



**Think about:** sales representatives, people travelling to other locations, service personnel

---

***How does the location of my workplace affect first aid needs?***

When assessing your first aid needs you can take into account how close you are to medical centres, hospitals or an ambulance service. But remember that these services may not always be open, and you may need to take this into consideration.

Even if you work close to medical services, you are required to take all practicable steps to put in place procedures for dealing with emergencies at work.

Workplaces in remote areas need to make special arrangements. It is recommended that employers find out what medical services are available in the area, how to communicate with them, and how long it is likely to take emergency services to reach the workplace. All these factors need to be taken into account when assessing first aid needs.



**Think about:** high-country stations, country road construction, forestry sites, planes, ships

---

***Do I need to provide first aid for people who aren't employees?***

Your first aid provisions should take into account other people in the workplace who could be harmed. Also think about contractors, any volunteers doing regular work, people receiving on the job training or work experience, and loaned employees.



**Think about:** shopping malls and other public places (e.g. airports, train stations), schools, visitors, patients, hotel guests, contractors

---

***What if my workplace provides in-house occupational health services?***

If your workplace has its own occupational health service, first aid arrangements should be made in consultation with the doctor or nurse in charge of the service.

The occupational health service doesn't need to be staffed continuously, provided there is suitable coverage for employees when the service isn't operating. This coverage should be provided by qualified first aiders.

It's recommended that in-house occupational health service providers have and maintain first aid qualifications.

## HOW MANY TRAINED FIRST AIDERS DO I NEED?

How many trained first aiders you need will depend on the hazards in your workplace, the number and location of your employees and how close you are to medical services. Completing the Needs Assessment will give you an idea of how many trained first aiders are needed at your workplace.

Here are some examples to help you think about what might be needed in your workplace.

- Alex runs a small IT company that employs three people and is based in the city close to a medical centre. His low hazard workplace has no trained first aiders.
- Mark has a small residential company employing five people. He has two trained first aiders.
- Lesley’s farm is in a rural area with limited access to medical and ambulance services. She has two first aiders for every 10 employees.
- Flo manages a large telephone contact centre in a suburban area. Her low risk workplace always has two first aiders present for every 50 employees at work.
- David’s roading company deals with significant hazards, including machinery, traffic hazards, and chemicals. He always has at least two first aiders present for up to 25 employees.



**Think about:**

- ensuring that first aid cover is provided on all shifts
  - rosters and managing planned/unplanned absences to ensure that a first aider is available during working hours
  - determining if the level of first aid response is appropriate to the hazards faced by workers
-

## WORKPLACE FIRST AID NEEDS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

This checklist will help you work out what first aid is needed in your workplace

Issue	Suggested Impact on First Aid Provision	Action
What likelihood is there of injury and ill health arising from work?	Higher likelihood: train more first aiders and expand first aid stock.	
Are there any job or task-specific significant hazards, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazardous substances</li> <li>• Hazardous tools</li> <li>• Hazardous machinery</li> <li>• Hazardous loads</li> <li>• Hazardous animals</li> <li>• Working at height</li> <li>• Large industrial sites</li> <li>• Commercial diving</li> <li>• Adventure tourism</li> </ul>	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific or advanced training for first aiders</li> <li>• Extra first aid equipment</li> <li>• Precise locations of first aid equipment</li> <li>• Making prior arrangements with emergency services</li> <li>• A first aid room</li> </ul>	
Are there parts of the workplace where different significant hazards can be identified, e.g. an office compared with a processing factory?	Alternative levels of first aid provision for different parts of the organisation.	
Are large numbers of people employed?	Extra first aiders, more equipment and possibly a first aid room to cope with the higher likelihood of an accident occurring.	
Are there employees with reading, hearing or language difficulties?	Provide specialised training to ensure that they know how to access first aid provisions when required.	

What sorts of accidents and illnesses have occurred and where did they occur in the workplace?	Locate first aid provisions in areas where accidents are more likely to happen, and stock specific first aid items.	
Are there inexperienced workers on site, or employees with disabilities and special needs?	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• special equipment</li> <li>• locating equipment to ensure ready emergency access by people with restricted mobility</li> </ul>	
Is the workplace spread out over a wide area, e.g. are there several buildings or multi-floor buildings?	Provision should be made for each building and each floor. First aid rooms should be located on ground floors where practicable for disability and emergency access.	
Is shift work, overtime or out-of-hours work provided?	First aiders and first aid equipment must be available when people are at work.	
Is the workplace remote from emergency services?	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informing medical services of your location and the types of injury and work-related illness that may be expected</li> <li>• prior special arrangements with emergency services</li> </ul>	
Do employees travel for work in company-supplied vehicles or work alone?	Issue first aid kits and train staff in their use; consider communication issues.	
Do employees work at sites occupied by other employers?	Determine first aid provisions for employees with the other employers.	
Do members of the public or non-employees visit or spend time at the workplace?	It is recommended that workplace first aid provisions are adequate to cover their needs.	
Does the workplace have any work experience employees, apprentices or volunteers?	Workplace first aid provisions must cover these people.	

<b>Other issues at your workplace</b>	<b>Suggested Impact on First Aid Provision</b>	<b>Action</b>

## WHAT FIRST AID EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED?

Completing the *Workplace First Aid Needs Assessment checklist* will help you identify what equipment and how many first aiders you need. This section provides more detailed information on things like what should be in your first aid kits and where to locate them.

### Do I need a first aid kit?

There should be a suitably stocked first aid kit in each place where people are working. There should also be a kit in work vehicles.



First aid kits must be made of sturdy material and be designed to protect the contents from damp, dust and contamination. Kits must be clearly identified as first aid containers. The marking must be a white cross on a green background.

### Figure 1: standard first aid sign

The kits can be of any size, but they must be large enough to fit the contents, and be of a sufficient size to cope with the number of people needing to use it.

The size of the kit will depend on whether or not it is designed to operate as a mobile, lone worker, vehicle or commercial premises kit.

### What should be in my first aid kit?

Below is a list of suggested minimum contents for first aid kits in workplaces with no special risks.

However, the content of your first aid kit must take account of the circumstances and hazards of your workplace. So the contents should be decided based on the outcome of your Needs Assessment. Where particular hazards exist, the kits should be provided with additional contents.

Appendix 1 has a list of suggested minimum contents for mobile first aid kits. They can be given to people working away from the usual workplace or for work vehicles. Where particular hazards exist, mobile kits should be provided with additional contents.

First aid kits must be checked regularly. Ensure they are replenished as soon as possible after use, so there's always an adequate supply of equipment available.

Items should be replaced before the expiry date shown on the packaging, where applicable.

Nothing other than first aid equipment or related equipment, such as pens and accident report forms, should be in the kits.

***Items needed for wound cleaning***

Clean water and disposable drying material should be provided to clean wounds. If clean water is not available, consider providing alternatives like individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes or sterile saline solution.

Cotton wool and antiseptics should not be used to treat wounds. Cotton wool fibres stick to wounds and incorrectly diluted antiseptics can cause burns.

If you supply reusable eye-wash bottles it's important the water is not stored in the bottles, as it can become stale and provide a breeding ground for bacteria. The bottles should be filled with fresh water at the time they are required. Once used, the bottles and any attachments must be properly cleaned with hot water and a mild detergent.

***Should I put pain relief in my first aid kit?***

It is recommended that over-the-counter pain relief medicines, such as paracetamol or aspirin, should not be given to people who have been injured at work, unless the person dispensing the medicine is medically qualified to do so.

Employers may decide to make over-the-counter pain relief medicine available for employees to administer themselves, so employees don't have to leave work to get medical help for relatively minor symptoms such as headaches. This may be relevant for workplaces located a long way from medical services or pharmacies, or that operate when medical services and pharmacies are closed.

If you decide to provide pain relief, monitor the usage to minimise misuse, abuse or accidental over-dosage.

Pain relief described as "pharmacy-only medicine", "prescription medicine" and "restricted medicine" should not be provided in first aid kits.

## **Suggested minimum contents for a workplace first aid kit**

Here is a list of recommended contents for first aid kits for workplaces with no special risk:

- a manual giving general guidance on first aid
- individually wrapped moist wipes or saline solution
- 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes), appropriate to the type of work (dressings may be of a detectable type for food handlers)
- two sterile eye pads
- two individually wrapped triangular bandages (sterile)
- clasps or safety pins to tie bandages
- two stretch bandages
- six medium sized, individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 12cm x 12 cm
- two large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 18cm x 18cm
- two pairs of disposable gloves
- one resuscitation mask.

This is a suggested contents list only, you may want to use equivalent but different items.

When you do your Needs Assessment you may identify a need for additional items. This could include, for example:

- scissors
- adhesive strips or band-aids for minor wound dressing
- non-allergic adhesive tape
- disposable aprons
- forceps or tweezers to remove foreign bodies
- individually wrapped moist wipes or saline solution
- plastic bags for waste disposal
- hand sanitiser.

Ideally, these items are stored inside the first aid kit. But if necessary they may be stored separately as long as they are available for use as required.

## **What signs should I use to identify first aid kits?**

It's recommended that you use first aid signs that clearly show the locations of first aid equipment. This makes the equipment easier to locate in an emergency. Signs should comply with *NZS/AS 1319: 1994 Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment* or an equivalent applicable standard. See the Standards NZ website for information on standards [www.standards.co.nz](http://www.standards.co.nz)

## **How many kits do I need and where should they be located?**

You need at least one full basic first aid kit in each place where people are working, which includes work vehicles. Additional kits may be required depending on the outcome of your needs assessment.

There should be at least one kit on each floor of a multi-level workplace. If you have more than 50 employees, it's recommended that an additional kit should be provided, and for every additional 50 employees another kit should be provided.

First aid kits should be located so they're clearly visible and accessible to all employees, and should be unlocked wherever possible. Sealed emergency kits should be available where kits must be locked.

First aid kits should be located close to a wash basin with hot and cold running water and clean towels. If because of the location clean running water isn't available, sterile saline solution or wipes should be supplied in the kits, and hand sanitising gel should also be available.

Kits should be located close to areas of particular or special hazards.

Wall-mounted kits should be removable, and be of a size and weight that one person can carry.

## **What personal protective clothing or equipment might I need?**

Disposable gloves should be provided for use by people giving first aid, to reduce the risk of them transmitting disease and infections from person to person.

If your Needs Assessment suggests other protective clothing and equipment is needed - such as non-absorbent aprons, face visors and non-absorbent overalls - this should be stocked near the first aid kit. The equipment should be checked regularly to ensure it is in good condition.

First aiders must be trained so they can safely use personal protective clothing and equipment.

## **What other equipment might some employers need?**

If your workplace has particular hazards like chemicals you may need additional first aid provisions. This might include things like:

- immediate access to safety data sheets for dealing with chemicals

- personal protective clothing or equipment for the first aiders if they need to enter a hazardous area
- ice or instant cold packs
- biohazard bags.

If a workplace covers a large area, or is divided into a number of separate self-contained working areas, consider providing suitable carrying equipment to transport casualties.

If blankets are provided, they should be stored alongside the first aid equipment, and kept free from dust and damp.

Other first aid equipment, including AEDs (defibrillators), oxygen and medicines may be supplied on specialist advice. People must not operate equipment that requires specialist training unless they have that training.

If respirators with cartridges are part of your emergency first aid equipment, they must be regularly maintained and the cartridges replaced as the manufacturer recommends.

### **How should I get rid of waste material?**

Plastic disposable bags that can be sealed closed should be provided for soiled first aid dressings, disposable equipment and gloves. Ensure that used dressings and other biologically contaminated equipment are safely disposed of in order to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

If needles or other sharp instruments require disposal, a sharps disposal bin and a contract for its safe removal is recommended.

### **What information should be provided with first aid kits?**

Each first aid kit should contain the names, job titles and contact details for the first aiders. They should also contain emergency contact numbers (ambulance, hospital, and doctor, etc).

The Department of Labour and the Environmental Risk Management Authority New Zealand have developed an *Emergency Response Flip Chart*, where the contact details for first aiders can be listed. The Flip Chart contains basic emergency information for fire, chemical spills, accidents and natural disasters. This can be downloaded from:

<http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/resources/publications/pdfs/ERMA%20Flip%20Chart.pdf>

It's recommended that writing materials are kept in or near the kit so people can record what has been used. This will help you make sure the kit is restocked in a timely way.

The Department of Labour has a form that can be used to record these details. This "*The First Aid Register*" form can be downloaded from

<http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz/order/catalogue/forms.shtml>. There's a copy of the form in Appendix 3.

### **Do I need a first aid room?**

Employers in large workplaces, for example those with more than 100 employees, should consider providing a first aid room to cope with the higher likelihood of an accident occurring.

Employers should also consider the need for a first aid room if their workplace is located somewhere where access to medical facilities is difficult, or where there are significant hazards in the workplace.

More information on how to set up a first aid room is in Appendix 4.

### **HOW DO I RECORD AND REPORT ACCIDENTS?**

By law, employers, the self-employed and principals (people who hire contractors) must keep a register of all accidents and near misses, and all incidents when someone is seriously harmed at work.

The register must be kept in a certain way, and the Department of Labour has a form you can download – called the *Form of Register or Notification of Circumstances of Accident or Serious Harm* - that meets these requirements. Copies of the form should be kept in or near the first aid kit. It can be downloaded from <http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz/order/catalogue/forms.shtml>.

If someone is seriously harmed at work, the employer, self-employed person or principal (someone who hires contractors) must notify the Department of Labour as soon as possible. They must also send a completed copy of the *Form of Register or Notification of Circumstances of Accident or Serious Harm* to the Department within 7 days after the accident, or as soon as possible after they find out about it. For more information on reporting accidents go to: <http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz/services/notification/accident.shtml>.

### **HOW SHOULD I INFORM EMPLOYEES ABOUT FIRST AID HELP THAT'S AVAILABLE?**

All employees must be given clear information about first aid available in the workplace, including the location of first aid kits, the names and locations of first aiders, the location of any first aid room and procedures to follow when first aid is needed. This information should be given:

- when an employee is first employed
- when there is a change in the nature or location of the duties the employee performs
- when there's a significant change in personnel – for example if the first aiders are replaced
- at regular intervals to refresh and remind them – for example annually.

Employees have useful information about the hazards people face at work and circumstances that can affect access to first aid. So it's recommended that you involve them in the planning and provision of first aid at work. Giving employees reasonable opportunities to participate effectively in processes to improve health and safety is also a requirement of the HSE Act.

## **WHAT TRAINING DO FIRST AIDERS NEED?**

It is recommended that training of workplace first aiders is carried out by people who work for an organisation accredited by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. A list of registered training providers is available at [www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/index.do](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/index.do)

First aid certificates are issued by training providers and are evidence that the person has completed the requirements for the certificate. They are valid for two years.

A refresher course is recommended every two years to keep the first aid certificate current, and update the first aider's knowledge.

If a certificate has lapsed for more than three calendar months from the certificate's expiry date, the certificate holder should complete a full first aid course.

Training courses can be conducted at, or away from, your workplace. For further information on first aid training requirements, visit the NZQA website [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz).

## HOW CAN FIRST AID FIT TOGETHER WITH HAZARD MANAGEMENT IN MY WORKPLACE?

The HSE Act includes a practical process that helps employers and others keep their workplaces safe. The process has three steps:

- identify hazards in your workplace
- consider if they are significant hazards that could cause serious harm
- take steps to protect people from hazards by – in order of preference – eliminating, isolating or minimising exposure to the hazards.

The *Hazard and First Aid Assessment Register* below shows you how you can use your hazard management process to help identify your first aid requirements, and combine the two in one easy to read worksheet.

Below is a short reminder of what you need to do to manage hazards.

---

<b>1</b>	<b>Identify the hazards in your workplace</b>
----------	---

---

You can do this by conducting a site assessment of your workplace and noting any physical, chemical, environmental, biological, or other hazards that could potentially harm employees and others in the workplace. Note, work processes or changes in processes can cause hazards.

Involve employees in this process. Employees can have valuable information about the hazards they face and how to manage them, and involving them in improving health and safety is also a requirement of the HSE Act.

---

<b>2</b>	<b>Consider the significance of the hazards – are they likely to cause serious harm?</b>
----------	--

---

The next step is to work out if each hazard could cause serious harm and is therefore significant.

Serious harm includes death and things like bone fractures, lacerations, crushing, amputation, burns requiring specialist treatment etc. It includes occupational illnesses as well as physical injuries. A full definition can be found at [http://www.osh.govt.nz/law/quickguide/glossary.shtml#\\_ser](http://www.osh.govt.nz/law/quickguide/glossary.shtml#_ser)

Serious harm also includes harm that has the potential to become more serious the more often people are exposed to the hazard. And it includes harm that may not be easily detectable until some time after the person has been exposed to the hazard.

Helpful questions to help you work out if a hazard is significant and could serious harm include:

- How often are employees exposed to the hazard?
- When employees are exposed, how long are they exposed for?
- Are the possible injuries or illnesses likely to be sudden and severe, or develop slowly and last a long time?

---

## 3

### **Eliminate, isolate or minimise the hazards as far as practicable to reduce employee exposure to potential sources of harm**

---

Employers are required to manage significant hazards to reduce the likelihood of employees being harmed. They must take all practicable steps to eliminate, isolate or minimise the hazards.

**Eliminate:** this is the preferred option. It means removing the hazard altogether so it can't harm anyone.

**Isolate:** this is the next preferred option. It means enclosing the hazard so it can't be reached by anyone. One example is machine guarding.

**Minimise:** this is the least preferred option. It means minimising the likelihood of people being harmed by providing things like training, personal protective clothing or equipment, signs, and by ensuring that emergency procedures are in place to cope with accidents.

Simply providing first aid will not cover your legal obligation to manage significant hazards. But it will help meet your obligation to provide an appropriate emergency response procedure in the event of an accident.

The *Hazard and First Aid Assessment Register* over shows how you can expand your hazard management plans to include first aid provisions. This will give you a useful snapshot of how health and safety can be managed in your workplace.

**Example of a Hazard and First Aid Assessment Register**

**Location**

**Date of Assessment**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Injury or Illness</b>	<b>Significance</b>	<b>Eliminate, Isolate or Minimise</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>First Aid Requirements</b>
Manual handling	Sprains, strains, fractures	Can range from lesser harm to significant harm	<b>Minimise</b>	<b>Lifting equipment, team lifts, training on safe manual handling</b>	Ice packs, bandages, splints
Falls	Fractures, bruises, cuts, dislocations, concussion	Likely to cause significant harm	<b>Isolate, Minimise</b>	<b>Scaffolding, use harnesses, forklift cages, handrails, suitable footwear, slip/trip/fall hazard ID</b>	Ice packs, bandages, wound dressings, CPR, splints
Electricity	Shock, burns, loss of consciousness, cardiac arrest	Likely to cause significant harm	<b>Minimise</b>	<b>Inspect and tag electrical leads, work to be conducted by registered electricians</b>	Ice packs, bandages, wound dressings, CPR
Plant/machinery	Cuts, bruises, dislocations, dermatitis, fractures, amputation, eye damage	Likely to cause significant harm	<b>Isolate, Minimise</b>	<b>Machine guarding, training in safe operating and maintenance procedures, personal protective clothing</b>	Ice packs, bandages, wound dressings, eye pads, tweezers, forceps
Hazardous substances	Dizziness, vomiting, respiratory problems, burns to skin or eyes	Likely to cause significant harm	<b>Eliminate, Isolate, Minimise</b>	<b>Substitute with less hazardous substances, isolate processes, training in safe work processes, personal protective clothing</b>	Emergency shower, eye wash facilities, safety data sheets, eye pads, wound dressings, gloves, aprons, oxygen
Temperature, UV radiation	Sunburn, frostbite, heat stress, heat stroke, hypothermia	Can range from lesser harm to significant harm	<b>Minimise</b>	<b>Reduce employee exposure to temperature extremes where practicable, sunscreen, appropriate clothing, provide shade</b>	Water or electrolyte rehydration fluids, thermal blankets, ice packs
Occupational violence	Nausea, shock, collapse, physical injuries	Likely to cause significant harm	<b>Minimise</b>	<b>CCTV, staff training, security</b>	Water, blankets, CPR, wound dressings, bandages, etc

## Hazard and First Aid Assessment Register

**Location**

**Date of Assessment**

Hazard	Injury or Illness	Significance	Eliminate, Isolate or Minimise	Controls	First Aid Requirements

## **APPENDIX 1: VEHICLE OR LONE WORKER FIRST AID KIT - SUGGESTED MINIMUM CONTENTS**

This appendix lists the recommended contents for a vehicle or lone worker's first aid kit:

- a leaflet giving general guidance on first aid
- six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes), appropriate to the type of work
- two individually wrapped triangular bandages (sterile)
- one stretch bandage
- clasps or safety pins to tie bandages
- one large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressing – approximately 18cm x 18cm
- one pair of disposable gloves
- one resuscitation mask.

This is a suggested contents list only; equivalent but different items will be considered acceptable. This kit can be carried in individual belt pouches by people working alone.

Once the employer has completed their assessment of the first aid items required, a need for additional items may be identified. This could include, for example:

- scissors
- adhesive strips or band-aids for minor wound dressing
- non-allergenic adhesive tape
- disposable aprons
- forceps or tweezers to remove foreign bodies
- plastic bags for waste disposal
- individually wrapped moist wipes or saline solution
- plastic bags for waste disposal.

The contents of vehicle or lone worker first aid kits should be stocked from backup stock at the main work site.

Consideration also needs to be given as to how mobile and lone workers can summon help if they are injured. Examples are the provision of mobile phones, radio access, GPS or a phone check-in procedure.

## **APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR FIRST AIDERS**

Specialist training is additional to the basic first aid training, and can apply to workplaces where the employer identifies the needs for additional skills. The training should be designed to meet the following learning outcomes relative to a specific hazard.

At the end of the additional training, first aiders will be able to:

- describe the nature of the hazard and the methods to manage it
- describe the signs, symptoms and treatment of conditions produced by exposure to the hazard
- describe the actions of antidotes (if any), the procedure for administering antidotes, and any risks associated with administration to casualties;
- demonstrate the use of appropriate specialist equipment and methods of applying first aid treatment
- demonstrate the maintenance of detailed records of incidents where additional methods of first aid treatment are used.

### APPENDIX 3: FIRST AID REGISTER

This form can be used to record details of situations where first aid treatment is administered.

Employee's Name	
Department/Work Area	
Date of Treatment	
Time of Treatment	
First Aider	
Description of Injury	
Treatment Provided	
First aid items used	Reminder: replenish the first aid kit with disposed of items.

If a work-related accident has occurred, please complete your organisation's Accident Report Form or the Department of Labour's *Form of Register or Notification of Circumstances of Accident or Serious Harm*.

## **APPENDIX 4: HOW SHOULD A FIRST AID ROOM BE SET UP?**

If you provide a first aid room ensure that:

- someone is available to take responsibility for the room and its contents, including ensuring that it's cleaned regularly and that stocks are replenished
- the room is always readily available when employees are at work, including during shift work and overtime
- preferably the room shouldn't be used for any other purpose, although you may want to consider using it for employees who are breastfeeding mothers
- the room is located on a ground floor, as near as possible to a building entrance and is signposted so emergency services can easily find it. Your local ambulance service may be able to provide advice on the best access points
- the room has ventilation and heating and is well lit
- the room is large enough to hold a couch or bed with space for people to walk around it, and a chair
- the entrance to the room is wide enough to accommodate a stretcher, wheelchair or carrying chair
- the room contains suitable first aid facilities and equipment, has a waterproof floor covering and is well maintained. All surfaces should be easy to clean and should be cleaned regularly. There should be suitable arrangements for disposing of rubbish, and laundering sheets, blankets and towels, where needed
- The room has a basin with hot and cold running water, soap and clean disposable towels
- The room has cupboards for storing first aid supplies.

## **APPENDIX 5: WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT THE NEED FOR FIRST AID IN WORKPLACES?**

Under the Health and Safety in Employment Regulations 1995 employers are required to take all practicable steps to ensure:

- first aid facilities are provided at every place of work under the control of the employer
- the facilities are suitable for the purpose for which they are used
- the facilities are provided in sufficient numbers
- the facilities are maintained in good order and condition
- all employees have access to these facilities in a way that is convenient to them.

The relevant regulations are:

- regulation 4(2)(d), to be read in conjunction with regulation 7.

The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 doesn't contain any specific provisions requiring first aid facilities. But it imposes a duty on employers to take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of employers and others in the place of work. In some circumstances this may be achieved by the provision of first aid equipment, facilities, training and information.

The relevant sections of the Act are:

- section 6(a), (b) and (e)
- section 12(1)(a) to (d)
- section 16(2)(b)
- section 18.

Employers are also required by section 19B of the HSE Act to involve employees in health and safety matters, including matters referred to in sections 6 to 13 of the Act.

To view the full legislation, visit [www.legislation.govt.nz](http://www.legislation.govt.nz)

## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Guide, the following definitions apply.

<b>AED:</b>	means Automated External Defibrillator. A defibrillator applies a short powerful electric shock to the heart, allowing the heart to regain its natural rhythm.
<b>All practicable steps:</b>	has the same meaning as the definition provided in section 2A of the HSE Act. For more information see <a href="http://www.legislation.govt.nz">www.legislation.govt.nz</a>
<b>CPR:</b>	means cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. CPR is a combination of mouth to mouth rescue breathing and chest compressions. It keeps blood and oxygen circulating to the heart and brain of a person whose heart has stopped pumping effectively.
<b>First aid certificate:</b>	means a certificate issued by a first aid trainer.
<b>First aid kit:</b>	means a suitable box, cabinet or other container used to contain first aid items. It may be static (fixed in one place) or portable.
<b>First aider:</b>	means a person or people in a place of work holding a valid first aid certificate based on National Qualifications Framework unit standards, and is designated by the employer as a first aider. First aiders will also be credited with the appropriate NZQA first aid unit standards and have undertaken regular refresher courses. Appropriate NZQA first aid unit standards are those registered on the National Qualifications Framework when the first aider was assessed.
<b>First aid trainer:</b>	means a trainer engaged by a provider who is accredited by the NZQA to assess first aid unit standards.
<b>Good practice guide:</b>	means recommended work practices or arrangements which have been developed with consultation, and represent the agreed good practice to be followed in defined circumstances.
<b>Harm:</b>	means injury, illness or both; and "harmed" has a corresponding meaning. It includes physical and mental harm caused by work-related stress.

<b>Hazard:</b>	<p>(from section 2 of the HSE Act): Means an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm, and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) a situation where a person's behaviour may be an actual or potential cause or source of harm to the person or another person; and</li><li>(b) without limitation, a situation described in (a) resulting from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock or another temporary condition that affects a person's behaviour.</li></ul>
<b>Pharmacy-only medicine:</b>	<p>also referred to as "pharmacy medicine", is medicine that may be sold in a community or hospital pharmacy, or a shop in an isolated area that is licensed to sell that particular medicine. These medicines are listed in the First Schedule to the Medicines Act 1984 and amendments.</p>
<b>Place of work/workplace:</b>	<p>(from section 2 of the HSE Act): means a place (whether or not within or forming part of a building, structure, or vehicle), where any person is to work, is working, for the time being works, or customarily works, for gain or reward; and, in relation to an employee, includes a place, or part of a place, under the control of the employer (not being domestic accommodation provided for the employee) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) where the employee comes or may come to eat, rest, or get first aid or pay; or</li><li>(b) where the employee comes or may come as part of the employee's duties to report in or out, get instructions, or deliver goods and vehicles; or</li><li>(c) through which the employee may or must pass to reach a place of work.</li></ul>
<b>Prescription medicine:</b>	<p>means a medicine that may only be supplied on the prescription of a medical or dental practitioner, midwife or veterinary surgeon.</p>
<b>Regulations:</b>	<p>means the Health and Safety in Employment Regulations 1995. In relation to a particular set of circumstances, they specify what must be done to comply with the Act.</p>
<b>Safety data sheets</b>	<p>Means a document that describes the properties and uses of a substance, e.g. identity, chemical and physical properties, health hazard information, precautions for use, and safe handling information. These were previously known as <b>Material Safety Sheets</b>.</p>

- Significant hazard:** (from section 2 of the Act):  
Means a hazard that is an actual or potential cause or source of:
- (a) serious harm; or
  - (b) harm (being harm that is more than trivial) the severity of whose effects on any person depend (entirely or among other things) on the extent or frequency of the person's exposure to the hazard; or
- harm that does not usually occur, or usually is not easily detectable, until a significant time after exposure to the hazard.
- Serious harm:** subject to section 2(4) of the Act, means death, or harm of a kind or description declared by the Governor-General by Order in Council to be serious for the purposes of the Act; and "seriously harmed" has a corresponding meaning. Section 2(4) refers to the First Schedule of the Act, which describes serious harm.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HEALTH AND SAFETY  
VISIT [WWW.DOL.GOVT.NZ](http://WWW.DOL.GOVT.NZ)



Department of Labour  
TE TARI MAHI



[newzealand.govt.nz](http://newzealand.govt.nz)