First aid needs assessment

Make sure you’ve got the right equipment and training in your workplace
Are you sure you’ve got the right first aid equipment and training in your workplace? This first aid needs review will help you assess your first aid provision and help you get it right.

Please tick the most appropriate answer to each question. The colour coding will help you identify any areas of concern:

If you have any areas you’d like to discuss further, you can speak to a St John Ambulance training advisor on 0844 770 4800. For advice on equipment and supplies, call 020 7278 7888.

### Legislation

**Has an assessment to identify significant risks been made in your workplace?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No 
- C – Don’t Know

**Are you currently implementing the findings of the assessment?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No 
- C – Don’t Know

**When has an assessment of your first aid needs been carried out in your workplace?**

- A – 0 – 24 months
- B – 2 – 5 Years
- C – Over 5 Years
- D – Don’t Know

### Points for consideration

It’s an employer’s duty of care to ensure employees and visitors to your workplace are considered under the Health and Safety (First Aid) at Work Act 1981. You are required by law to make an assessment of significant risk in your workplace and identify the risk of injury and ill health. The size and risks identified in your assessment will indicate how many first aiders you need and the appropriate level of training they require.

A first aid assessment every 12 months, or when a major change to staff or your workplace takes place, is an essential part of your duty of care for employees in the workplace. It’s important that you regularly review your first aid needs, number of trained first aiders, first aid equipment and where both are sited in your workplace. This is an integral part of your main risk assessment.

### Risks to the health and wellbeing of your employees

**Are there any specific risks related to your workplace or work activities? eg, Hazardous substances, working at heights, dangerous machinery….**

- A – Yes 
- B – No

**What is the frequency of accidents and ill health in your workplace?**

- A – Low 
- B – Medium
- C – High

**Are particular types of accident common to your workplace?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No 
- C – Don’t Know

**Are there inexperienced workers at your workplace?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No

**Do you have employees with disabilities or special health problems?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No

**Do you have employees who may have difficulty understanding your first aid arrangements, including those with language difficulties or visual impairment?**

- A – Yes 
- B – No

**Are there times when your first aider(s) may be absent? eg, during staff holidays, or regularly travelling during working hours.**

- A – Yes 
- B – No
Points for consideration
Specialist training for staff working in areas of high risk is needed to make them aware of the dangers and prepare them with the right first aid knowledge and equipment in the event of an accident.

You can work out your rating for accidents and ill health by reviewing previous reported accidents, illnesses and near misses. This would form part of your risk assessment and contribute to your final calculation on the number of first aid trained staff you need.

A particular type of accident or illness common to your workplace indicates an area of concern which needs addressing as a matter of urgency, especially if the accidents regularly occur in the same place. Specialist training may be required to reduce or eradicate the risk at the root of the problem.

The First aid at work course covers a range of major illnesses such as diabetes, epilepsy and asthma but additional training for the care of people who suffer anaphylactic (severe allergic) reactions and other special health problems should be considered.

You should also consider whether you have the appropriate procedures, equipment and training in place for the safe evacuation of employees with disabilities during an emergency.

Suitable provision must be made to enable all employees to understand who their qualified first aider is and where the necessary first aid equipment and supplies are stored.

It’s an employer’s duty of care to ensure all employees are considered at all times. A recent St John Ambulance survey revealed that 79% of businesses have times when a first aider isn’t available. You must ensure absences and annual leave is considered and your workplace maintains its full quota of trained first aiders at all working times throughout the year.

Risks affecting your workplace

Do you occupy more than one building on a single site or do you have several floors in a single building?
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐

Is there shift work, out of hours working or overtime working?
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐

Do any of your workforce regularly work alone? eg, security guard, driver
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐

How many members of the public visit your site per week? eg, footfall in shops, hotels, restaurants and sports arenas
A – Approx 0 – 99  ☐  B – Approx 100 – 500  ☐  C – More Than 500  ☐

Are there any parts of your workplace with different levels of risk? eg, Warehouse with office, university with laboratories
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐

Do you have the appropriate first aid equipment on every floor level or building at your workplace?
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐  C – Don’t Know  ☐

Is the location of your workplace remote from emergency medical services?
A – Yes  ☐  B – No  ☐

Points for consideration
Each building must be considered as a separate site and requires its own risk assessment to determine your appropriate requirements for equipment and training. You should also consider the time it would take for a first aider to reach any casualty in an emergency, especially where the workplace occupies several floors.
You are legally required to make first aid available to all employees while the workplace is in use. First aid requirements may change depending on the numbers of people working shifts or overtime.

First aid facilities should be made available to employees working alone and you may require a specific risk assessment to determine whether training is also needed.

If you have employees working at a site managed by another organisation, you should be aware of the risk assessment for that site to check it includes your own employees working there.

Although you have no legal obligation to do so, the Health and Safety Executive strongly recommends that members of the public visiting your workplace are included in your risk assessment and first aid provision.

Areas of higher risk require more first aiders per number of staff. You should site the first aiders and first aid equipment as near to areas of risk as possible. It’s important to note that a workplace may have differing levels of risk on the same site, such as a combined office and warehouse.

All employers are legally required to provide appropriate first aid equipment to all employees while the workplace is in use. First aid kits should be readily available and contents maintained to ensure expiry dates have not been passed and used items are replaced. You need to consider how quickly first aid equipment can be reached and distribute kits and equipment evenly throughout the building.

You should consider the time it can take for an ambulance to reach a casualty. For each minute that passes after the heart stops, the chance of survival decreases by 10%. An automated external defibrillator (AED) is easy to use and can restart the heart. Training in the use of auto-injectors for treatment of severe allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock) and administering medical gases could be vital to the safety of your employees. These are time-critical procedures that can be the difference between life and death.

The next steps

Your answers will give you a summary of your current level of first aid compliance

- Mostly green answers indicates you are generally meeting requirements
- Mostly amber answers indicates there are still areas which may need addressing
- Mostly red answers indicates immediate action is needed

Need to know more?

St John Ambulance is the nation’s leading first aid organisation, delivering life saving first aid in times of emergency and helping to ensure that workplaces and public spaces have appropriate first aid provision. We train employees from over 200,000 organisations at our training centres throughout the country and on their premises.

Our website is designed specifically to help you meet your first aid and health and safety requirements with interactive guides and information. You can determine the appropriate training and equipment and book and pay online.

Our advisors are always happy to help you ensure you have the appropriate level of training and equipment in place. If you wish to discuss your training and equipment needs, call us on the numbers below.

To speak with an advisor about **training**, call **0844 770 4800**

To speak with an advisor about **equipment and supplies**, call **020 7278 7888**

Visit our website at [sja.org.uk](http://sja.org.uk)