
	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Frequently Asked Question</h1>		
Ref: FAQ 007:04	RE: Occupational First Aid - First Aid at Work		
Issue date:	July 2015	Revised Date:	August 2020
Author(s):	National Health & Safety Function – Information & Advisory Team		
Note:	<i>This information/advice has been issued in response to frequently asked questions around a specific topic and may not cover all issues arising, should you require more specific advice please contact the Health & Safety Help Desk. The management of any occupational safety and health issue(s) remains the responsibility of local management.</i>		

Do I need a qualified first aider in my workplace?

This decision will be based on risk assessment however in many of our work locations, nurses and doctors may be available to provide assistance. It still may be necessary to appoint qualified first aiders. The risk assessment should be based on the:

- Numbers employed
- Nature of the work undertaken
- Degree of hazardous activities
- Level of accidents arising
- Size and location of the workplace
- Distribution of the employees
- Shift working
- Availability of an occupational health service in the workplace
- Distance and duration from external medical services etc.

How many first aiders should be present in a workplace?

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) recommend the following based on the risk assessment conclusion:

Maximum no. of Employees at any one time	No. of Occupational First Aiders
Up to 99	1, if safety statement risk assessment shows it necessary
100-399	1
400-699	2
more than 700	1 extra for every 300 employees or part thereof.

What is the requirement for additional first aiders when the designated occupational first aider is absent from the place of work?

If the occupational first aider is absent in temporary or exceptional circumstances, the employer may designate a person, to take charge of an injured or ill person until medical assistance is obtained. Such person's functions, if they have not received training in basic lifesaving skills, would, primarily be to seek appropriate assistance as soon as possible and to ensure that nothing further is allowed to occur which would exacerbate the problems of the injured person.

Foreseeable absences such as planned annual leave are not considered "temporary or exceptional circumstances". In these situations the employer must ensure that there are an adequate number of trained occupational first aiders to cover the foreseeable absences or leave, if the need for an occupational first aider in the workplace has been identified.

How is a first aider contacted?

You must ensure that your emergency plan includes information on how to contact the first aider when required; this could include a telephone/mobile phone/ pager/ radio. This information should be clearly displayed in the workplace.

How are the emergency services contacted?

Your emergency plan must include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the local emergency services. They must be clearly displayed in the workplace along with suitable instruction to clarify who makes contact with the emergency services.

NOTE: Those persons with designated roles in the emergency plans/procedures must receive appropriate training.

Is there a requirement to have a first aid room at my workplace?

Premises must have one or more first aid rooms if the risk assessment shows that it is necessary and based on the following criteria:

- Premises size
- Type of activity being carried out
- Frequency of accidents arising
- Existence of special hazards: refer to the Guide to the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 Chapter 2 of Part 7: First-Aid for more details
- Distance from nearest appropriate medical facility

Can a first aider administer painkillers/headache tablets?

First aid does not cover the administration of drugs or medications and should not be kept in the workplace first aid box or kit. In certain circumstances first aiders can assist in the administration of certain medication for certain conditions but this will be clearly identified during the training programme.

What is the requirement for employees working away from the employer's premises e.g. home working?

Where employees regularly work away from the employer's premises (e.g. working from home) and there are no special hazards, no first-aid equipment needs be provided by the employer.

What should be in a first aid box or travel kit?

Table 1, below identifies the recommended contents of first aid boxes and travel kits.

Table 1:

Materials	First Aid Travel Kit Contents	First Aid Box Contents		
		1-10 persons	11-25 persons	26-50 persons*1
Adhesive Plasters	20	20	20	40
Sterile Eye Pads (No. 16) (bandage attached)	2	2	2	4
Individually Wrapped Triangular Bandages	2	2	6	6
Safety Pins	6	6	6	6
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Medium (No. 8) (10 x 8cm's)	1	2	2	4
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Large (No. 9) (13 x 9cm's)	1	2	6	8
Individually Wrapped Sterile Unmedicated Wound Dressings Extra Large (No. 3) (28 x 17.5cm's)	1	2	3	4
Individually Wrapped Disinfectant Wipes	10	10	20	40
Paramedic Shears	1	1	1	1
Examination Gloves Pairs	3	5	10	10
Sterile water where there is no clear running water*2	2x20mls	1x500mls	2x500mls	2x500mls
Pocket Face Mask	1	1	1	1
Water Based Burns Dressing Small (10x10cm's)*3	1	1	1	1
Water Based Burns Dressing Large*3	1	1	1	1
Crepe Bandage (7cm)	1	1	2	3

Notes:

*1: Where more than 50 persons are employed, pro-rata provisions should be made.

*2: Where mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, sterile water or sterile normal saline (0.9%) in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Each container should hold at least 20ml and should be discarded once the seal is broken. Eye bath/eye cups/refillable containers should not be used for eye irrigation due to risk of cross infection. The container should be CE marked.

*3: Where mains tap water is not readily available for cooling burnt area(s).

What is an AED?

A **defibrillator** is a device that delivers an electric shock to the heart muscle through the chest wall in order to restore a normal heart rate.

An **automatic external defibrillator** (AED) is a portable defibrillator designed to be automated such that it can be used by persons without substantial medical training who are responding to a cardiac emergency.

Are employers required to have an AED?

No, but it would be good practice to have one. The provision of such equipment on premises should be based on risk assessment.

Are occupational first aiders trained in the use of Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)?

Yes, AED is part of the Cardiac First Response (CFR) PHECC FAR standard and first aiders are trained in its use.

What additional training is required for the First Aider?

The PHECC FAR training course should not be less than 18 contact hours including assessment but excluding breaks, averaging 6 hours instruction per day **(3 day training)**.

For the PHECC FAR award, the refresher course is not less than 12 hours including assessment but excluding breaks, averaging 6 hours instruction per day **(2 day training)**.

How long is certification valid for?

Occupational first aid certification is valid for **2 years** after which refresher training is required.

Are occupational first aid certificates from other countries valid in Ireland?

No, there are no mutual recognition agreements between Ireland and other countries for occupational first aid. Therefore occupational first aid certificates obtained in other countries are not transferable and are not valid in Ireland. In order to be a valid occupational first aider in Ireland, you must complete the training by an approved training provider in Ireland.

Additional Information:

When an accident occurs and first aid is required it is important that a clear procedure is in place and that all employees are made aware of same.

The names of occupational first aider must be recorded in the Safety Statement along with the location of the first aid rooms, equipment and facilities where applicable.

Written records of the dates of all first aid training, including refresher training should be kept at the workplace and be made available on request to the Health and Safety Authority Inspector.

Records of all cases treated by the first aider should be kept in a suitable secure place, respecting their confidential nature and be made available on request to the Health and Safety Authority Inspector. Details to be recorded are:

- Name of injured person
- Type of injury
- Treatment given
- Name of occupational first aider
- Date

Legislation: The Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 2 of part 7: First-Aid.