

SECTION 18 EMERGENCIES

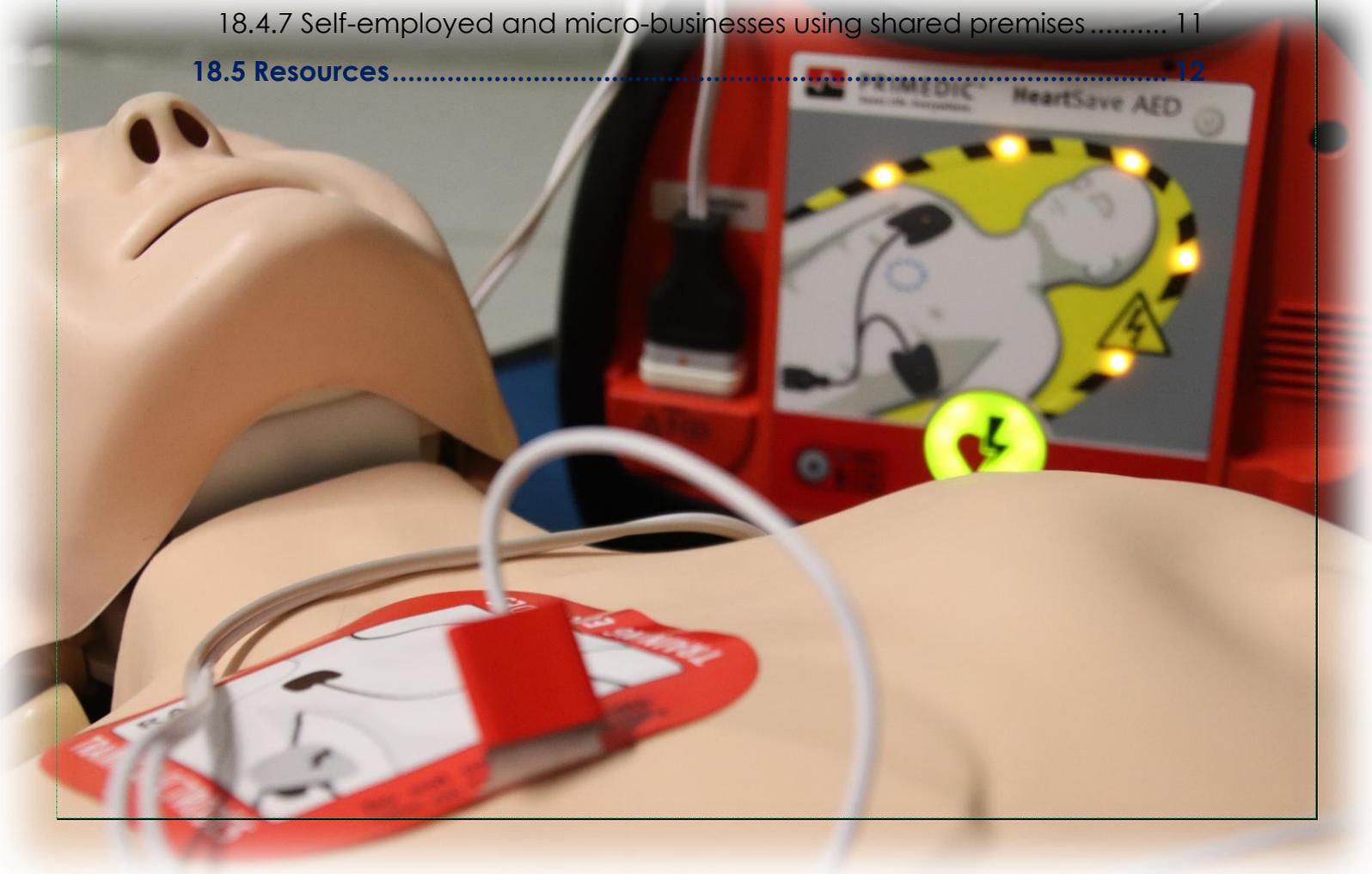


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18.2 Introduction

There is potential for various emergencies to occur in the workplace which can include:

- Fire or explosion
- Medical emergency e.g. heart attack
- Bomb threats
- Natural disaster e.g. flood
- Personal threat e.g. violent person

Under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, workplaces should have plans to respond to emergencies and health and safety incidents. These plans should be in proportion to the potential severity and extent of the incident, and the level of risk posed by the event activities.

Quick, effective action may help the situation a lot and reduce the consequences. In emergencies people are more likely to respond reliably if they:

- are well trained and competent
- take part in regular and realistic practice
- have clearly agreed, recorded and rehearsed plans, actions and responsibilities

18.3 Emergency Procedures

The following tips will help

- Consider what might happen and how the alarm will be raised. Don't forget night and shift working, weekends and times when the premises are closed, such as holidays
- Plan the actions you are going to take, including how to call the emergency services
- Decide where to go to reach a place of safety or to get rescue equipment
- Have clear emergency roles and responsibilities (such as a first aider and fire warden)
- You must provide suitable and sufficient forms of emergency lighting
- You must make sure there are enough emergency exits for everyone to escape quickly, and keep emergency doors and escape routes unobstructed and clearly marked
- Nominate competent people to take control

- All staff must be trained in the emergency procedures. Take special care with children, people with disabilities and neurodiverse people – they may not react the same way!
- After the incident, if serious danger remains, do not resume work
- Check if you need a first aider in the workplace. And if you do, ensure their training is up to date

Legally, every work place is required to have a fire warden(s) and a first aid officer(s) and ensure that all workers are trained in emergency procedures.

This includes making everyone aware of:

- The location of emergency exits
- Firefighting equipment
- First aid kits
- Assembly areas

Emergency contact numbers, such as the following, should also be displayed in a prominent place:

- Police
- Ambulance
- Fire Brigade
- Local Hospital

Emergency equipment needs to be inspected and maintained by specialist consultants in accordance with regulations e.g.

- Fire extinguishers and hose reels
- Fire and smoke alarms
- Emergency signage and lighting

Emergency evacuation drills should occur at least twice in a calendar year.

18.3.1 Example Emergency Procedures

Salons are required to provide a written emergency plan with clear emergency procedures and these must be accessible to all workers. The following are examples of emergency situations that may occur.

Fires

Preventing fires is the first and best course of action. Workers are required to:

- Report faulty electrical switches or exposed wiring.
- Avoid using faulty electrical appliances.
- Ensure all electrical equipment on premises is tested and tagged in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Know where the fire exits and firefighting equipment are located.
- Know the evacuation assembly points and listen to the fire wardens for instructions.
- If safe to do so, close all doors and windows and extinguish the fire.

Salons may require three types of extinguishers for:

- electrical fires
- normal fires
- alcohol based fires.

If you are unsure contact your fire extinguisher provider for further advice.

Personal Threat

In the event of a personal threat (violent or threatening person), workers are required to:

- Note and report the person to a manager, if safe to do so
- If on your own, use duress alarm
- If confronted, obey instructions of the offender, if safe to do so
- Try to remain calm and do not respond aggressively
- Observe personal characteristics of the offender
- Call the police on '999'
- Record the information for the police
- If possible, and you are able to do so, secure the door from the inside if the offender is outside, and wait for the police

Bomb Threat

In the event of a bomb threat workers are required to:

- Report details to manager and warden
- Call the police on '999'
- Evacuate to the designated emergency assembly point
- Remain at assembly point to ensure everyone is accounted for
- Assist police with details of the bomb threat

Burglary

In the event of a burglary workers are required to:

- Not touch anything
- Inform the relevant manager and call the police on '999'
- Leave the area if concerned

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency, workers are required to:

- Notify a first aid officer
- Call an ambulance on '999' if required
- Assist with first aid procedures
- Do not attempt to move the person unless they are in immediate danger

18.4 First Aid

18.4.1 Introduction

All employers, no matter what size of business or what kind of activities they carry out, have a duty to provide first aid care to look after their workers if they are taken ill or have an accident in the workplace.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 (as amended in 2024) says that employers need to have adequate and appropriate facilities, people and equipment in place to give immediate and effective assistance if somebody is taken ill or is injured at work. You also have a duty to tell your workers about the first aid arrangements in place in their workplace.

What is considered 'adequate and appropriate' will depend on each individual workplace. So what may be adequate and appropriate in one salon, may not be so in another.

18.4.2 First aid needs assessment

Employers should carry out an assessment of first-aid needs to determine what to provide. And though the Regulations do not place a legal duty on employers to provide first aid provision for non-employees, such as your customers, HSE highly recommends taking the needs of those non-employees into account.

By carrying out a first aid needs assessment, you will look at all factors that might influence the nature of incident you may face, the people and available to help and the help available from outside sources such as emergency services.

Factors to consider include:

- nature of work, hazards, and risks
- accident and illness history of the organisation
- the people in your organisation (e.g., age profile, known vulnerabilities and special medical needs)
- size of your organisation
- shift / working patterns
- annual leave or absence of first aiders or appointed persons
- the needs of people who travel for work

- other people who may work on your site, in particular contractors or if you work in a shared space
- provision for non-employees
- time taken for emergency help to be summoned and response times of emergency services

18.4.3 How many First Aiders do we need?

How many first aiders you need in your workplace will depend on the outcomes of your needs assessment.

There are no set rules for the number or type of first aiders (yes, there are different types!), it all depends on your specific circumstances and the availability of those people in your workplace who are designated first aiders.

HSE guidance gives suggested numbers of first-aid personnel who should be available at all times that people are at work. This is guidance only, and you may need more than is suggested in this table.

If your needs assessment shows that first aiders are not needed in your workplace, you must as a minimum have an Appointed Person. The role of the Appointed Person is to take charge of first aid arrangements, ensures facilities and equipment are available and calls emergency services when required (though of course, anyone can and should call the emergency services when needed – don't put off calling for an ambulance just because the Appointed Person is in the loo!).

If you do need first aiders, you will need to consider whether you need them to be Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) trained or fully First Aid at Work (FAW) trained. Typically, for lower hazard workplaces with fewer than 50 people you will need at least 1 EFAW trained person, and for higher hazard workplaces with 50+ people you will need 1 or more FAW trained people.

18.4.4 What training should our First Aiders have?

A four-layer framework for first aid training has been around for many years. This is an optional framework, but it is used commonly across the vast majority of businesses in the UK.

Appointed Person (AP)

1/2 day training course, suitable for appointed people in lower risk workplaces.

This could also be someone who has done the course below, but may be unable to get down on the ground themselves in order to give life-saving first aid

Training certificates are valid for 3 years, and once the certificate expires the person is no longer permitted to be an Appointed Person

Emergency First Aid At Work (EFAW)

One day training course, suitable for first aiders in lower risk workplaces.

Training courses must meet the requirements set out in Appendix 6 of L74 First Aid at Work guidance. Training certificates are valid for 3 years, and once the certificate expires the person is no longer permitted to be a first aider without repeating the course in full.

First Aid at Work (FAW)

Three-day training course, suitable for first aiders in higher risk, larger workplaces.

Training courses must meet the requirements set out in Appendix 5 of L74 First Aid at Work guidance.

Training certificates are valid for 3 years, and once the certificate expires the person is no longer permitted to be a first aider without either completing a two day requalifying course or repeating the course in full.

Additional training

This may be done by a specialist first aid training provider who has developed a bespoke training programme to meet the organisations needs or be delivered in-house by somebody who is competent to deliver and assess the effectiveness of the training.

Many first aid training providers offer Ofqual regulated qualifications that meet the requirements set out in L74.

18.4.5 Selecting a first aid training provider

If your first aid needs assessment has indicated you need to have trained first aid personnel, then you need to find a suitable, competent training provider.

To do so, you have different options.

Due Diligence

As an employer, you need to do your 'due diligence'. This means that you must gather information from the training provider, to make sure that the training they will be providing falls under The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 (as amended in 2024), and that the trainers used have the full training required to fulfil their role, and are competent.

Questions to ask are:

- ✓ the qualifications expected of trainers and assessors
- ✓ monitoring and quality assurance systems
- ✓ teaching and standards of first-aid practice;
- ✓ syllabus content
- ✓ certification

You will find a Due Diligence Checklist in SECTION 20 – FORMS AND TEMPLATES

Nationally regulated qualifications

Nationally regulated qualifications are delivered by training centres recognised by an 'awarding organisation' (AO).

These AOs are regulated by the national qualification regulators (Ofqual, SQA or Qualification Wales)* against standards for the design, delivery and award of qualifications.

By choosing one of these providers, the Awarding Organisations have done their due diligence, and have strict criteria in place for those who run their courses.

[Pochat Training is one such organisation](#), that runs nationally accredited qualifications via several Awarding Organisations (and thus meets the standards for each AO used).

Voluntary Aid Societies

First-aid training is also available from the Voluntary Aid Societies (St John Ambulance, British Red Cross and St Andrew's First Aid).

Their first aid courses are not nationally accredited – they set their own standards.

In-house training

Should an employer decide to provide first-aid training in-house they will need to make sure that the first-aid training is fit for purpose by ensuring:

- ✓ the content of any first-aid training is appropriate and that elements of the syllabus in common with FAW or EFAW, are delivered in accordance with currently accepted standards for first-aid practice
- ✓ in-house individuals acting as trainers/assessors have the necessary skills, qualifications and competencies expected of those working for an external training provider
- ✓ a system of quality assurance is in place ensuring that the competence of trainers/assessors is regularly reviewed by competent 'verifiers'. These systems should be reviewed on an annual basis by a competent person independent of those directly involved in the delivery/assessment of this training
- ✓ class sizes are appropriate and take account of the needs and capabilities of those undertaking any training
- ✓ equipment provided is suitable and sufficient
- ✓ training consists of sufficient, minimum contact training time

18.4.6 What First Aid Facilities do we need to provide?

Again, the answer to this question will be determined by your first aid needs assessment.

For low hazard workplaces like offices, an off-the-shelf first aid kit may be suitable.

For higher hazard workplaces, you will need to determine what might be needed in an emergency depending on what might go wrong, what treatments are likely to be needed and how many people you are may need to treat. Additions to your basic first aid kit might include things like foil blankets, haemostatic dressings, tourniquets, sterile solution, and so on.

All workplaces must have at least one basic first aid kit, more if your needs assessment shows they are needed.

Your first aid kits should be suitably marked and easily accessible. They should be in places where accidents are most likely to occur, and protected from dust, damp, and other potentially damaging environments, and preferably close to hand washing facilities.

Where your needs assessment shows it is necessary, you will need to provide a dedicated First Aid Room. These are typically needed in high hazard industries such as the chemical industry, construction sites or in large workplaces. Where needed, your first aid room should contain all the essential facilities and equipment, be easily accessible by stretchers, be clearly signposted and identifiable, and have a designated person responsible for looking after the room.

18.4.7 Self-employed and micro-businesses using shared premises

If you are self-employed and there is only you in your business, you still need to make sure you have a first aid kit so that you can provide first aid to yourself while at work. This might be as simple as buying a standard first aid kit, making sure you keep it fully stocked and accessible, and a working mobile phone so that you can call to summon help in an emergency.

If you travel around for your work, for example a mobile hairdresser, you may need to carry a first aid kit in the vehicle – clearly labelled, visible and easy to get to in an emergency.

If you are working in shared premises, like a co-working space, then it might be sensible to make joint arrangements for first aid provision with others in the same space.

One business may take the lead in making sure there is adequate first aid provision for everyone who uses the premises, however you remain legally responsible in ensuring those arrangements are in place. In other words, if you're working in a co-working space, don't assume you'll be ok – check out what arrangements there are for first aid and if there aren't any you need to make your own.

18.5 Resources

For more information, see

[Sample: Accident Book](#) (HSE)

[Accident book](#) (HSE Publications)

[Near-miss book](#) (HSE Publications)

[INDG214 First aid at work - your questions answered](#) (HSE)

[GEIS3 Selecting a first aid training provider - A guide for employers](#) (HSE)

[L74 First aid at work: The Health and Safety \(First-Aid\) Regulations 1981. Guidance on Regulations](#) (HSE)

