



A Guide to the Workplace Safety and Health (First-Aid) Regulations

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A Guide to the Workplace Safety and Health (First-Aid) Regulations

What is in this section of the Guide?

This section of the Guide provides a brief explanation of the main features in the Workplace Safety and Health (First-Aid) Regulations to assist you in complying with the Regulations.

Why is there a need for First-Aid Regulations?

The life of an injured employee may depend on proper first-aid given within the first few minutes of an accident. Besides saving lives, first-aid treatment is important in preventing further injury and pain. The requirement for first-aid treatment in the workplace is not new and was defined in Section 58 of the Factories Act as well as the Factories (First-Aid) Regulations 1995.

In the new framework for occupational safety and health in Singapore, the Workplace Safety and Health Act replaces the Factories Act with effect from 1 March 2006. This Workplace Safety and Health (First-Aid) Regulations is one of the subsidiary legislations under the new Act.

Where will the Workplace Safety and Health (First-Aid) Regulations apply?

The Regulations will apply in the following workplaces.

1. Any premises which is a factory.
2. Any premises within an airport where any checking, inspecting, cleaning, loading, unloading or refueling of

- an aircraft is carried out by persons other than by the crew of the aircraft.
3. Any ship in a harbour where any of the following is carried out:
 - a. scaling, scurfing or cleaning of boilers, including combustion chambers and smoke boxes, in the ship;
 - b. cleaning of any tank, bilges or holds in the ship;
 - c. construction, re-construction, repair, fitting, furnishing or breaking up.
 4. Any laboratory or other premises where the testing, examination or analysis of any article is carried out.

What are the responsibilities of the employer or occupier of the workplace?

If you are an employer or occupier of the workplace, you are responsible for the following:

- provision and maintenance of first-aid box,
- appointment and training of first-aiders,
- provision and maintenance of first-aid room,
- provision of suitable facility for quick drenching of body or flushing of eyes where toxic or corrosive substances are used.

What factors do I have to consider in carrying out my responsibilities as an employer or occupier?

When deciding on the number of equipment, first-aiders, and facilities for your workplace, you should consider the following factors:

- type of industry, the nature and specific hazards of the work,
- number of employees,

- number of work shifts,
- physical layout of the workplace,
- known occurrences of accidents or illnesses,
- location of the workplace in relation to the nearest medical clinic or hospital,
- work during holidays.
- first-aiders on sick leave.

The Safety Committee in the workplace should periodically review the first-aid facilities to ensure that these facilities are adequate.

Provision And Maintenance Of First-aid Box

What should be provided in the first-aid box and how should it be maintained?

Contents of First-Aid Box

The required minimum contents of first-aid boxes are listed in Annex A.

First-aid boxes should not contain materials other than those required for first-aid treatment.

It is essential that first-aid boxes be checked frequently to make sure they are fully equipped and all items are usable. Used or expired items should be replaced as soon as possible.

Number of First-Aid Boxes

The number of first-aid boxes required depends on the physical layout of the premises and the number of employees.

There should be at least one first-aid box on each floor of the premises. The total number of first-aid boxes required should be sufficient for use by all employees.

Ratio Of Employees To First-Aid Boxes

No. of employees	No. and type of first-aid boxes
Less than 25 employees	at least one Box A
every 50 employees	at least one Box B
every 100 employees	at least one Box C

Note: One box B is equivalent to two Box A.
One Box C is equivalent to two Box B.

Accessibility of First-Aid Boxes

The first-aid box should be labeled clearly and placed in an unmistakably identified, well-illuminated and easily accessible location. The first-aid box must be made of sturdy material and be portable so that it can be quickly taken to the site of an accident.

Where the factory covers a large area, an adequate number of first-aid boxes should be provided and well distributed throughout the premises. Employees should be informed of the location of all the first-aid boxes.

Provision And Maintenance Of First-Aid Room

What should be provided in a first-aid room and how should it be maintained?

A first-aid room is to be provided where there are more than 500 employees.

Design of First-Aid Room

The room should be large enough to hold a couch, and still have space for people to move about. It should be well lit and ventilated and have provision for emergency lighting.

It should also be clearly identified as a first-aid room by means of a sign.

Facilities in First-Aid Room

The items that should be provided in a first-aid room are listed in Annex B.

Location of First-Aid Room

When choosing a site for a first-aid room, bear in mind the following factors:

- proximity to toilets,
- proximity to lifts and main passageways which are wide enough to allow a stretcher, wheelchair or carrying chair through,

- accessibility to work area,
- accessibility to car park, so as to facilitate transfer of injured persons to an ambulance.

Working With Toxic Or Corrosive Substances

What first-aid facilities are required if toxic or corrosive substances are being used?

If the workplace has exposure to toxic or corrosive substances, the Commissioner of Workplace Safety and Health may require the provision of suitable facilities for emergency treatment, such as emergency showers for quick drenching and eye wash for flushing the eyes. These facilities for emergency use should be located within the work area and be properly maintained.

Special Instructions

Some chemicals handled in the factory may not be commonly used. Hence, instructions on the handling of employees injured by such chemicals may need to be written down in Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for easy reference in the event of an accident. If a chemical has an antidote eg amyl nitrite for cyanide poisoning, the antidote should be available. Instructions on the administration of the antidote should be clearly written down.

Copies of the SDS should be located near the first-aid boxes so that they can be referred to quickly and easily.

Appointment Of First-Aiders

Number to Be Appointed

Ratio Of First-Aiders To The Number Of Employees

Type of workplace	No. of employees	No. of first-aiders
Quarries, construction sites, shipyards, petroleum refineries, woodworking factories	26 – 100	one
	More than 100	one for every 100 persons employed or less
All other factories and workplaces covered under the Regulations	26 – 150	one
	More than 150	one for every 150 persons employed or less

Shift Work

If there is a shift work schedule, there must be a sufficient number of first-aiders corresponding to the number of employees working on that shift to provide adequate coverage for each shift.

Availability of First-Aiders

The names and where the first-aiders normally work must be displayed on a notice in a prominent location in the workplace.

What are the responsibilities of the first-aider?

The first-aider has 3 main responsibilities.

1. Management of Casualty

The first-aider should be aware of the specific hazards (eg, hazardous substances, dangerous goods, machinery or equipment) in the workplace and be able to render first-aid for these specific hazards.

In the management of an injured employee, the first-aider should take the following steps.

- Assess the situation without endangering his own life.
- Identify the injuries.
- Give immediate first-aid treatment, keeping in mind that a casualty may have more than one injury and that some casualties will require more urgent attention than others.
- Arrange without delay for the injured employee(s) to be sent to a doctor, hospital or home, according to the seriousness of his condition.
- Provide information to an attending doctor on the nature of the incident and the first-aid treatment rendered.

The first-aider's responsibility ends when the casualty is handed over to the care of a doctor, nurse or other appropriate person.

2. Maintenance of Treatment Record

The first-aider must record the treatment given and keep the record in a designated place.

3. Maintenance of First-Aid Facilities

The first-aid er is responsible for maintaining the first-aid box. He should ensure that only first-aid equipment is kept inside the box. The first-aid er should periodically check the first-aid box to ensure that the contents of the box are regularly replenished.

In workplaces with Occupational Health Nurses, the supervision of first-aid ers and the responsibility for the maintenance of first-aid facilities may be taken over by the nurse.

How are employees informed of the availability of first-aid?

Employees should be informed of the type and location of the first-aid facilities and the procedures to be followed when first-aid is required.

This should take place as part of the initial training or induction of the employee and when there is a significant change in personnel, workplace, or nature or type of duties performed. All employees should also be advised and made aware of the first-aid requirements of the specific hazards in the workplace.

Training of First-Aiders

What are the qualities and training required for a person selected to be a first-aid-er?

Selection for Training

An employer or occupier should select suitable persons for first-aid training. Persons who are suitable are those who:

- are mature and responsible,
- can remain calm in an emergency,
- can leave their work immediately to respond to an emergency,
- are physically fit.

The employer or occupier should maintain a written record of all the first-aiders, and record the dates they obtained their first-aid certificates and the dates on which they received retraining.

Training Providers

A person is considered a trained first-aid-er if he successfully completes a first-aid course approved by the Ministry of Manpower. The list of training providers can be found at <http://www.mom.gov.sg/oshd>, under "Occupational First-Aid Courses".

Validity of Certificates

First-aid certificates are valid for 3 years only. Thereafter, the first-aider has to undergo a refresher course and be issued with a new certificate.

Transitional Period

What is the status of persons appointed or documents obtained before 1 March 2006 when the Workplace Safety and Health Act comes into force?

Any persons appointed, and any documents, certificates or permits issued or approved under the Factories Act, will continue to be valid under the Workplace Safety and Health Act during the transition between the two pieces of legislation until the Act is fully implemented. Examples of such persons or documents include safety officers, safety auditors, authorized boiler inspectors, approved persons, designated factory doctors, safety committees, certificates of factory registration, and inspection reports. Subsidiary legislation made under the Factories Act will also remain in force.

Further Information

Copies of the Workplace Safety and Health Act and its subsidiary legislation can be purchased from:

SNP Corporation (Legal) Ltd
Legal Publications Retail Outlet
1 Kim Seng Promenade #18-01/06
Great World City East Tower
Singapore 237994
Tel: +65 68269691
Website: <http://www.snpcorp.com/webshop>

For more information, please contact us at:

Email : mom_oshd@mom.gov.sg
Telephone : +65 64385122
Fax : +65 63171261

Mailing Address : Occupational Safety and Health Division
Ministry of Manpower
18 Havelock Road #03-02
Singapore 059764

Web-site : <http://www.mom.gov.sg/oshd>

You can also obtain the latest occupational safety and health information by subscribing to the OSH Alerts. Details can be found in the web-site address provided above.

Please call 63171111 to report any unsafe workplaces or practices.

Annex A

Minimum Contents Of First-Aid Boxes

S/no	Contents	Box A (for every 25 persons employed or less)	Box B (for every 50 persons employed or less)	Box C (for every 100 persons employed or less)
1.	Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings	20	40	40
2.	Crepe bandage 5 cm	1	2	4
3.	Crepe bandage 10 cm	1	3	6
4.	Absorbent gauze (packets of ten pieces)	5	10	15
5.	Hypoallergenic tape	1	1	2
6.	Triangular bandages	4	4	6
7.	Scissors	1	1	1
8.	Safety pins	4	4	6
9.	Disposable gloves (pairs)	2	2	4

S/no	Contents	Box A (for every 25 persons employed or less)	Box B (for every 50 persons employed or less)	Box C (for every 100 persons employed or less)
10.	Eye shield	2	4	6
11.	Eye pad	2	4	6
12.	Resuscitation mask (one-way)	1	1	2
13.	Sterile water or saline in 100 ml disposable containers (only where tap water is not available)	1	3	3
14.	Torch light	1	1	1

Note: One Box B is equivalent to two Box A.
One Box C is equivalent to two Box B.

Annex B

Recommended Facilities For First-Aid Room

The following items should be provided in a first-aid room.

1. First-aid box
2. Sink with running potable water
3. Disposable paper towels
4. Smooth top working surfaces
5. Record keeping facilities
6. Adequate supply of sterile dressings and other materials for wound treatment
7. Stretcher(s)
8. Splints
9. Clinical thermometer
10. Couch with pillow and blanket
11. Suitable store for first-aid equipment eg stretchers, wheel chairs
12. Soap and nail brush
13. Clean garments for use by first-aiders
14. Suitable refuse container with disposable lining

In addition, a few chairs should be provided close to the first-aid room if employees have to wait for treatment.

