

First Aid Cover for Federation/WI Meetings and Events

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidelines only apply to employers and their employees therefore, as WI members are not technically 'paid employees' there is no duty of care under the first aid regulations. What Federations and WIs can do if they so wish is to follow the HSE guidelines as best practice. These can be found on the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk

The NFWI advise that the minimum standard of practice that should be adopted by Federations and WIs at their meetings is to ensure that they have an appointed person who is responsible for a small first aid kit and a charged mobile phone in case they need to dial 999.

Federations and WIs only have a duty of care to paid employees or any other paid person, such as speakers, at their meetings. If the Federation or WI is taking part in a large event such as a county show the event organisers would be responsible for supplying first aid cover.

At Federation Council Meetings, AGMs or other such large meetings where members have paid to attend, there is still no legal duty to provide first aid for non-employees, but the NFWI strongly recommends that you include all attendees in your first-aid provision. The NFWI recommends that the organiser of the Federation event contacts their local St John's Ambulance or Red Cross branch to ask for first aid cover. In some instances this cover may be provided by the venue so it is advised that you discuss first aid provision with the venue and undertake a joint risk assessment to establish what cover is needed. Please note that it is often less expensive to contact St Johns Ambulance directly than to pay the rate quoted by a venue for first aid cover, though some venues may insist that this cover is part of the 'package' for the hire of the hall.

To contact St John's Ambulance please call 08700 10 49 50 to be put in touch with your local St John Ambulance branch. They will need to know the following information:

- Date and time
- Venue/location
- Type of event
- Numbers attending/participating
- Any special requirements.

Once they have received your information they will carry out a risk assessment and quote you for the level of cover they recommend. You can also get further information from their website www.sja.org.uk.

Below are some questions and answers taken from the HSE Website which might be helpful.

Appointed persons

What is an appointed person?

When an employer's first-aid needs assessment identifies that a first-aider is not necessary, the minimum requirement is to appoint a person to take charge of first-aid arrangements. The role of this appointed person includes looking after the first-aid equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required.

First aid for the public

Do I need to make first aid provision for members of the public?

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 do not require employers to provide first aid for members of the public. However, many organisations such as schools, places of entertainment, fairgrounds and shops provide a service for others. HSE strongly recommends that employers include the public in their first-aid needs assessment and make provision for them.

Larger Events

Do the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 cover large events such as concerts?

Only in so far as employers are responsible for providing first aid for their employees. At an event such as a concert, it is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure the availability of medical, ambulance and first-aid assistance as appropriate for all those involved in an event. HSE has produced guidance, '*The event safety guide: A guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events*', which provides further details. Under the regulations, you have no legal duty to provide first aid for non-employees, but HSE strongly recommends that you include them in your first-aid provision.

What should I put in the first-aid box?

There is no mandatory list of items to put in a first-aid box. It depends on what you assess your needs to be. As a guide, where work activities involve low hazards, a minimum stock of first-aid items might be:

- a leaflet giving general guidance on first aid (e.g. HSE's leaflet: Basic advice on first aid at work)
- 20 individually wrapped sterile plasters (assorted sizes), appropriate to the type of work (you can provide hypoallergenic plasters, if necessary);
- two sterile eye pads;
- four individually wrapped triangular bandages, preferably sterile;
- six safety pins;
- two large, individually wrapped, sterile, unmedicated wound dressings;
- six medium-sized, individually wrapped, sterile, unmedicated wound dressings;
- a pair of disposable gloves (see HSE's free leaflet: Latex and you).

This is a suggested contents list only.

It is recommended that you don't keep tablets and medicines in the first-aid box.

What is a first-aider?

A first-aider is someone who has undertaken training and has a qualification that HSE approves. This means that they must hold a valid certificate of competence in either:

- first aid at work (FAW), issued by a training organisation approved by HSE; or
- emergency first aid at work (EFAW), issued by a training organisation approved by HSE or a recognised Awarding Body of Ofqual/Scottish Qualifications Authority.

HSE Suggested numbers of first-aid personnel at work.

How many employees do you have?

Low hazard	No. of Employees	
e.g. offices, shops, libraries	Less than 25	At least one appointed person
	25-50	At least one first-aider trained in EFAW
	More than 50	At least one first-aider trained in FAW for every 100 employed (or part thereof)
Higher Hazard		
e.g. light engineering and assembly work, Food processing, warehousing, extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments, construction, chemical manufacture	Less than 5	At least one appointed person
	5-50	At least one first-aider trained in EFAW or FAW depending on the type of injuries that might occur
	More than 50	At least one first aider trained in FAW for every 50 employed (or part thereof)