

First aid cover & qualifications during the coronavirus outbreak

The Health and Safety Executive have recently issued guidance for organisations on what to do regarding first aid arrangements and training during the coronavirus outbreak in the UK.

What should organisations do?

If first aid cover for your organisation is reduced because of coronavirus or you can't get the first aid training you need, there are some things that all organisations can do, so that they still comply with the law.

You should review your first aid needs assessment and decide if you can still provide the cover needed for the workers that are present and the activities that they are doing. Remember dangerous plant and work equipment as well as dangerous activities will require higher levels of first aid cover and resources.

Keep enough first aid cover

If there are fewer people coming into your workplace it may still be safe to operate with reduced first aid cover. You could also stop higher risk activities.

Share first aid cover with another business

You could share the first aiders of another business, but be sure that they have the knowledge, experience and availability to cover the first aid needs of your business.

Shared first aiders must:

- be aware of the type of injuries or illnesses that you identified in your first aid needs assessment and have the training and skills to address them
- know enough about your work environment and its first aid facilities
- be able to get to the workplace in good time if needed

You need to familiarise them with your site and first aid needs and whoever provides the temporary cover must make sure they do not adversely affect their own first aid cover.

First aid certificate extensions

If you hold a first aid certificate that expired on or after 16 March 2020 and cannot access requalification training because of coronavirus you **may** qualify for a 3-month extension. This applies to:

- Offshore Medic (OM)
- Offshore First Aid (OFA)
- First Aid at Work (FAW)
- Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW)

To qualify for the extension, you must be able to explain why you haven't been able to requalify and demonstrate what steps you have taken to access the training, if asked to do so.

Anyone with Appointed Person training, can refresh this **online** as the course is for low risk environments where assessments have identified no requirement for trained first aiders.

Interrupted first aid training

If because of coronavirus you cannot complete training for your first aid qualification within the usual timeframe, training can restart at a later date as long as:

- a full recap of training delivered before the interruption is done before moving onto undelivered modules
- the awarding body is content that you can show:
 - a full understanding of all aspects of the course content
 - the knowledge required and competencies at the end of the training