



First Aid Procedures

Health and Safety Directorate

First aid procedures

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First aid procedures

1. Purpose and scope

The NSW Department of Education is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment for all staff, students and visitors, so far as is reasonably practicable. To achieve this goal, the Department has developed a safety management system which is comprised of policies, guidelines and support tools designed to help workplaces manage work health and safety (WHS) at the local level.

The Department also provides a range of supports to assist workplace managers and staff. This includes specialist advice through the HS Directorate and WHS Consultants who provide onsite advice and assistance where required.

These procedures provide workplace managers, including principals across the Department with practical strategies for implementing first aid requirements in accordance with the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#), [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#), [SafeWork Guide to First Aid in the Workplace](#) and the [Department's Work Health and Safety Policy](#).

The provision of immediate and effective first aid to staff, students and others who have become injured or ill at the workplace or on related activities may reduce the severity of the injury or illness and promote recovery. In some cases it could mean the difference between life and death.

Scope

These procedures have been developed to provide specific guidance for all departmental workplaces including NSW public schools and state office locations. They are intended for application within departmental workplaces as well as authorised off site activities such as excursions, field trips or other relevant activities.

Support

For further information and support please contact the HS Directorate Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 or your [local WHS Consultant](#).

2. Definitions

For the purposes of these procedures:

First aid is the immediate treatment or care given to a person suffering from an injury or illness until more advanced care is provided or the person recovers.

First aid equipment includes first aid kits and other equipment used to treat injuries or illnesses.

First aid officer is a person who has been appointed as a first aid officer at a workplace and is in receipt of an allowance. A first aid officer holds a nationally accredited competency in first aid.

First aider is defined as a person who has successfully completed a national training course or an equivalent level of training that gives them competencies required to administer first aid. In low risk workplaces, first aiders are sufficiently trained if they can perform CPR and treat minor illnesses and injuries. A first aider is able to provide first aid support where required.

First aid facilities are the location or facilities for supporting first aid and include first aid rooms and first aid bays in schools or other facilities for administering first aid.

First aid plan – the workplace first aid plan details the management strategies to be applied at each workplace to ensure the provision of appropriate first aid equipment, facilities, first aid officers, first aid training and protocols relative to workplace requirements.

High risk workplace or activity means a workplace or activity where a person is exposed to hazards that could result in serious injury or illness that would require first aid. Examples include areas where hazardous machinery is used, areas where hazardous work is conducted (e.g. demolition or electrical work) or work areas in or around extreme heat or cold.

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The majority of departmental workplaces are not considered high risk, however where a workplace assessment identifies areas of high risk, for example, some workshop areas in schools, first aid arrangements must take those risks into account.

Local first aid response protocols are the documented local first aid response protocols each workplace should have **as part of their first aid plan** to ensure that staff and others have a clear understanding of actions to be taken in the event of a first aid response in their workplace. Arrangements will vary across each workplace to meet local needs in consultation with staff, however the first aid response will generally include commonly understood first aid action steps.

Low risk workplace or activity means a workplace or activity where people are not exposed to hazards that could result in serious injuries or illnesses, such as classrooms, offices or libraries. Work related injuries and illnesses requiring first aid are normally minor in nature. The majority of departmental workplaces or activities are generally low risk.

Notifiable incident means an incident defined under the Department's [Incident Reporting Procedures](#) which requires notification to the appropriate area of the Department, e.g. a serious injury or illness.

Workplace means any NSW Department of Education workplace including NSW public schools, state office locations and any other Department of Education work location.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The Secretary of the Department of Education will ensure that systems are in place for the provision of first aid in accordance with statutory and regulatory obligations.

3.2 Senior executives and workplace managers (including school principals) are required to:

- Ensure these procedures are implemented within their area of control;
- Ensure first aid plans and local first aid response protocols relevant to workplace requirements are documented, communicated and prominently displayed;
- Review the first aid plan and procedures in consultation with staff and others at regular intervals (at least annually) to assess ongoing requirements for first aid in the workplace;
- Ensure requirements regarding hazard, injury and incident reporting are implemented;
- In joint occupancy working environments, ensure that common local first aid response protocols are developed and coordinated across all areas and communicated and displayed; and
- Ensure that employees maintain current competency in first aid training requirements.

3.3 First aid officers are required to:

- Participate in the development of first aid plans and local first aid response protocols in accordance with local requirements, policy and guidelines;
- Provide initial treatment and first aid to injured or ill persons at the workplace, consistent with their level of training and competence;
- Use standard precautions for infection control during the provision of first aid and disposal of first aid waste;
- Report to a supervisor or manager if an injured or ill person will need to leave the workplace;
- Report incident or injury to the HS Directorate Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 in accordance with the Department's Incident Reporting Procedures;
- Ensure first aid documentation, including a Register of Injuries and the Record of First Aid Treatment documents are completed; and
- Arrange for regular checking of all workplace first aid kits (after each use or at least once every 12 months) and to replenish any used or out of date items.

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3.4 Staff are required to:

- Administer first aid immediately as required, commensurate with their level of training and experience;
- Know and follow local first aid protocols;
- Complete a Register of Injuries form and Record of First Aid Treatment document after they have administered first aid to a student(s) or staff member(s); and
- Report any hazard to their manager/supervisor in accordance with workplace protocols.

3.5 Students, visitors, volunteers and contractors are required to:

- Follow local first aid protocols while visiting or conducting business in departmental workplaces or participating in authorised activities outside of departmental workplaces.

Responsibilities of all staff in an emergency

In addition to the specific responsibilities of the first aid officer(s) at the workplace, all staff have a responsibility in accordance with their duty of care to administer first aid immediately as required in an emergency, commensurate with their level of training and experience.

For example, any staff member should contact an ambulance immediately when required or administer an adrenaline autoinjector immediately if they believe an employee, student or others in the workplace are suffering an anaphylactic reaction.

To support staff and students in schools in the event of an emergency, the Department has mandatory training requirements in place in relation to emergency care and CPR.

Refer to Step 5.3.1 in the risk assessment process on Page 8 for details on mandatory training applicable to all school based staff.

4. Developing and implementing a first aid plan

All workplaces are required to utilise a risk management approach to develop and implement a first aid plan. The first aid plan details the management

strategies to be applied at each workplace to ensure the provision of appropriate first aid equipment, facilities, first aid officers, first aid training and local first aid response protocols relative to workplace requirements.

In accordance with the responsibilities, the workplace manager (including school principals) has overall responsibility for ensuring these procedures are implemented within their area of control. This includes development and implementation of first aid plans and local first aid response protocols relevant to workplace requirements which are documented, communicated and prominently displayed. First aid officers and other relevant staff are to participate in the development of first aid plans and local first aid response protocols in accordance with local requirements, policy and guidelines.

First aid requirements will vary from one workplace to the next, depending on:

- The nature of workplace hazards or potential causes of injury at the workplace
- The size, location and hours of operation of the workplace, and
- The number of people at the workplace.

Multi-location sites such as those found in large schools may require several first aid plans to address the specific needs of each site.

First aid plans and local first aid response protocols are to be developed and reviewed in consultation with staff and others at the workplace. Where relevant, first aid plans and local first aid response protocols should also be developed in consultation with other duty holders, such as at a worksite occupied by more than one organisation. An example is in joint occupancy working environment such as the Educational Training Centres within Juvenile Justice Centres.

First aid plans and local first aid response protocols are to be documented, clearly displayed and communicated to all staff and others (including casual staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers) at the workplace to ensure that staff and others have a clear understanding of first aid in their workplace.

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First aid arrangements should also be considered in specific risk management plans and be implemented for authorised activities occurring off-site such as excursions, sporting events or other activities or programs.

Communication of first aid arrangements with students, parents and carers is also important to ensure they are well informed of the workplace’s first aid and emergency care arrangements. Communication can be via bulletins, workplace meetings, classroom announcements, school assemblies, newsletters or other correspondence as appropriate.

Confidentiality should be maintained for injured or ill students and staff members.

5. Risk Management

Each workplace needs to consider the risk of injury and illness at the workplace, the controls in place to reduce and manage those risks and the first aid arrangements (first aid officers, first aiders, first aid kits, local first aid response protocols and first aid facilities) that will assist in responding to any potential incidents.

The four steps in the first aid risk management process are detailed below:

Table 1 : Risk management process for first aid	
Step 1	<p>Identify hazards or potential causes of injury or illness for your workplace, including hazards associated with authorised off-site activities. Consult with staff, volunteers, community users etc.</p> <p>Document the results in your first aid plan.</p>
Step 2	<p>Assess the risk of workplace injury or illness. Consider the size, location and hours of operation of your workplace when assessing the potential severity and likelihood of injuries and illnesses that may arise in the workplace.</p> <p>Document the results in your first aid plan.</p>
Step 3	<p>With reference to information collated in Steps 1 and 2, determine what first aid is required:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Document and communicate your first aid plan and local first aid response protocols. *Please refer to Section 3.1 and the Guide to First Aid Officers in the Department.</p>
Step 4	<p>Undertake ongoing monitoring and review of the first aid plan and local first aid response protocols to ensure effectiveness.</p>

Further information on each step is detailed in the following sections.

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Step 1: Identify potential causes of injury at the workplace

Different work environments have different hazards or potential causes of injury or illness, depending on the nature of activities and work being carried out in the workplace environment. There are many ways to identify hazards. Some ways include:

- Reviewing records of injuries, illnesses, near miss incidents as well as other information already available about controlling risks in the workplace;
- Consultation with staff, including staff involved in the provision of first aid at the workplace;
- Review of previous risk assessments,
- Checking Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for chemicals handled, stored and used at the workplace, and
- Review of staff and student health conditions that may require first aid response, including emergency response and administration of medication.

Document these hazards in your first aid plan.

Step 2: Assess the risk of workplace injury or illness

Once potential causes of workplace injury or illness requiring first aid are identified, an assessment of the risk is conducted. This assessment involves considering the controls or strategies that are in place to eliminate or minimise risk, the likelihood of an incident to result in harm and the severity of potential injuries and illnesses. When considering how to provide first aid, the following should be considered as part of the risk assessment process:

a) **The nature of work being conducted at the workplace and workplace hazards**

Different work environments have varying risks of injury and illness due to the nature of the work, activities and programs being undertaken, both within the workplace and during authorised off-site activities or programs e.g. excursions or field trips. The nature of the hazards within workplaces e.g. areas of increased risk, will also vary. Records of the types of injuries and illnesses that have occurred over the past 12-month

period and the areas where these have occurred will assist in making decisions about first aid requirements.

b) **The size, location and hours of operation of the workplace**

The location, layout and distance between work areas within a workplace e.g. the number of buildings on a site or multiple floors in an office building, as well as the proximity of the workplace or off-site venue/activity to medical facilities or emergency services should be considered when determining first aid arrangements.

Larger workplaces may require additional first aid equipment and facilities in each work area. Workplaces providing out of hours services such as evening classes, sporting activities and educational programs will have additional first aid considerations at these times. In limited cases, additional first aid consideration about alternate first aid arrangements, such as, aerial evacuation may be required for employees and others in remote or isolated areas.

c) **The number and composition of staff and others (including students, contractors, volunteers and visitors) at the workplace**

The number, composition and distribution of employees and others at the workplace at any one time will affect the amount of first aid resources required. Additionally, consideration should be given to the health care needs of employees and others who have a known disability or health condition and the effectiveness of current controls in the workplace.

d) **The procedures should also consider if there is a need to provide first aid kits and training to staff who work in isolation and travel long distances e.g. school counsellors, itinerant teachers, and school liaison officers.**

Risk assessments should be documented in all first aid plans.

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Step 3: Determine first aid requirements

The outcome of the risk assessment process is used to assist workplaces to determine what type of first aid arrangements they require, including first aid officers, first aiders, first aid kits, local first aid response protocols and first aid facilities. These arrangements are to be determined in consultation with staff and others at a workplace.

5.3.1 First aid officers, first aiders and first aid training

The first aid risk assessment assists in determining and refining the number of first aid officers and first aiders needed in the workplace and the type of training they require. Please refer to the [Guide to First Aid Officers in the Department](#) for more information.

The vast majority of departmental workplaces and activities are considered to be low risk. Where a workplace believes that a location or activity may be considered high risk, a risk assessment should be conducted in relation to the hazards at that site and submitted to the local WHS Consultant. If it is confirmed that the workplace or activity is high risk (or part of the workplace or activity is high risk) the first aid plan should reflect this in the type of training and number of first aid officers and first aiders required.

The names, locations and contact numbers of nominated first aid officers should be prominently displayed within the workplace so that staff and others know who to contact if they are sick or injured.

First aid training records must be maintained by the workplace. These records demonstrate the currency of staff in training courses recognised by the Department that give them competencies to administer first aid in departmental workplaces, particularly in an emergency situation.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

Resuscitation is the preservation or restoration of life by the establishment and / or maintenance of airway, breathing and circulation, and related emergency care.

It is a mandatory requirement for each NSW public school to arrange annual face-to-face CPR training for staff. Each school is required to ensure that a significant proportion of staff attend the annual training, subject to essential student supervision arrangements.

This annual training can also be extended to regular casual staff working at the school, canteen staff and volunteers; however, this training is not mandatory for these staff/volunteers.

It is a requirement of the Department's excursion procedures that for any overnight excursion or water related activity, there must be at least one staff member with current CPR training.

e-Emergency Care

e-Emergency Care provides simple, effective treatment and management protocols to support staff to manage the most common types of emergencies. This training closely reflects the types of illnesses, incidents and accidents that most commonly occur in schools, school activities and on excursions.

This training is mandatory for all permanent, temporary and casual school based staff to complete at least once every three years.

A comprehensive list of all work health and safety training courses available for staff is outlined in the [WHS Training Courses](#) document.

5.3.2 First aid kits

All staff must be able to access a first aid kit that is kept in a prominent, accessible and central location such as a sick bay, clinic or first aid room.

- **At least one adrenaline autoinjector (within its current shelf life) must be included within the first aid kit, alongside the ASCIA First Aid Plan for Anaphylaxis (Orange).**
- **At least one asthma reliever inhaler and spacer**
- **At least one non-contact temperature monitor must be included within the first aid kit.**

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A non-contact temperature monitor can be used where a student is observed to have fever or flu like symptoms. In these instances, the student should be taken to the sick bay area for assessment. Students can have their temperature taken as part of the assessment. The student should be isolated from others as they may be infectious until the parent or carer collects them from the school.

Where possible, workplace First Aid Officers should conduct the temperature test given their knowledge and skills in the area of first aid.

A first aid kit must be taken on all school excursions (refer to the [Excursions Policy](#)) and out of school activities. This kit must contain a general use adrenaline autoinjector, asthma reliever inhaler and spacer.

To order additional or replacement general use adrenaline autoinjectors for your workplace, please email epipen@det.nsw.edu.au. For additional or replacement asthma reliever inhalers and spacers, please email asthma@det.nsw.edu.au

Please access the Department's website for further information on the management of [anaphylaxis](#).

The first aid risk assessment process will assist in determining whether additional first aid kits are required, the contents of these kits, and their location. For example, additional first aid kits may be required at specific locations around a workplace e.g. where there is increased risk or history of injury or illness such as within science laboratories or workshops.

Portable first aid kits must be available for authorised off-site programs and activities (such as excursions and sporting activities) or emergency evacuations. The requirement for additional adrenaline autoinjectors is also considered through the risk assessment process.

An adrenaline autoinjector should be included within first aid kits for off-site activities and programs.

First aid kits can be of any size, shape or type to suit the workplace, but each kit should:

- Be large enough to contain all the necessary items;
- Be identifiable with a white cross on a green background that is prominently displayed on the outside;
- Contain a list of the contents for that kit and dates for restocking; and
- Be made of material that will protect the contents from dust, moisture and contamination.

Note: With the exception of an adrenaline autoinjector, no medication, including paracetamol and over-the-counter medicines are to be stored in first aid kits. It is possible that an undiagnosed student may have an unforeseen medical emergency at school. In the absence of a health care plan, staff must provide what assistance they can within the limits of their skills and training and request emergency medical assistance.

Displaying well-recognised, standardised first aid **signage** will assist in easily locating first aid equipment and facilities. First aid signs may be constructed to suit individual requirements but should comply with AS 1319:1994 - *Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment*. Signage can be purchased through the Department's [DoE online catalogue](#).

5.3.3 First aid equipment

In addition to first aid kits, consideration should be given to whether other first aid equipment is necessary to treat the injuries and illnesses that could occur in the workplace.

Defibrillators

Based on formal advice from the NSW Ministry of Health, there is no requirement for NSW Department of Education schools or other workplaces to have a defibrillator in place. Schools are considered to be an unusual location for cardiac arrest. However, schools and workplaces may make a decision to purchase and maintain a defibrillator as part of their first aid equipment if there is an identified risk. Please refer to the [Defibrillator Guidelines](#) for further information

Where a student is identified as requiring access to a defibrillator through their individual health care plan the parent or carer is responsible for this equipment. A risk

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assessment should be completed and provided to the HS Directorate in order for advice and support to be provided to the school to ensure an appropriate program is in place.

Maintenance

Defibrillators are not mandatory and are not a requirement of the Department's First Aid Procedures. The maintenance and upkeep of the equipment would be the responsibility of the school. The workplace manager (school principal) is responsible for the purchase of and the upkeep of the defibrillator. Procedures should be discussed with all staff.

5.3.4 First aid facilities

The type of first aid facilities and contents of a first aid room required will be determined through the first aid risk assessment. A checklist for items to be provided in a first aid room is available as a supporting resource on the [HS Directorate website](#).

Schools are required to have an area set aside for use as a sick bay or clinic that is properly maintained. A first aid room should be established at the workplace if a risk assessment indicates that it would be difficult to administer appropriate first aid unless a first aid room is provided. For low risk workplaces, a rest area within the workplace that affords privacy may be suitable to assist with the treatment of an injured or ill person. Where a risk assessment determines that it would be difficult to administer appropriate first aid and further treatment by an emergency service, e.g. where there is a higher risk of serious injury or illness occurring, these workplaces may benefit from having a dedicated first aid room.

Subject to risk assessment, a first aid room is recommended for low risk departmental workplaces where there are 200 or more employees on site and for high risk workplaces with 100 employees or more. A First Aid Officer who has competency in Manage First Aid Services and Resources (HLTAID008) should be allocated responsibility for maintaining the first aid room.

5.3.5 Local first aid response protocols

Each workplace must have a documented local first aid response protocol as part of its first aid plan to ensure that staff and others have a clear understanding of actions to be taken in the event of a first aid response in their workplace. Arrangements made in consultation, or with staff, will vary across each workplace to meet local needs, however the first aid response will generally include commonly understood first aid action steps such as:

- Immediate notification of an accident or incident to the first aid officer and relevant supervisor;
- A first aid officer or first aider providing immediate response to the injured or ill person according to their level of qualification and competence;
- A first aid officer or first aider and supervisor coordinate medical assistance. Note that an ambulance should be called immediately by any staff member or other person if one is needed, even if there is doubt about whether this response is required;
- Supervisor coordinates the accident or incident site;
- Workplace manager (or delegate) contacts nominated emergency contact; and
- Workplace manager (or delegate) follows [incident reporting policy and procedures](#).

For schools, the first aid officer is not required to accompany a student to a hospital unless special circumstances exist. Refer to the SchoolBiz article [Accompanying students transported by Ambulance](#) for further information. Proper infection control must be considered as part of the protocols – refer to the Department's [Infection Control Procedures](#). Local first aid response protocols should be incorporated into emergency management planning procedures.

Step 4: Monitoring and review of first aid

First aid plans should be reviewed by the workplace annually or after a major incident in the workplace. Changes may be necessary following, for example, a first aid emergency in the workplace or when a student enrolls with a medical condition which can be life-

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threatening, such as severe asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or anaphylaxis.

Students diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis or who require the administration of health care procedures need to have their own [individual health care plan](#).

Workplace managers must review the effectiveness of the first aid plan, consult with staff and communicate the revised plan.

Step 5: Providing and recording first aid information

Workplace first aid arrangements, including the location of first aid equipment and facilities, the names and locations of persons trained to administer first aid including the first, second and third contacts for first aid at the workplace (including first aiders trained in CPR and emergency care) and the local first aid response protocols to be followed when first aid is required are to be prominently displayed within the workplace and provided to employees and others at induction and when changes are made.

Records of first aid treatment and training must be kept by the workplace and reported to workplace managers at regular intervals to assist with the review of first aid arrangements and management of workplace hazards.

Legislation requires a *Register of injuries* form to be completed for all injuries sustained at the workplace. Additionally, the administration of first aid should be recorded in the *Record of First Aid Treatment* document. The register should be readily accessible to all staff.

Schools should also consider whether the [reporting accidents policy and support material](#) needs to be implemented following the incident.

The Department's incident reporting policy and procedures must be followed where a workplace hazard, injury or illness is identified. Staff or their manager must ensure that workplace injuries or illnesses are notified to the HS Directorate Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 as soon

as possible, at most within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

Notifiable incidents should be reported to the Hotline immediately.

The contents of the first aid kit should be checked after each use or at least once every 12 months to ensure that all items are in good working order, have not deteriorated, are within their expiry dates, and that no items are missing. A first aid kit inventory should be maintained with each kit that is signed and dated after it is checked. The first aid officer should arrange for regular checks of all first aid kits and the replenishment of any out of date or missing items.

In accordance with NSW government [State Archive](#) requirements, schools are required to retain lists of student accidents, injury trauma and illness related incidents, such as registers of injury, accidents first aid medicines, medication books and EpiPen currency checks. For more information refer to Section 3.0.2 of the Functional Retention and Disposal Authority for primary and secondary education (FA387).

6. Legal liability for staff administering first aid

Any member of staff who provides first aid to a student who is presumed to be suffering an illness or injury is acting in the course of their employment. Parliament has also protected good Samaritans such as those who may assist a parent or other person on the school site from any personal liability arising from genuine attempts to help someone in an emergency.

In the unlikely event that you are personally sued for providing an emergency response to a student, the Department will defend the claim at no expense to you and pay any damages.

The only exception will be where the actions of the employee amount to serious and willful misconduct. Carelessness, inadvertence (i.e. lack of attention) or a simple mistake do not amount to serious and willful misconduct.

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Further information can be accessed from the [Legal Services Directorate](#) (intranet only).

If a student's parents or carers provide the school with a Do Not Resuscitate order for their child, advice should be sought from the Legal Services Directorate about the impact of the order on any emergency response the school may need to provide the student.

7. Supporting resources

The following supporting resources are available on the HS Directorate intranet:

- [Guide to First Aider Officers in the Department](#)
- [Checklist for items to be provided within first aid facilities](#)
- [Checklist of contents for first aid kits](#)
- [Temperature monitors for first aid kits](#)
- [Register of Injuries](#)
- [Record of First Aid Treatment](#)
- [First aid allowance form for state offices](#)
- [Application for Allowance Payment \(First Aid\) – School administrative and support staff](#)
- [First Aid Plan Template](#)
- [First Aid Plan Sample](#)

8. Further information and support

For further information and support please contact the HS Directorate Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 or your local [WHS Consultant](#).