

Developing a first aid plan

OHS information for employers

This bulletin describes the basics of a first aid plan, an important part of an overall emergency response plan.



Planning for emergencies and having a first aid plan helps employers meet requirements in the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act*, Regulation and Code.

Key information

- Everyone at the work site should know how to respond and how to get help in the event of an illness or injury.
- Employers must make emergency transportation arrangements before sending workers to a work site.

Develop the plan

When putting together a first aid plan, the first step is to review the potential and known hazards at the work site, and the types of injuries and illnesses that are likely to occur, including worst-case scenarios. This review helps determine potential illnesses and injuries, and the extent of the first aid plan required. Employers should develop a first aid plan in collaboration with the joint work site health and safety committee or a health and safety representative, if there is one for the work site.

Determine services, supplies and equipment

Part 11, including Section 178 and Schedule 2, Tables 3-7, of the OHS Code, specify the number of first aiders (or nurses/advanced care paramedics), first aid training levels, and the supplies and equipment required at work sites.

These requirements consider three factors:

- how hazardous the work is,
- the time it takes to travel to a health care facility, and
- the number of workers at the work site per shift.

In processes such as hazard assessment and control or emergency response planning, work sites may determine they need more than the minimum first aid services, supplies and equipment required by the OHS Code.

- When an employer provides specialized equipment, they must ensure that first aiders are trained and competent in the use of that equipment.
- Training for workplace first aiders does not include administering medications, although first aiders can assist workers in taking their own medications.
- The minimum requirements for first aid kits do not include over-the counter medications or any other medication.
- See the **Medication in First Aid Kits (FA014)** resource for additional information.



Employers must supply and maintain first aid kits.

Plan emergency transportation

The goal for the transportation section of the first aid plan is to get the injured or ill worker to medical treatment as soon as possible.

Section 180 of the OHS Code requires employers to arrange for the transportation of injured or ill workers to a health care facility where medical treatment is available before sending workers to a work site. This

applies to all work sites, regardless of the types of illnesses and injuries, the number of workers at the work site, the number and level of trained first aiders, and the supplies and equipment required at the work site. The employer must ensure a licensed ambulance service is readily available to the work site when travel conditions are normal.

If a licensed ambulance service is not available or weather conditions pose a risk to transport, the employer must ensure alternate transportation meets Section 180(3) of the OHS Code. The means of transport must:

- be suitable, considering the distance to be travelled and the types of acute illnesses or injuries,
- provide protection against the weather,
- have a means of communication with the health care facility, and
- be large enough to accommodate a stretcher and an accompanying person.

Employers should consider the hazards of the workplace and proximity to health care facilities, especially for rural and remote locations where workers may be isolated or working alone.

Employers should also contact municipal emergency services ahead of time if potential work exposures may require specialized supplies, equipment or specific arrangements for transportation or treatment to be in place.

Alberta's *Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation*, section 85, does not permit passengers to ride in a mobile treatment centre module carried in the bed of the truck, as this is considered outside of the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle. Employers who may use the mobile treatment centre to transport an injured or ill worker must get an exemption from section 85. For more on the exemption please follow the Alberta Transportation link in "**For more information**".



In rural areas, it may be appropriate for first aid plans to include specific latitude and longitude coordinates and/or directions with highway, township

or range road numbers and landmarks, so that those responding can find the work site.

Document the plan

The written first aid plan should include information that will be needed in a first aid emergency. This should include:

- names of first aiders and how to summon them,
- first aid supplies and equipment requirements,
- what type of transportation is available to get injured or ill workers to medical care,
- transportation plans for getting injured or ill workers to health care facilities for treatment,
- what the back-up plan is if the first type of transportation is unavailable,
- procedures for communication, including how to summon help and an ambulance service, and
- how to report and record first aid incidents.

Communicate the plan

Communication is one of the most important elements of the first aid plan. No matter what or where injuries or illnesses occur, everyone at the work site should know how to respond and how to get help.

Keep the plan current

After your plan is finalized, it is recommended to have drills at least once a year, or more often if work locations, workers or other first aiders change. Drills will help you assess if your plan is still current, and allow worksite parties to respond faster in an emergency.

Be sure to let emergency response personnel know before conducting drills.

OHS Contact Centre

Anywhere in Alberta

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton & area

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hearing impaired:

- 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta)
- 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

PSI Online Reporting Service

alberta.ca/report-potentially-serious-incidents.aspx

Website

alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.aspx

Get copies of the *OHS Act*, Regulations and Code

Alberta Queen's Printer

qp.gov.ab.ca

Occupational Health and Safety

alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx

For more information

Alberta Transportation mobile treatment centre passenger exemption

<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/4729.htm>

Medication in First Aid Kits (FA014)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/first_aid014

First Aiders and Legal Requirements in the Workplace (FA011)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/first_aid011

Oxygen Equipment and Related Training Requirements at Work Sites (FA013)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/first_aid013

Automated External Defibrillators in the Workplace (FA015)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/first_aid015

Workplace First Aid Records (FA009)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/first_aid009

Reporting and Investigating Injuries and Incidents (LI016)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li016

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