

COMPLETED EXAMPLE

Workplace first aid needs assessment

A completed example for a fictional 45-person furniture business.

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Example Furniture Ltd, its site, people, dates and figures are invented to show how the template works. The conclusions fit this imaginary workplace only: yours should come from your own. Answers are shown in blue.

What this is, and what it isn't

A Northlight working template that follows the seven steps in our first aid needs assessment guide. It isn't a statutory form or an HSENI-approved form, and you don't have to use it.

Northern Ireland law requires adequate and appropriate first aid equipment, facilities and people, but not a written needs assessment. We recommend a proportionate record of what you considered, what you decided and why: HSE guidance, which HSENI follows, says a record can help you show an inspector or safety representative how you decided.

Filling it in doesn't on its own show that you comply. What matters is that the provision you decide on is in place where and when it's needed.

It isn't your general risk assessment, which is a separate legal duty: if you employ five or more people, you must record its significant findings.

How to use it

1. Gather your risk assessments, rotas and working hours, accident records and a list of anyone already trained.
2. Work through the steps in order. Start with what could happen, not with a course or a number: situation, then response, then provision.
3. Write as much as your workplace needs. A small office may need a line per box; a site with shifts or separate buildings needs more. Add or delete rows.
4. Involve the people who know the work, such as supervisors, first-aiders and safety representatives.
5. Record needs, never an identifiable person's health information.
6. Keep it with your health and safety records and review it when something changes (Step 7).

Assessment details

Organisation	Example Furniture Ltd (fictional)
Site(s) covered Address, and which buildings or areas	Unit 4, [example industrial estate], [town], [postcode]: main building and warehouse
Assessment carried out by Name and role	Pat (managing director)
People consulted For example supervisors, first-aiders, safety representatives	Jo (office manager), production manager, warehouse supervisor, safety representative
Date of assessment	21 Oct 2026
Next review date See Step 7	31 Mar 2027, to check the actions are done; then by Oct 2027
Related risk assessments Title and date of each one you used	Machinery (Jan 2026); finishes and adhesives, COSHH (Feb 2026); workplace transport and manual handling (Mar 2026); office (Jun 2026); stress (Sep 2026)

STEP 1 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Define the workplace you're assessing

Be clear what this assessment covers. Treating everyone as one group can hide real differences between areas, times and people.

Site address and main activities	Unit 4, [example industrial estate], [town], [postcode]. We design, make and deliver made-to-order wooden furniture.
Buildings, floors and separate work areas	Main building: office and design studio at the front (reception, studio, meeting room); production workshop behind it (machine shop, assembly with the edge bander, finishing area with a spray booth). Warehouse and despatch: a separate building at the far end of the yard, about 1 minute 20 seconds' walk from the production yard door.
Working days and hours <small>Include shifts, early starts, late finishes, weekends and overtime</small>	Production: Mon to Fri 7am to 3.30pm, plus overtime on some Saturdays 7am to 12 noon (about 10 people). Warehouse: Mon to Fri 8am to 4.30pm. Office: Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm. No night work.
Home, remote, lone or travelling workers	Four design and admin staff, including Priya, work from home on Fridays. Two warehouse staff deliver and install in the company van on Tuesdays to Thursdays, always as a pair. No one works alone onsite.
Shared premises <small>Other occupiers, and any agreement about first aid</small>	None. We occupy the whole unit; the estate road is shared with neighbouring units.

People by area

Area	What happens there	Usual number	Maximum number	Days and hours
Office and design studio	Design, admin, sales, customer meetings	8 on Fri, 12 Mon to Thu	12, plus visitors	Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm
Production workshop	Saws, planer, CNC router, edge bander, powered hand tools, spray finishing	28	28, plus agency staff at busy times	Mon to Fri 7am to 3.30pm; some Sat 7am to 12 noon
Warehouse and despatch	Storage, loading, forklift, manual handling	5 (3 when the van is out)	5, plus visiting drivers	Mon to Fri 8am to 4.30pm
Delivery van	Local deliveries and installation	2	2	Tue to Thu

STEP 2 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Turn workplace hazards into first aid situations

Start from your risk assessments, but don't just copy the hazards. For each one, write what could reasonably happen and the help someone might need.

What happens at work?	What could reasonably happen?	What first aid help might be needed?	Where?
Powered saws, router, planer and cutting tools	Serious cuts, life-threatening bleeding, partial amputation, crush injuries	Immediate bleeding control, emergency help and the right equipment	Machine shop, assembly
Moving and handling timber and finished products	Sprains, strains, injuries to bones and joints	Assessment and appropriate first aid	Production, warehouse, van
Forklift and vehicle movements	Significant impact, crush, head or other serious injury	Immediate assessment, first aid and rapid access for an ambulance	Warehouse, yard
Office and design work	Sudden illness, collapse, choking or a fall	Emergency first aid response	Office, and anywhere
Solvent-based lacquer (spray booth); contact adhesive; hot-melt glue on the edge bander	Splash to eyes or skin, breathing in vapour, small burns	Response based on each safety data sheet: rinsing eyes and skin, cooling burns	Finishing area, assembly
Wood dust and flying fragments	Eye injuries, something in the eye	Rinsing the eye, covering it, getting further help	Machine shop
Anyone, anywhere onsite	Cardiac arrest	CPR at once and a defibrillator within minutes	All areas

Have you thought about:

- machinery, saws and cutting tools: serious cuts, life-threatening bleeding, crush injuries, amputations, fractures, eye injuries;
- vehicles and workplace transport: crush and head injuries, fractures;
- manual handling, slips, trips and falls: fractures, cuts, sprains and strains;
- substances: poisoning, burns, eye injuries (check the first aid section of each safety data sheet);
- sudden illness anywhere: collapse, cardiac arrest, choking, seizures, asthma, diabetic emergencies;
- mental ill health, and anything unusual about your work.

Accident and incident history

Use your history as evidence, but not as the only test: a serious injury doesn't have to have happened before to be reasonably foreseeable. Reporting under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 is a separate duty and isn't covered by this form.

What your records show Accidents, first aid treatments and near misses, say over the last three years: what happened, where, and what it tells you	<p>Oct 2023 to Oct 2026, from the accident book and first aid records: 14 minor cuts and splinters in production, treated from the reception kit; two cases of wood dust in the eye, rinsed at the canteen sink.</p> <p>Mar 2025: deep hand cut at a bandsaw, treated in hospital. It happened at 7.40am, when nobody trained was onsite and the kit was locked in reception. Aug 2025: sprained ankle at the warehouse loading bay. Jan 2026: near miss when a reversing forklift came close to a pedestrian.</p> <p>What it tells us: most injuries happen in production, some before 9am, and the warehouse has had a vehicle near miss. There's been no life-threatening bleed or vehicle injury, but both are reasonably foreseeable.</p>
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STEP 3 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Consider the people who may need help

Does anything about the people here change the response you might need?

Record the need, not the person

Write what your provision must cover, for example: "Provision must include a response to suspected anaphylaxis." Never record an identifiable person's health information on this form. Anything about an individual belongs in their confidential records.

Consider	Applies here?	What it means for first aid provision
Employee numbers Usual and peak	Yes	45 employees: 12 office and design, 28 production, 5 warehouse. Agency workers sometimes join production at busy times and are covered by the same arrangements.
Young or inexperienced workers Including apprentices	Yes	One apprentice in production. Inexperience adds to the machinery risk, which production cover already addresses. Show apprentices and new starters who the first-aiders are on their first day.
Trainees and work experience placements	Yes	Occasional school work experience placements in the design studio. Covered by the office arrangements; tell them how to get help at induction.
Pregnant workers	Not known	If anyone tells us they're pregnant, their individual risk assessment will check they can get help quickly. We don't expect it to change first aid provision.
Employees with a disability	No	Nothing identified that changes first aid provision. Individual needs are handled in confidential individual risk assessments.
Relevant known health needs Record the need only	Yes	Provision must include a response to suspected anaphylaxis in every area, whenever people work.
Mental health	Yes	Pressure rises in the weeks before Christmas. Not a first aid training need at present: covered by the stress risk assessment, and managers know how to point people to support.
People working alone, remotely or away from the main site	Yes	Home workers do desk work and know to call 999. The van crew work away from the site, always in pairs, with mobile phones.
Visitors, customers, contractors and other non-employees	Yes	A few customer and supplier visits a week, plus delivery drivers at the warehouse. Visitors sign in and are escorted in production. Included in the arrangements; counted when we timed the walk to a defibrillator.

The Northern Ireland Regulations cover employees. HSE guidance, which HSENI follows, strongly recommends including non-employees in your assessment. Don't add visitors to your headcount and apply a staffing ratio: think about whether their presence changes what's sensible.

STEP 4 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Check where and when people work

An arrangement can look fine until you ask whether it works at 7am, in the separate building or when the office is closed. Record what happens now.

Area and times	Who can help, and how quickly?	Can they reach a first aid kit?	How is help summoned?
Production, 7am to 9am	Nobody trained onsite. The production supervisor takes charge.	No: the only kit is locked in reception until 9am.	Shout for the supervisor, who calls 999 on a mobile.
Production, 9am to 3.30pm	Jo or Priya from the office, about 1 minute away.	Yes: the reception kit, about 1 minute away.	Phone extension to reception.
Production, overtime Saturdays 7am to 12 noon	Nobody trained.	No: reception is locked.	Supervisor's mobile.
Warehouse, 8am to 4.30pm	Nobody before 9am, then the office first-aiders, about 2 minutes away.	No kit in the warehouse.	Mobile phones, but the signal is weak at the back of the warehouse.
Office, 9am to 5pm	Jo and Priya (Priya works from home on Fridays).	Yes: the reception kit.	In person, or phone extension.
Delivery van, Tue to Thu	Nobody trained.	No kit in the van.	Mobile phones.

Emergency access

Address to give 999 Including postcode, and which building or entrance	Example Furniture Ltd, Unit 4, [example industrial estate], [town], [postcode]. Say which building: "main building, yard door" or "warehouse, far end of the yard".
Route for an ambulance Entrance to use, and where it can stop	Estate entrance, second left, yard gate on the right. An ambulance can drive into the yard and reach both buildings.
Gates, barriers or door codes Could anything delay help, including early or late?	Yard gate open 6.45am to 5.30pm on weekdays and overtime Saturdays. The front door is locked until 9am, so use the yard door.
Who meets the ambulance	Not agreed at present (see Step 7).
Mobile reception Any areas where phones don't work, and the alternative	Good in the main building. Weak at the back of the warehouse; the despatch office has a landline.
Remoteness Anything that could delay emergency services reaching you	Not remote: the site is on the edge of a town. We can't count on an ambulance arriving within minutes, so the first minutes are down to us.

STEP 5 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Decide what provision you need

For each situation from Step 2, work out the response, then what must be in place to make it possible. Each decision should answer a need you've identified.

Situation: what could happen?	Response: what immediate help is needed?	Provision: people, equipment, arrangements
A life-threatening bleed at a saw in the machine shop at 7.15am	Recognise how serious it is, control the bleeding at once, call 999, meet the ambulance, look after the casualty until help arrives	FAW first-aider in production from 7am, trained to use a tourniquet and haemostatic dressings; critical injury pack with each production kit; someone meets the ambulance at the yard gate
A forklift strikes a pedestrian in the warehouse	Assess, keep them still if a head or spinal injury is possible, call 999, direct the ambulance to the warehouse	Trained first-aider in the warehouse building; kit in the warehouse; a phone or radio that works at the back of the warehouse
Someone collapses and isn't breathing normally, anywhere onsite	Call 999, start CPR at once, use a defibrillator within minutes	First-aiders in each area; a defibrillator reachable within two minutes from everywhere; everyone knows where it is
Suspected anaphylaxis, any area	Recognise it, call 999, help the person use their adrenaline auto-injector	FAW first-aiders (or EFAW with additional training) wherever people work
Lacquer splashed in the eyes at the spray booth	Rinse the eye at once, as the safety data sheet says, then get further help	Sink with running water at the finishing area; first-aider in production; safety data sheet kept at the booth

Before you fill in the summary:

- HSE's suggested numbers of first-aiders (INDG214) and BS 8599-1 kit sizes are starting points, not legal ratios.
- No law requires a defibrillator. BS 8599-1, the British Standard for workplace first aid kits, expects one within two minutes on sites with five or more people. Time the walk from the furthest point onsite, early and late.
- Only provide tourniquets, haemostatic dressings and other specialist items where people are trained to use them.
- An appointed person can cover a first-aider's unexpected absence, but not planned leave.
- Two decisions follow: how many people to train, and what training they need. Our guides on both are free at northlighttraining.co.uk.

STEP 5 OF 7, CONTINUED | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Provision summary

Based on HSE's record of first aid provision (L74, Appendix 1). An assessment doesn't have to end in a training booking or a purchase.

Provision	Needed?	How many, where and when	Why
PEOPLE			
Appointed person Takes charge and calls for help	Yes	The senior person present on each shift, briefed on the role. For unexpected absence only.	The law allows this in temporary and exceptional circumstances. Planned leave is covered by training enough people.
Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) first-aiders	No	None	Our needs go beyond EFAW: fractures, head and spinal injuries, eye injuries and anaphylaxis are in FAW, not EFAW.
First Aid at Work (FAW) first-aiders	Yes	At least 1 in production whenever it runs; 1 in the warehouse 8am to 4.30pm; 1 in the office 9am to 5pm.	Higher-hazard work: HSE suggests at least one EFAW or FAW first-aider for 5 to 50 people, depending on the injuries that could occur.
Additional training Such as life-threatening bleeding, anaphylaxis	Yes	Production first-aiders: tourniquet and haemostatic dressing use, if their FAW course doesn't include it.	Life-threatening bleeding is foreseeable at the machines.
First-aiders needed at any one time, and how many to train Allow for shifts, areas, leave, home working	Yes	Train 3 in production and 1 in the warehouse; keep Jo and Priya in the office (6 in total).	One needed at a time isn't one to train: leave, sickness, Friday home working and overtime Saturdays.
EQUIPMENT			
First aid kits Number, size and location	Yes	2 large in production (machine shop; assembly by the finishing area); 1 medium in the despatch office; keep the reception kit. None locked away while people work.	Kits go where injuries are likely. Sizes follow BS 8599-1's guide for risk and numbers, a starting point, not a legal ratio.
Travel or vehicle kits	Yes	1 travel kit in the delivery van.	The van crew work away from the site.
Personal issue kits For lone or remote workers	No	None	No one works alone or remotely, apart from desk work at home.
Critical injury pack Machinery, power tools, construction	Yes	1 with each production kit (2 in total), once the first-aiders are trained to use them.	Saws, router and cutting tools could cause life-threatening bleeding.
Burns kit Where there are burns risks	No	Extra burns dressings in the kit by the edge bander.	Burns are limited to small hot-melt glue burns, and there's cool running water at the finishing area sink.
Eye wash kit or sterile water Where clean tap water isn't close	Yes	1 eye wash kit in the machine shop.	Dust and fragments, and the nearest sink is in the canteen.
Other equipment	No	None	Nothing else identified.

Provision	Needed?	How many, where and when	Why
Defibrillator (AED) Reachable within two minutes?	Yes	1, in an unlocked cabinet inside the production yard door, registered on The Circuit. Timed walks: far end of production 1 min 10 s; design studio 1 min; far corner of the warehouse 1 min 50 s.	Not a legal requirement. 45 people plus visitors, physical work, and the nearest public defibrillator is about 6 minutes away. Meets BS 8599-1's two-minute benchmark.
FACILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS			
First aid room	No	The meeting room by reception can be used for privacy or rest.	The site isn't remote, an ambulance can reach both buildings, and there will be kits and first-aiders in each area. Review if this changes.
Emergency arrangements Calling 999, meeting the ambulance	Yes	999 address card by every phone and on the notices; yard gate open whenever people work; the caller sends someone to meet the ambulance at the gate; radios for the warehouse.	So help can be called from every area and the ambulance finds the right building.
Telling employees Notices, induction, briefings	Yes	First aid notices in reception, the production canteen and the despatch office; covered at induction, including agency workers and the apprentice.	The law requires employees to be told where equipment, facilities and first-aiders are.

STEP 6 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Test it against a real working week

Map the provision you need (Step 5) against an actual week, area by area. Is it there? Then repeat it with someone you normally rely on away on leave.

Week tested	Week beginning 12 Oct 2026, current arrangements
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In each day column write Y if the required provision is there, N if it isn't, P if it's only partly there (say why below), or a dash if nobody works then.

Area	Times	Provision required (from Step 5)	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Production	7am to 9am	FAW first-aider in production; kit reachable	N	N	N	N	N	N	-
Production	9am to 3.30pm (Sat to 12 noon)	FAW first-aider in production; kit reachable	P	P	P	P	P	N	-
Warehouse	8am to 9am	Trained first-aider and kit in the warehouse	N	N	N	N	N	-	-
Warehouse	9am to 4.30pm	Trained first-aider and kit in the warehouse	N	N	N	N	N	-	-
Office	9am to 5pm	FAW first-aider in the office; kit reachable	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	-
Whole site	Whenever people work	Defibrillator within two minutes	N	N	N	N	N	N	-
Delivery van	Delivery days	Travel kit in the van	-	N	N	N	-	-	-

STEP 6 OF 7, CONTINUED | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

The same week, with someone you rely on away

Who is away, and when		Jo (office first-aider) on annual leave all week							
Area	Times	Provision required (from Step 5)	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Production	7am to 9am	FAW first-aider in production; kit reachable	N	N	N	N	N	N	-
Production	9am to 3.30pm (Sat to 12 noon)	FAW first-aider in production; kit reachable	P	P	P	P	N	N	-
Warehouse	8am to 9am	Trained first-aider and kit in the warehouse	N	N	N	N	N	-	-
Warehouse	9am to 4.30pm	Trained first-aider and kit in the warehouse	N	N	N	N	N	-	-
Office	9am to 5pm	FAW first-aider in the office; kit reachable	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	-	-
Whole site	Whenever people work	Defibrillator within two minutes	N	N	N	N	N	N	-
Delivery van	Delivery days	Travel kit in the van	-	N	N	N	-	-	-
What the test showed		Production has no first-aider or reachable kit from 7am to 9am on any weekday, or on overtime Saturdays. From 9am it relies on the office first-aiders (P). The warehouse has no kit and no first-aider in the building. There's no defibrillator and no kit in the van.							
Every N or P is a gap to carry into Step 7		With Jo away, nobody trained is onsite on Friday because Priya works from home. Monday to Thursday, the office is still covered.							
		After the Step 7 actions we'll retest: with three FAW first-aiders in production, at least one should be there every working day and on overtime Saturdays, even with one on leave.							

STEP 7 OF 7 | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Record it and keep it current

Summarise what you need, what you have and what has to change. It may be that nothing needs to change.

Provision required	Provision currently available	Gaps and actions	Owner	Due date
FAW first-aider in production whenever it runs: Mon to Fri 7am to 3.30pm, and overtime Saturdays	None in production. Jo and Priya (FAW) are in the office, 9am to 5pm.	Train three production employees to FAW, including Sam, so one is always there through leave and sickness. Put one on every overtime Saturday. Until then, brief the supervisor as appointed person and keep the reception kit unlocked from 7am.	Production manager	Interim: 6 Nov 2026. Training: 31 Jan 2027
Trained first-aider in the warehouse building, 8am to 4.30pm	None. Office first-aiders are about 2 minutes away from 9am.	Train one warehouse employee to FAW. When they're away, a production first-aider covers, called by radio.	Warehouse supervisor	31 Jan 2027
Production first-aiders able to manage life-threatening bleeding, with critical injury packs	None	Check the FAW course covers tourniquets and haemostatic dressings, or add that training. Then put a critical injury pack with each production kit.	Production manager	28 Feb 2027
FAW first-aider in the office 9am to 5pm, including Fridays and during leave	Jo and Priya. Gap on Fridays when Jo is away.	No training needed. Jo and Priya don't take leave at the same time, and Priya works in the office on Fridays when Jo is away.	Jo (office manager)	1 Dec 2026
Kits reachable whenever people work: 2 large in production, 1 medium in the warehouse, the reception kit, a travel kit in the van, an eye wash kit, extra burns dressings	One kit, in reception, locked until 9am.	Buy and place the kits. Name one person to check each kit monthly and after use.	Jo (office manager)	13 Nov 2026
Defibrillator within two minutes of everywhere onsite, whenever people work	None. The nearest public one is about 6 minutes away.	Buy one. Fit an unlocked cabinet inside the production yard door, register it on The Circuit, check it weekly and show everyone where it is.	Pat (managing director)	18 Dec 2026
Emergency access: gate open, someone meets the ambulance, a phone that works in every area	Gate open whenever people work. No agreed meeting arrangement. Weak signal at the back of the warehouse.	Address card by every phone. The caller sends someone to the yard gate. Two radios for the warehouse and production.	Warehouse supervisor	30 Nov 2026
Employees know the arrangements	Induction mentions the reception kit only. No notice.	First aid notices in reception, the production canteen and the despatch office. Update induction, including for agency workers.	Jo (office manager)	18 Dec 2026, then after each change

No change needed, because... Where your existing arrangements already meet a need, record that and why	Office: Jo and Priya (FAW) and the reception kit already meet the office's needs, apart from the leave arrangement in row 4. First aid room: not needed (see Step 5). Personal issue kits and a burns kit: not needed (see Step 5).
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Review

There's no fixed legal interval. Review periodically, and sooner if any of these happen:

- ☐ New machinery, substances or activities
- ☐ Changes to shifts or staffing
- ☐ Moving premises or changing the layout
- ☐ Different lone or remote working arrangements
- ☐ A first-aider leaving
- ☐ An incident or recurring problem that shows a gap

Next review date	31 Mar 2027: check the actions are done and retest the week. Then by Oct 2027, or sooner if a trigger above happens.
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Sign-off (optional)

Not required. It shows who agreed the conclusions and actions.

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Pat	Managing director	[signed]	23 Oct 2026

ANNEX A | FICTIONAL EXAMPLE

Register of first-aiders

Keep this with the assessment and update it when anyone qualifies, requalifies or leaves. First aid certificates are valid for three years, so book requalification before the expiry date.

Name	Course	Level	Date passed	Certificate expiry	Requalification booked
Jo (office manager)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	14 Mar 2025	13 Mar 2028	Not yet due
Priya (design)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	9 Sep 2024	8 Sep 2027	To book by Jun 2027
Sam (production supervisor)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	Course booked, Jan 2027		
Production employee 2 (to be agreed)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	To book		
Production employee 3 (to be agreed)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	To book		
Warehouse employee (to be agreed)	First Aid at Work	Level 3	To book		

Annex B: Review record

Date	Reviewed by	What changed	Next review
21 Oct 2026	Pat, with Jo, the production manager, the warehouse supervisor and the safety representative	First assessment on this template	31 Mar 2027

Sources

Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1982, as amended, regulations 3 and 4.

HSENI, First aid at work (hseni.gov.uk).

HSE, First aid at work: Guidance on Regulations (L74, 2024 reissue) and First aid at work: your questions answered (INDG214). HSENI has adopted HSE's first aid guidance for Northern Ireland.

BS 8599-1:2019+A1:2026, the British Standard for workplace first aid kits and defibrillators. A standard, not law.

The general risk assessment duty is in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, regulation 3. This needs assessment is not that risk assessment.

Check this template against current HSENI guidance before you rely on it.