

FIRST AID & FIRST AID KITS IN THE WORKPLACE BEST PRACTICES

This bulletin helps public employers determine their first-aid training and first-aid kit requirements.

OSHA 1910.151 *Medical Services and First Aid*, paragraph (b) says, "In the absence of an infirmary, clinic, or hospital in proximity to the workplace which is used for the treatment of all injured employees, a person or persons shall be adequately trained to render first aid. Adequate first aid supplies shall be readily available." Public employers should consider three references to determine whether they are meeting the standard:

- OSHA Letters of Interpretation
- OSHA Non-Mandatory Appendix to 1910.151 *First Aid Kits*
- The current edition of ANSI/ Z308.1 *Minimum Requirements for Workplace First-Aid Kits*

About 30 Letters of Interpretation on 1910.151 discuss proximity, local first-aid squads, first-aid training, and first-aid kits.

- 'Near Proximity' is interpreted by OSHA as emergency care must be available within no more than 3 - 4 minutes in workplaces where serious accidents such as falls, suffocation, electrocution, or amputation/uncontrolled life-threatening bleeding are possible. OSHA recognizes that in workplaces, such as offices, where the possibility of such work-related severe injuries is less likely, a longer response time of up to 15 minutes may be reasonable.

  Departments that use extension ladders, bucket trucks, chainsaws, or that work with electricity or in confined spaces should conduct a risk assessment to determine:
  - Whether their local police, fire, or EMS departments can reliably arrive at any site where employees could be working within 3 – 4 minutes, AND
  - Are appropriately equipped and trained to handle life-threatening injuries.

  If not, the employer must train and equip one or more employees to render immediate first aid.

- Some OSHA standards, for example, *Logging Operations* (29 CFR 1910.266), *Permit-Required Confined Spaces* (29 CFR 1910.146), and *Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution* (29 CFR 1910.269) have specific requirements that employees be trained in first aid and CPR. If an employer is covered by one of these standards, it may not rely on outside emergency responders and must provide employee training.

- OSHA recognizes any nationally accepted, medically sound first aid training program that covers the fundamentals of first aid as meeting the requirements in 29 CFR 1910.151. However, OSHA does not certify first aid training programs. Employers are responsible for assessing the work area and all first aid needs for expected injuries and illnesses. Each employer using any first aid course must satisfy him/herself that the course adequately covers the type of injuries/illnesses likely to be encountered in the workplace.

  OSHA recommends that CPR training be an element of a first aid program. Most CPR certifications are valid for 2 year, depending on the organization that issued the certification. First aid training should occur at least once every three years.

- OSHA says online training alone does not fulfill the training requirement for employees who must be trained to comply with the 1910.151 Standard.

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First Aid Kits and Supplies

Appendix A states, "An example of the minimal contents of a generic first aid kit is described in American National Standard (ANSI) Z308.1-1998 *Minimum Requirements for Workplace First-aid Kits*." While Appendix A is non-mandatory, Appendix A and ANSI Z308.1 should be considered industry standards. Courts generally treat industry standards as requirements for employers unless the employer can explain why it did not, or could not, follow the guideline.

ANSI Z308.1 was recently updated, effective September 15, 2026. The 2026 edition retains the Class A or Class B kit classifications for stationary locations. Class A kits are generally suitable for all wounds, minor burns, and eye injuries. Class B kits are intended for densely populated workplaces with complex and/or high-risk environments, such as warehouses, factories, and outdoor areas. The new recommended basic contents are given on page 3.

There are some noteworthy updates in ANSI Z308.1-2026:

- **Naloxone, the opioid overdose medication,** was added as a supplemental supply item.
- **Bleeding control kits:** added considerations, including anti-choking devices, chest seals, thermal blankets, and more.
- **Arterial tourniquet at least 1.5 inches wide, effective on limb sizes from 7 to 33 inches,** was added.
- **New guidance for mobile and field workers,** including hazard assessments, how kits should be transported, and restocking kits in the field.
- **First aid training guidelines**
- **The first aid written guide in each kit must be available in English and Spanish.**

While the OSHA Permit-Required Confined Space standard (29 CFR 1910.146) requires "basic first aid and CPR" training, which now often includes automated external defibrillator (AED) training, it does not require providing AEDs. However, New Jersey requires AEDs in specific workplaces such as health clubs, airports, and nursing homes; please review the MSI Safety Director Bulletin AED Programs for additional information av.

Appendix A continues by saying, "employers should determine the need for additional first aid kits at the worksite, additional types of first aid equipment and supplies, and additional quantities and types of supplies and equipment in the first aid kits." The intent is for employers to consider whether their injury potential indicates a need for specific first aid equipment, such as heat packs for hypothermia treatment, or whether more than one of an item is needed. Looking at the list, it is easy to see that many trauma supplies assume a single injured employee at a time. If a workplace incident could affect two or three employees, the employer should consider doubling or tripling the number of items on the ANSI list.

OSHA primarily targets industrial settings when creating its standards. The updated ANSI Z308.1-2026 standard provides guidance on first aid kits for mobile workers, including hazard assessments, monthly inspections, and accessibility in vehicles. As with the stationary workplace, employers should consider which first-aid equipment and supplies are needed and in what quantities. For example, include equipment and supplies to control severe bleeding from chainsaw injuries, along with personal protective equipment bags for chainsaw use.

Lastly, employers should consider their people. Did the employer hire and create a culture where employees will help another person in need? If so, the employer should ensure employees are prepared to assist and give them the best chance to succeed. Statistically, employees are more likely to use first aid within their own family. The bond created is more valuable than the cost of a bit of training time.

ANSI Z308.1 – 2026 *Minimum Requirements for Workplace First-aid Kits*			
Item	Description	Minimum Quantities	
		Class A Kit	Class B Kit
Adhesive Bandage	1" x 3"	16	50
Adhesive Tape	2.5 yds.	1	2
Antibiotic Application	1/57 oz.	10	25
Antiseptic	1/57 oz.	10	50
Breathing Barrier		1	1
Burn Dressing (gel-soaked)	4" x 4"	1	2
Burn Treatment	1/32 oz.	10	25
Cold Pack	4" x 5"	1	2
Eye Covering	2.9 sq. in.	2	2
Eye/Skin Wash	1 fluid ounce	1	0
First Aid Guide	English & Spanish	1	1
Foil Blanket	52" x 84"	1	1
Hand Sanitizer	1/32 fl. oz.	10	20
Medical Exam Gloves	Pair	2	4
Roller Bandage (gauze)	2" x 4 yds.	1	2
Roller Bandage (gauze)	4" x 4 yds.	0	1
Scissors		1	1
Splint	4" x 24"	0	1
Sterile Pad (gauze)	3" x 3"	2	4
Tourniquet	1.5" Wide	0	1
Trauma Pad	5" x 9"	2	4
Triangular Bandage	40” x 40” x 56”	1	2