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Saudi Contractors Authority

National Council for
Occupational Safety & Health

Guideline for First Aid in the Workplace

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Introduction

First aid is considered one of the essential elements in the occupational safety and health system within the workplace, as it contributes to the rapid response to injuries and emergency situations until specialized medical care arrives.

Various work environments may be exposed to a number of incidents such as cuts, burns, fractures, or fainting due to the use of equipment or exposure to different occupational hazards. In such cases, a quick response and proper administration of first aid can help reduce complications and protect the life of the injured person.

Therefore, providing first aid equipment and training workers on its use is an important part of prevention measures and emergency response in organizations.

Purpose of the Guide:

This guide aims to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of first aid in the workplace.
- Clarify the basic procedures for dealing with injuries and emergency situations.
- Support organizations in providing appropriate first aid equipment.
- Enhance rapid response to occupational incidents.
- Reduce complications resulting from workplace injuries.

Target Audience:

This guide is intended for the following groups:

- Employers and organization managers.
- Occupational safety and health officers.
- Emergency and first aid teams within organizations.
- Workplace supervisors.
- All workers in various work environments.

Definition of First Aid

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care provided to an injured person before the arrival of specialized medical care, with the aim of preserving life, preventing the condition from worsening, and improving recovery chances.

Article (142) of the Labor Law states: “Every employer shall provide one or more first aid kits equipped with the necessary medical supplies required for first aid. The regulations specify the contents, quantities, storage methods, and the qualifications of those responsible for providing first aid.”

The National Council for Occupational Safety and Health also recommends, according to Ministerial Decision No. (400/1) dated 28/1/1428H, organizing first aid in the workplace and providing the necessary equipment and qualified personnel to handle emergency cases.

Employer Responsibilities Regarding First Aid

- Provide sufficient first aid kits equipped with essential medical supplies.
- Train an adequate number of workers in first aid and emergency response.
- Provide means of communication with emergency and ambulance services.
- Assign trained personnel to provide first aid within the facility.
- Raise worker awareness of reporting procedures for injuries and incidents.
- Regularly review and update emergency procedures.
- Record and monitor occupational injuries and incidents.

Employee Responsibilities Regarding First Aid

Immediately report any injury or incident to the supervisor or safety department.

- Know the locations of first aid kits and emergency contact methods.
- Cooperate with first aid teams during incidents.
- Follow safety instructions and guidelines.
- Do not tamper with first aid kits or use them for unintended purposes.
- Participate in first aid training and awareness programs.

Contents of a First Aid Kit

In implementation of Article (142) of the Labor Law, the employer must provide a first aid kit containing essential supplies:

- Burn dressings.
- Bandages and sterile gauze in various sizes.
- Medical and compression bandages.
- Adhesive plasters.
- Medical gloves and masks.
- Disinfectants and eye wash solutions.
- Basic tools such as scissors and tweezers.
- Emergency equipment such as a stretcher, splints, and airway kit.

The following should also be considered:

- All supplies must be valid and usable at all times.
- Any shortage must be replenished immediately.
- The kit must be stored in a suitable hygienic place at an appropriate temperature.
- It should be marked with the Red Crescent symbol and clear signage indicating its location.
- Additional supplies should be provided based on the nature of work and level of risk.

Organization of First Aid in the Facility

- Report all injuries, no matter how minor, to the supervisor and first aid unit for documentation and follow-up.
- Provide an accurate description of the injured person's condition without exaggeration or spreading rumors.
- Notify the supervisor, first aid unit, and safety department when leaving the workplace due to a work-related injury or illness.

- Inform relevant authorities if external medical treatment is received due to a work-related condition.
- Provide a trained and equipped team to deliver first aid and rescue when needed.
- Submit a medical report when using supportive devices such as splints or casts that may affect work.
- Provide proof of recovery to the direct manager and relevant authorities upon returning to work.
- The occupational safety and health department should review assigned tasks to determine safe return-to-work capability.

Common Occupational Injuries in the Workplace

These may include:

- Cuts and bleeding.
- Burns.
- Fractures and sprains.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) cases.
- Fainting.
- Choking or breathing difficulties.
- Falls and impact-related injuries.

Handling Workplace Injuries

In case of any workplace injury, first aid should be provided quickly and safely until professional medical care arrives:

- Cuts and bleeding: Apply pressure using a clean dressing, elevate the injured area if possible, use additional dressings if needed, and seek medical help if bleeding continues.
- Burns: Remove the person from the heat source, cool the burn with cold water, cover with a clean dressing, avoid applying non-medical substances, and seek medical help for severe burns.
- Fractures or sprains: Immobilize the affected area, avoid movement, use a splint if available, and transfer to a medical facility if necessary.
- CPR situations: Ensure scene safety, check responsiveness and breathing, begin CPR if required, and call for medical assistance immediately.
- Fainting: Lay the person on their back, elevate the legs slightly, ensure airway is open, monitor breathing, do not give food or drink, and seek medical help if unconsciousness persists.
- Choking or breathing difficulty: Remove visible obstructions, help the person sit comfortably, start CPR if breathing stops, and monitor continuously.
- Falls or impact injuries: Immobilize the person, do not move unless necessary, keep them warm, monitor breathing and circulation, seek medical help immediately, and document the incident.

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Safe Return-to-Work Requirements After Injury

In case of a work-related injury:

- Receive appropriate medical treatment.
- Submit a medical report upon returning to work.
- Assess the ability to perform job duties.
- The safety and health department should review job tasks if needed.
- Apply job accommodation when necessary.

Emergency Response

In case of an injury at the workplace:

- Notify the supervisor or safety team immediately.
- Assess the injured person's condition quickly.
- Provide appropriate first aid.
- Contact emergency services if needed.
- Transfer the injured person to a medical facility if required.

Training and Awareness

- Train an adequate number of workers in first aid.
- Conduct regular emergency response training programs.
- Raise awareness of first aid kit locations.
- Educate workers on reporting procedures for injuries and incidents.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Ignoring minor injuries and failing to report them.
- Moving the injured person before assessing their condition.
- Providing first aid without proper knowledge.
- Lack of first aid equipment at workplaces.
- Delaying medical assistance.

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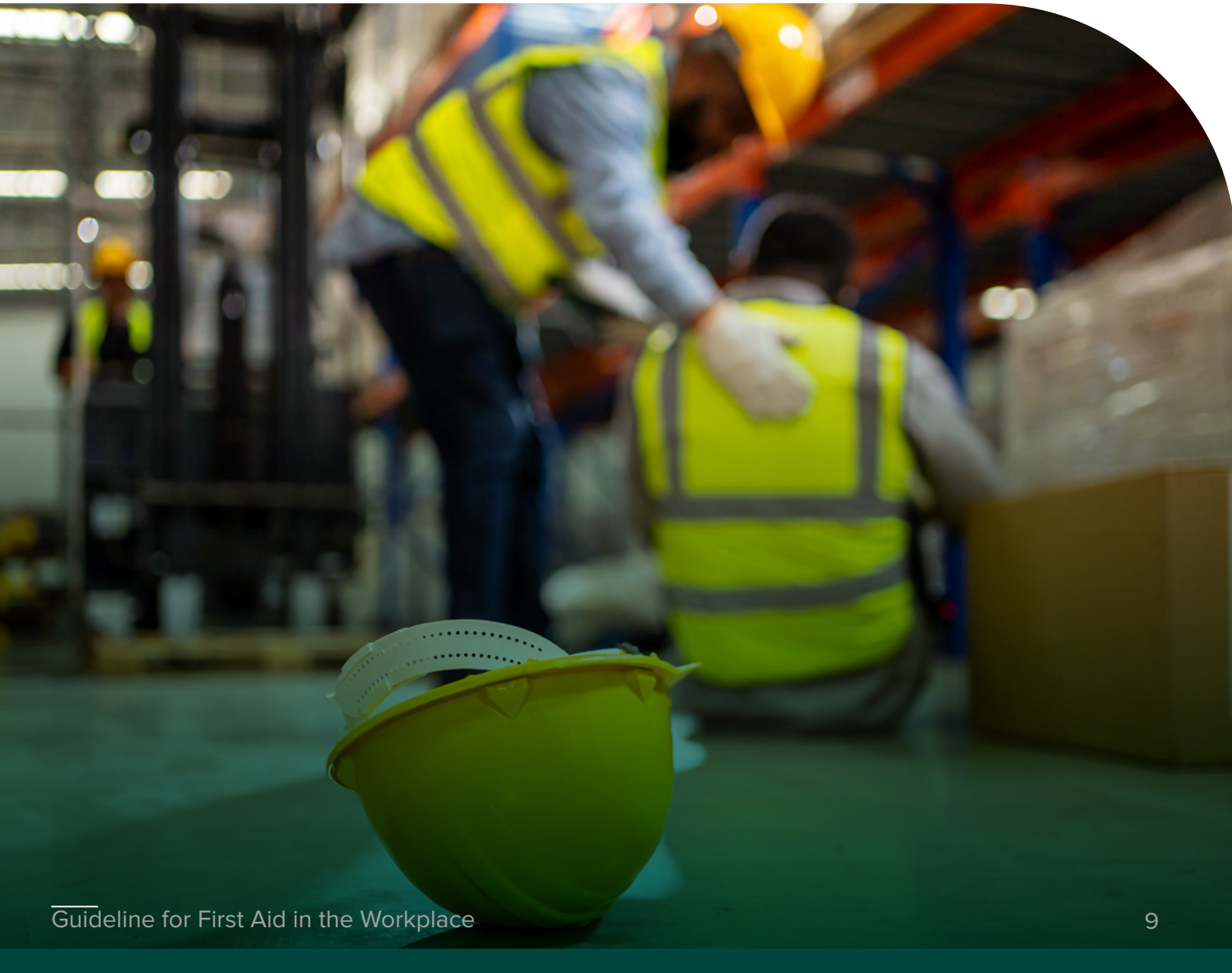
Conclusion:

First aid is the first line of defense in handling workplace accidents and injuries. Quick response and correct procedures help reduce the impact of injuries and fatalities and protect workers' lives.

Providing first aid equipment and continuous training enhances organizational readiness to handle emergencies and supports a safe and healthy work environment.



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