

# First Aid in the Workplace and COVID19

## Guidance for first aiders

Below are the additional requirements identified (due to Coronavirus) that should be considered alongside established first aid processes: it should be reiterated that the key objective of first aid remains: preserve life, prevent worsening and promote recovery.

All first aiders need to be reminded that the best way to protect themselves and others is through rigorous cleaning, personal hygiene and regular hand hygiene.

Try to assist at a safe distance from the casualty as much as you can and minimise the time you share a breathing zone.

If they are capable, tell them to do things for you, but treating the casualty properly should be your first concern. Remember the 3P model – preserve life, prevent worsening, promote recovery.

Where it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre or more distance away from an individual, disposable gloves and a disposable plastic apron or other suitable covering is recommended. Disposable gloves should also be worn if physical contact is likely to be made with potentially contaminated areas or items. The use of a fluid repellent surgical face mask is recommended and additional use of disposable eye protection (such as face visor or goggles) should be risk assessed when there is an anticipated risk of contamination with splashes, droplets of blood or body fluids.

You will need to read, understand and follow the guidance about putting on and taking off PPE and also watch and understand the resuscitation video and guidance shown below in this document.

### Preserve life: CPR

- Call 999 immediately – tell the call handler if the patient has any COVID-19 symptoms
- Ask for help. If a portable defibrillator is available, ask for it
- Before starting CPR, to minimise transmission risk, use a cloth or towel to cover the patient's mouth and nose, while still permitting breathing to restart following successful resuscitation
- If available, use:
  - a fluid-repellent surgical mask
  - disposable gloves
  - eye protection
  - apron or other suitable covering
- Only deliver CPR by chest compressions and use a defibrillator (if available) – **don't** do rescue breaths

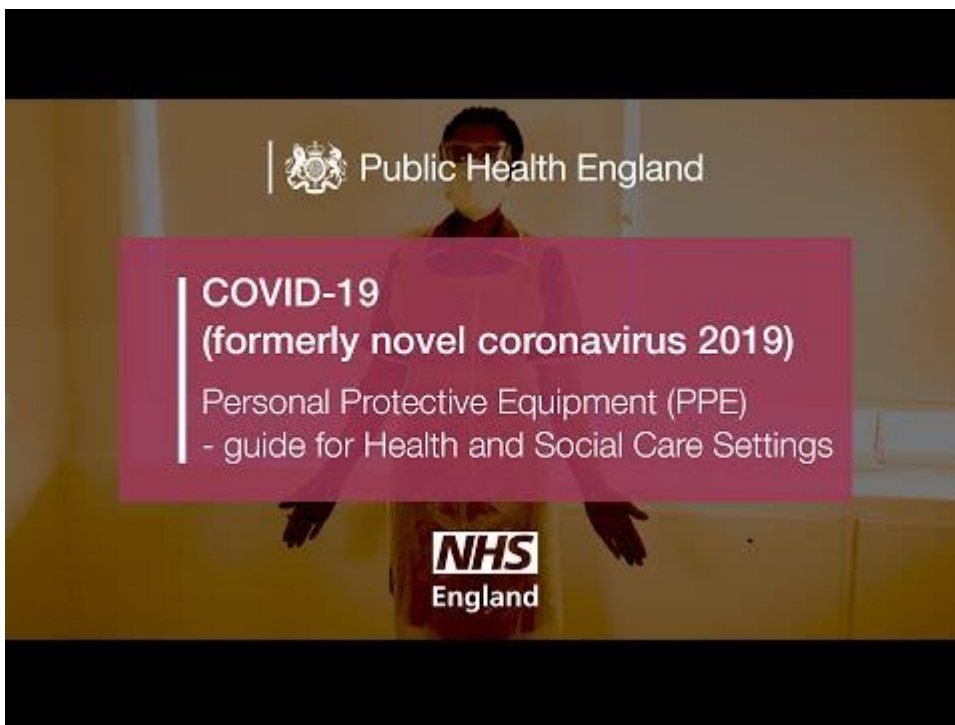
### Prevent worsening, promote recovery: all other injuries or illnesses

- If you suspect a serious illness or injury, call 999 immediately – tell the call handler if the patient has any COVID-19 symptoms
- If giving first aid to someone, you should use the recommended equipment listed above if it is available
- You should minimise the time you share a breathing zone with the casualty and direct them to do things for you where possible

## After delivering any first aid

- Ensure you safely discard disposable items and clean reusable ones thoroughly
- There are no additional precautions to be taken in relation to cleaning clothing other than what is usual practice.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser as soon as possible. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact, or the minimum 2 metre social distancing.

[Guidance on putting on and taking off PPE is available](#) and first aiders must familiarise themselves with this. The associated video is available here below.



Hands should be cleaned thoroughly before putting on, and after taking off PPE. In all circumstances where some form of PPE is used, the safe removal of the PPE is critical to avoid self-contamination. Any waste from possible cases/use of PPE, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied, then placed in a second bag and tied. Waste should be stored securely for 72 hours before disposal.

The casualty should also be moved to a place away from others (if it is safe to do so), and further guidance re quarantining and cleaning can be followed [here in the steps to take for managers and staff for suspected cases](#). For blood or body spills follow usual processes.

## Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and Coronavirus

If first aiders are required to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), they should conduct a risk assessment and adopt appropriate precautions for infection control (including PPE as above). **During the pandemic** the resuscitation council recommends recognising cardiac arrest by looking for the absence of

signs of life and the absence of normal breathing, **but not listening or feeling for breathing** by placing your ear and cheek close to the patient's mouth.

In adults, it is also recommended **not to perform** rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation; but to perform chest compressions only. The resuscitation council also recommends that before starting CPR, if there is a perceived risk of infection, to minimise transmission risk, by using a cloth or towel to cover the patient's mouth and nose, while still permitting breathing to restart following successful resuscitation. Please see guidance and video [here](#)

Cardiac arrest in children is more likely to be caused by a respiratory problem, therefore chest compressions alone are unlikely to be effective.

If a decision is made to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation, use a resuscitation face shield where available.

If first aiders give mouth-to-mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than self-monitoring for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 14 days, and then following advice on the [NHS website](#). Symptomatic members of staff also need to follow the reporting guidance [here](#)

## First aid training and qualifications during the outbreak

### First aid certificate extensions

If you hold a first aid certificate that expires on or after 16 March 2020 and cannot access requalification training because of coronavirus, you may qualify for an extension. This applies to:

- First Aid at Work (FAW) (Paediatric)
- Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW)

### How you qualify for the extension

To qualify for the extension, you must be able to:

- explain why you haven't been able to requalify
- demonstrate what steps you have taken to access the training, if asked to do so

### Requalification training in England

The first aid training industry in England is confident that enough courses will now be available for all required requalification training to take place. HSE has therefore agreed a final deadline for requalification for these qualifications of **30 September 2020**.

### Annual refresher training

HSE strongly recommends that the practical elements of actual FAW, EFAW and requalification courses are delivered face to face, so that competency of the student can be properly assessed.

## **Interrupted first aid training**

If because of coronavirus you cannot complete training for your first aid qualification within the usual timeframe, training can restart at a later date as long as:

- the awarding body is content that you can show:
  - a full understanding of all aspects of the course content
  - the knowledge required and competencies at the end of the training

## **First aid training for Warwickshire County Council**

First aid training for Warwickshire County Council staff is delivered by Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Services Training Team.

Their delivery of face to face training will start from 1st September 2020 and they have made adjustments and put a process in place to stay COVID compliant.

Their courses will be running at half capacity, 6 to a course, and every delegate attending will have their temperature taken before they enter the building and a hand sanitiser will be ready and waiting for them to use.

Delegates will all be sat adhering to social distancing guidelines and will all have a training pack waiting for them on the table. This pack will include, a manikin for them to use for the course duration, any books they require (which they then keep), gloves, mask, CPR shield, bandage, and sling.

All manikins will be cleaned down at the end and have new lungs after every session.

They have also adapted their training to make sure that delegates are aware of the current guidelines (CPR mainly) to protect themselves from COVID.

To book onto this course, please contact Bev Unett at WCC Fire & Rescue at [beverleyunett@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:beverleyunett@warwickshire.gov.uk) to book onto it when and where necessary.

## **Additional links:**

The guidance below is aimed at supporting organisations and their first aiders to be confident that they can help someone injured or ill at work during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

[GOV.UK Guidance](#)

[Health and Safety Guidance](#)

[Resuscitation Council Guidance](#)