

Engaging a First Aid Service Provider FAQ

First Aid Sector

OFFICIAL

First aid services, Victoria - what has changed?

From October 2021, all first aid services, providing commercial first aid in Victoria are required to be licenced under the *Non-Emergency Patient Transport and First Aid Services Act 2003* (the Act). Licenced first aid services will be required to comply with the Non-Emergency Patient Transport and First Aid Services (First Aid Services) Regulations 2021 (the regulations).

The aim of these changes is to provide minimum standards in the provision of first aid across public events. Public events can range from small-scale, short duration events to large single day events, large multiday live-in events, and events that travel across the state over several days.

What does this change mean for event organisers and local councils?

As an event organiser, or local council planning or approving an event, you should ensure that the first aid service contracted to the event is licenced. Having a licenced first aid service is important to ensure the provision of quality and safe patient care.

Where can I locate a list of licenced first aid services?

The register of licenced first aid services is available on the Department of Health (the department's) website <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/first-aid-services>. The licenced first aid providers register will be updated regularly to ensure information is current. Please check the register prior to any event you have planned or approved.

What happens if the first aid service contracted for the event is not on the licenced register?

If you intend using or approving a first aid service that doesn't appear on the register, please contact the NEPT and First Aid Regulations team at Neptfirstaidregulation@health.vic.gov.au in the first instance. A member of the team will check the status of your preferred first aid service provider. If your preferred service is not licenced, they cannot provide first aid services in Victoria.

A first aid service providing first aid in Victoria without a licence is in breach of the *Act* and must not be permitted to provide first aid.

If you are made aware of an un-licenced first aid service tendering for, or servicing an event, please notify the NEPT and First Aid Regulations team via Neptfirstaidregulation@health.vic.gov.au.

Do all first aid services offer the same level of first aid?

No. Under the regulations, first aid services are divided into three distinct levels: basic, intermediate, and advanced. The first aid provider can only operate their first aid service at the level they are licenced.

Basic: The minimum clinical staff level is a trained first aid officer holding a relevant certificate III qualification or below. Basic providers have access to 'over the counter' medications and are trained and equipped to adequately cater for **minor** injuries or illnesses which would not usually require referral to another health care provider or hospital for ongoing care, for example simple wounds, sunburn, sprains and strains.

Example Event types:

Low risk event profile- the event nature and patron demographics, numbers and behaviours have a low probability of patient injury and or illness. For example,

- community and school sport
- local fete
- roadshow

Intermediate: The minimum clinical staff level includes certificate IV or diploma trained first aid officer and some registered health professionals. Intermediate providers have access to some scheduled medications and are trained and equipped to adequately cater for **significant** injuries or illnesses which may require referral to another healthcare provider or hospital for ongoing care, for example fractured bones.

Example Event types:

Medium Risk event profile- the event nature and patron demographics, numbers and behaviours have a medium probability of patient injury and or illness. For example,

- low speed motorsport
- low impact equestrian events
- small festivals

Advanced: The minimum clinical staff level includes registered health professionals, such as registered paramedics, registered nurses, and registered medical practitioners, including anaesthetists and critical care physicians.

Advanced providers have access to additional scheduled medications and are trained and equipped to adequately cater for **serious** injuries or illnesses which often require referral to another healthcare provider or hospital for ongoing care. For example, traumatic head injured patients who have been intubated. In addition, advanced providers may offer primary care services, such as suturing and anti-biotic administration.

Example Event types:

High risk event profile- the event nature and patron demographics, numbers and behaviours have a high probability of patient injury and or illness. For example,

- high speed motorsport
- high impact equestrian
- pyrotechnic/explosives
- geographically isolated or dispersed
- aquatic motorsport
- large festivals, including multi day events.
- event size > 10k
- new events, with moderate level risk (nil prior event history)

How do I know if the first aid service provider is appropriate for the event?

A first aid service provider is required to undertake a risk assessment of each event to assess potential health risks. This will inform the first aid service of their ability to provide safe and quality care. Event organisers and local council should work collaboratively with first aid services to undertake a thorough risk assessment.

The first aid service is responsible for their risk assessment to ensure that it matches the event profile. It is not expected an event organiser will prescribe or specify the clinical care required, instead event organisers should provide appropriate, *updated* information about the event to enable the first aid service to determine the clinical care requirements.

Within an event, there may be different levels of risk. Spectators, for example may only need the provision of basic first aid, while participants may need a higher level. It is important that event organisers and local councils properly assess and communicate their needs based on their understanding of the event and any learnings from previous events.

NOTE: A First aid service providing first aid beyond their licenced service level is in breach of the regulations.

I have a licenced first aid provider. Do I also need Ambulance Victoria?

It is not compulsory to engage Ambulance Victoria (AV) for an event. However, AV encourages all event organisers to consider notifying them of a planned event. Ambulance Victoria will perform a risk assessment of the event taking into account, the nature of the event, distance to and capacity of nearest health service, as well as the planned event's impact on local and broader communities access to timely, emergency care. Importantly, as the statutory ambulance service, AV are the only service provider authorised to transport patients from an event to a hospital.

How are the first aid service providers monitored?

Authorised Officers (AO's) from the department appointed under section 45 of the Act attend events to conduct inspections. Authorised Officers include Registered Paramedics with extensive pre-hospital experience, and may include at times, departmental regulation managers. The purpose of the inspection is to assess the first aid service providers compliance with the regulations and that there is the provision of safe, quality patient care, appropriate to the licence level.

How will I know if an Authorised Officer is attending my event?

Authorised Officers will contact event organisers directly to gain access into and around events. At times, AOs may ask the event organiser to not inform the first aid service of the inspection, as pre-notification of an inspection limits the ability of the department to conduct an accurate assessment of the first aid service's compliance with the regulations.

Event organisers are requested to support AOs with their inspection activities by providing the relevant authorisation and or accreditation to attend an event. AOs will carry photo identification and identify themselves prior to conducting inspection activity.

Authorised Officers are only permitted to assess the first aid service provider's activity, and do not conduct inspection of any other part of an event.

If the AO detects a regulatory non-compliance that poses an immediate and severe risk to patient safety, the AO will make contact with the event organiser to advise of further regulatory action.

Who do I speak with regarding concerns of quality and safety of patient care at an event?

If you are concerned with the level of patient care provided, a complaint can be made to the first aid service in the first instance. Alternatively, you can discuss your concerns with the NEPT and First Aid Regulations team via Neptfirstaidregulation@health.vic.gov.au

For further information visit the [Department of Health](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/first-aid-services) website available at <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/first-aid-services>>

To receive this document in another format [email NEPT, First Aid and Investigations](mailto:NeptFirstAidRegulation@health.vic.gov.au) <[NEPTFirstAidRegulation@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:NeptFirstAidRegulation@health.vic.gov.au)>.

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Available at [First Aid](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/first-aid-services) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/first-aid-services>>