

One to One Rule

The Association introduced a scheme in April 2007 to ensure that all employees have a basic knowledge of their job before they are permitted to clean carpets or upholstery. The One to One rule goes some way to assist you as an employer to improve your image and to minimise potential problems of damage to customer's carpets or upholstery. Understandably, it led to a number of questions from members about how it affects them and their employees. A series of questions and answers have been prepared which should go a long way to make things clearer, and it should be made clear that the rule operates across all levels of membership.

It is important to remember that the idea of the One to One rule is to ensure that everyone cleaning soft furnishings has at least some basic knowledge of their trade. It does not change the requirements for anyone who wishes to join the Association. It is still necessary for a new applicant to attend the two-day NCCA course (or equivalent approved course), the 2-day IICRC Carpet Cleaning & Upholstery Cleaning Courses or complete training by franchises ChemDry, Rainbow International, SafeClean or Hydro-Dynamix.

The idea behind the One to One rule is not to encourage minimum only training. Rather, it is simply to ensure there has been some basic training and from that there is an understanding of what the business is about. If it is your policy to send employees on fuller training programmes this is still encouraged. The more training your staff receive the greater their contribution to your company.

If, after considering the questions and answers, you still have some doubt please contact the office.

Who does the rule apply to?

The rule applies to all full-time or part-time employees, who either clean carpets or upholstery or proactively assist in cleaning carpets or upholstery.

What is a proactive assistant?

In the simplest terms this applies to anyone who takes control of equipment used for cleaning.

What if I use a helper and not an assistant?

A helper is someone who fetches and carries. They may unload and assemble the kit; fill and empty the extractor; possibly participate in the pre-vacuuming but do not share in the actual cleaning of the carpet or upholstery. It is not a requirement to provide proof of training for helpers.

How does the One to One Rule apply to my existing employees?

You must be able to offer evidence that they have at the very least attended and received a certificate of attendance from a training course. Ideally, they will have attended the NCCA two day training course, an IICRC course, or provide evidence that they have attended a recognised course organised by an NCCA Corporate member, involved in supply for carpet and upholstery cleaning. Other industry recognised organisation will also be sufficient.

Does that mean that if I have an employee who has cleaned for many years but has not attended an external course he must attend a course?

Some companies have excellent in-house and tool box training. If the employee has worked with you for more than two years it is not obligatory that they attend an

external course, however, it will be necessary for them to complete a knowledge paper obtainable from the NCCA. There will be a small charge for the knowledge paper.

What am I required to do if I have an employee who has been with me less than two years?

It is necessary for you to arrange for your employee to attend a training course, however, to give you adequate time to organise this there will be a six month period in which you can arrange for this to take place.

From April 1 what is the situation with new employees?

It is assumed that you don't immediately send them out to clean carpets but have in place a learning programme to assist them, however, before they are permitted to actually clean carpets you must arrange for them to attend an acceptable training course. The expression 'acceptable' refers to a training course where there has been an agreement that the employee attends and completes the NCCA knowledge paper. This should be done within 3 months of their joining your company. The one exception to this is if you have adopted the IICRC apprentice scheme* and have in place the one day training programme. The participants complete a test paper and on passing receive a certificate. A copy of this is acceptable evidence of training to an acceptable standard.

What if I want them to go out and clean carpets immediately?

It is unacceptable to permit any employee to undertake cleaning work unless they have fulfilled the training requirements and have evidence of their training.

What if my new employee has already cleaned carpets?

If they have been cleaning carpets and upholstery within the last two years and if they have attended and received a certificate of attendance from a training course a copy of the certificate should be sent to the office as evidence of their suitability.

What if they are unable to find their certificate?

It would preferable for them to attend a training course, however, if you are able to ascertain that they have been cleaning for more than 5 years it will be possible for you to obtain a copy of the NCCA knowledge paper and have them complete that.

What if my employee does not achieve a pass mark in the knowledge paper?

Arrangements will be made to allow you to assist them to improve their knowledge and re-sit the paper.

*For information about this scheme contact IICRC – 0844 880 0025