

OUR MISSION

The Canadian Red Cross mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity, in Canada and around the world.

WHAT CONSTITUTES RED CROSS EMBLEM MISUSE?

Misuse includes any unauthorized appearance of a red cross on a white background, or use of the capitalized words Red Cross. This includes any symbol so closely resembling a red cross that it could be easily mistaken for one.

Typical misuses include business signage and logos, advertising, marketing materials, music videos and games, first aid kits and first aid posts, and medical supplies or facilities.



Example of emblem misuse

WHAT IS DONE IN CASES OF EMBLEM MISUSE?

In most cases, individuals, businesses or other entities voluntarily stop misuse of the emblem when it is brought to their attention. If there is not voluntary compliance, legal action can and has been taken. Emblem misuse is a federal offence that can result in a fine or imprisonment, as well as forfeiture of products connected with the misuse.



WHAT SHOULD I USE AS A FIRST AID SYMBOL?

International and Canadian organizations responsible for standards recommend a white cross on a green background



to identify a first aid kit or supplies or a first aid treatment station. This symbol is widely used in Canada and abroad.

HELP US PROTECT THIS IMPORTANT EMBLEM

HOW CAN I HELP STOP EMBLEM MISUSE?

Everyone in Canada has an obligation to help protect the integrity of the red cross emblem. Please report misuse of either the emblem or the organization's name to any Canadian Red Cross office or online at: www.redcross.ca/emblem-reporting.



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT:


- Humanity
- Impartiality
- Neutrality
- Independence
- Voluntary Service
- Unity
- Universality



www.redcross.ca

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT EMBLEM MISUSE IN CANADA



WHY DOES THE RED CROSS EMBLEM NEED PROTECTION?

 The red cross emblem is among the most widely recognized symbols in the world. Its familiarity helps to explain why many people believe — mistakenly — that it can be used by anyone for a wide variety of purposes. In fact, any unauthorized use of a red cross symbol on a white background is prohibited internationally under the Geneva Conventions and within Canada by federal law.

Every day, Red Cross personnel work in regions of armed conflict, disasters and health emergencies. Their ability to safely carry out their humanitarian missions and protect those in their care depends on universal acceptance of the emblem as a sign of Red Cross neutrality and protection. Unauthorized use of the emblem contributes to confusion over what it represents, and can put lives at risk.

To prevent this, Canada and other states that are signatories to the Geneva Conventions agree to protect the emblem and restrict its use to official Red Cross organizations and programs, as well as the medical and religious services of their armed forces.

WHY IS THERE MORE THAN ONE EMBLEM?

A red cross on a white background    has been the emblem of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement since 1863 and has been incorporated in the Geneva Conventions since 1864.

The red crescent was recognized in 1929 and the red crystal was added in 2005. All three emblems have equal status.

WHO IS ENTITLED TO USE THE RED CROSS EMBLEM?

Under the Geneva Conventions, regulations of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and national legislation in nearly 200 countries, the only



organizations permitted to use the emblem, or the names Red Cross or Red Crescent, are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Canadian Red Cross and its counterparts in countries around the world, and the medical or religious services of the armed forces.

WHAT CANADIAN LAWS PROTECT THE EMBLEM?

Canadian statutes governing use of the emblem or the names Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Crystal are:

- the Geneva Conventions Act
- the Canadian Red Cross Society Act
- the Trade-marks Act.

The emblems and the Red Cross name are “prohibited marks” under the Trade-marks Act. The emblems and name cannot be used by anyone else without written authorization of the Canadian Red Cross.

