**FAQs: Police officer guidelines on Health Protection Regulations 2020**

***What does the new legislation state on police enforcement?***

The Government has made new public health regulations strengthening police enforcement powers in England, to reduce the spread of coronavirus, protect the NHS and save lives.

To ensure people stay at home and avoid non-essential travel, from March 26, if members of the public do not comply the police may:

•Instruct them to go home, leave an area or disperse

•Ensure parents are taking necessary steps to stop their children breaking these rules

•Issue a fixed penalty notice of £60, which will be lowered to £30 if paid within 14 days.

•Issue a fixed penalty notice of £120 for second time offenders, doubling on each further repeat offence.

***How are officers expected to enforce?***

The College of Policing has drawn up guidelines alongside the National Police Chiefs’ Council, Home Office and the Federation.

Officers have been advised to follow the Four E’s approach:

**Engage** – Officers will initially encourage voluntary compliance.

**Explain** – Officers will stress the risks to public health and to the NHS. Educate people about the risks and the wider social factors.

**Encourage** – Officers will seek compliance and emphasise the benefits to the NHS by staying at home, how this can save lives and reduce risk for more vulnerable people in society.

**Enforce** – Officers will direct individuals to return to the place where they live. This may include providing reasonable instruction of the route by which the person is required to return. Officers may also remove that person to the place where they live, using reasonable force where it is a necessary and proportionate means of ensuring compliance.

Officers will make sensible decisions, employ their judgement and continue to use other powers.

The new regulations encourage police to keep an inquisitive and questioning mindset, and consider that it might not be safe for everyone to be at home. Officers should consider if there are any safeguarding aspects at play, such as domestic abuse, child abuse or mental health. If safeguarding issues are at play, officers should not follow legislation and revert to normal processes for dealing with vulnerable people.

Enforcement will be a last resort.

Read the full guidelines here: [www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/Health-Protection-Guidelines.aspx](http://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/Health-Protection-Guidelines.aspx)

**I am unsure about some of the points, what should I do?**

Your force should receive a briefing and training package which will be delivered to you imminently. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your line manager who will be able to advise.

**Will the legislation apply to Welsh forces?**

The Home Office believes the new laws will not apply to the devolved authorities, meaning that the Welsh Assembly may have to consider its own legislation or “piggy back” the Westminster legislation.

