

# Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce – applying the four ‘E’s

## Policing will adopt a four-phase approach

This is guidance to help officers put the **four ‘E’s** into practice – it’s a suggested approach.

The **four ‘E’s** are based on evidence that people are more likely to comply after a police encounter if they feel they have been treated fairly, have received an explanation, and have been given the opportunity to give their view. This idea of procedural justice to support police legitimacy has been quite well tested and fits with the policing by consent model – it’s founded on building public cooperation.

**1 Engage** – officers speak to people and try to establish their awareness and understanding of the situation. They may ask people about their circumstances if they feel they are in breach of the Regulations. Officers give people the opportunity to express their views. They listen and take people’s responses into account.

**2 Explain** – officers try to educate people about any personal risks they are taking, they will explain the Regulations and highlight the responsibilities we all share. Officers treat people with dignity and respect. They highlight their trustworthy motives by explaining wider social factors, such as the risks to public health and the NHS.

**3 Encourage** – officers may need to guide individuals, suggesting they disperse and/or return home. Officers can encourage people to act reasonably, emphasising that staying alert and safe (social distancing) saves lives. They demonstrate consistency in their approach and are willing to explain why they are requesting a certain course of action.

If an officer has been explicit in their request for someone to take action, has explained the risk and encouraged people to be reasonable to save lives and they have refused, then it may become necessary to:

**4 Enforce** – officers may, as a last resort, remove a person to the place where they live, using reasonable force only if it is a necessary and proportionate means of ensuring compliance (for gatherings in a public place only). They may also fine individual(s) for breach of the Regulations.

The enforcement powers are afforded to officers by **The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020**. Officers should only use these powers if the **Engage, Explain** and **Encourage** phases are unsuccessful.

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

## What it means for the public

- People may now leave and remain outside of the place where they live for any reason, subject to restrictions on gatherings and overnight stays. Anyone in a prohibited gathering (exceptions apply), or staying away from home overnight without a reasonable excuse, may be fined. Individuals who continue to disregard these requirements may face further fines.
- If a public gathering includes more than six people (from any household) officers may instruct the gathering to disperse and may remove people to their home(s), exceptions apply. There are no powers to remove or use force in a private place.
- Police can issue a fixed penalty notice of £100, which will be lowered to £50 if paid within 14 days. Police can then issue further penalty notices, the fine increasing on each repeat offence (up to a maximum of £3,200). Refusal to pay will lead to proceedings in the magistrates’ court.