

### **Risk Factors**

7. COVID-19 virus transmits when someone breathes in aerosolised droplets from an infectious person or when they touch a surface that is contaminated by the virus and then transfer the infection to their eyes, nose or mouth. People are not at risk of air-borne infection unless they are within a metre of someone who aerosolises the virus e.g. by coughing or unless they touch a contaminated surface and then transfer the infection. The two-metre rule ensures people are not in reach of each other and will therefore not spread the virus by touch. Risk controls should focus on these factors. The idea that the two-metre rule relates to protection from respiratory risk is likely to be a common misunderstanding which inspectors may have to explain to concerned workers.

### **Risk controls**

8. If an employer is following the relevant Public Health guidance for their sector in terms of controlling the public health risks, they will generally be taking reasonably practicable precautions to control workplace risks. Annex 2 contains a reminder of relevant guidance, as at the end of March 2020.

### **Responding to Concerns**

9. In considering whether a Concern merits investigation the factors in Annex 3 should be considered.

### **Hierarchy of control**

10. Employers should consider the control of COVID-19 infection in the context of the familiar hierarchy of control. Annex 4 sets out some examples of thinking in the hierarchy.

### **Initial Enforcement Expectation**

11. The Enforcement Management Model should be applied when considering the initial enforcement expectation.
12. The measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID19 should be treated in the same way as any other risks to health.
13. The working population is generally healthier than the population at large. Workers in defined vulnerable groups (i.e. in receipt of an NHS letter) should not be in work but shielding in their own homes. For healthy people a COVID-19 infection should be treated as a 'significant health effect' which could result in the person being unable to perform their normal duties for more than 3 days, causing non-permanent or reversible health effects.
14. If the duty holder meets all the standards the likelihood of receiving the infection at work is Remote. If the social distancing controls are deficient then the likelihood may rise to Possible or Probable.