



## 1.d Health & Safety at work during the COVID-19 outbreak

### Existing legal requirements continue

The Health and Safety at Work general duty under section 2 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees is still in force and applies. The risk of contracting Coronavirus is not related to or caused by work activities directly. However, the risk of transmission may be increased by following normal working practices, so employers have a duty to identify and implement control measures to mitigate the risk in line with current HM Government Advice.

#### Risk assessments for vulnerable people

Risk assessments for vulnerable persons need to be reviewed on a priority basis and in accordance with the current HM Government Advice. Vulnerable employees are classed as:

- Pregnant Employees
- Employees beyond normal retirement age
- Employees with underlying health conditions.

#### Employee sickness

If an employee reports sick with COVID-19 symptoms, they must be instructed not to report for work and advised to follow the self-isolation NHS guidelines.

#### Coronavirus and RIDDOR regulations

As of the 3rd April 2020 you must report a case of COVID-19 under the RIDDOR Regulations if it is believed an employee has been exposed through an unintended incident at work. **This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.**

or

If a worker has been diagnosed as having COVID-19, and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by an exposure at work, **this must be reported as a case of disease.**

#### Reduced Workforce Numbers

It's inevitable that the workforce may reduce as employees follow self-isolation advice when symptoms appear, or persons in their households become affected. The requirement to keep risk assessments under review is vitally important as this may generate other safety related issues.

#### Impact on HSE visits

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has suspended routine inspections during the Coronavirus outbreak. It will however, continue to respond to fatalities and serious issues, but has to ensure it is following HM Government advice.