**Example COVID-19 Recruitment – Obtaining References protocol**

Whilst completing the recruitment process for new starters during and throughout the COVID-19 outbreak you may encounter some difficulties with obtaining relevant reference checks. This could be due to new starters previously being employed in, for example, the retail sector and due to closures we may be unable to obtain a reference in a timely manner.

CQC have been consulted on 25/03 (Ref: ENQ1-8611749857) and we have been provided with the following advice:

Must remain complaint with the following Regulations surrounding recruitment:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-18-staffing#guidance>
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-19-fit-proper-persons-employed>

**References:**
Must provide sound reasons why reference not obtained (i.e. unable to contact employer), must be fully documented and appropriate Risk Assessment in place, please also obtain another character reference before commencing work or, alternatively, a reference for 2nd to last recent employer. Please make use of the ‘Inability to Obtain References Risk Assessment Checklist’ on the HMS-V2 under Recruitment > New Starter Forms > Personnel Files.

Where possible, contact Head Office of said company and provide evidence of attempted contact in the file – if not received within timely manner then please complete steps as above.

In first instance, please telephone referees in attempts to get references as quickly as possible. When taking a reference via telephone it is important to document this and then once complete you will need to email/send a written evidence of the conversation (ideally following the steps on Reference Request form) along with ‘Telephone Reference Confirmation Letter’ ,the referee will need to sign and confirm accuracy. Therefore, on completion of Application Forms please ensure that References section includes telephone numbers and email addresses in order to speed up the process for both candidate and organisation.