

Production: COVID-19 Guidelines

Background

The current global coronavirus “lockdown” or “stay-at-home” orders determine when and under what circumstances individuals are permitted to leave their residences. The orders vary from country to country and, in the United States, from state to state. Decisions on whether to resume production must be made in accordance with all applicable governmental “stay-at-home” orders regarding the movement of individuals.

As a production company decides to resume production, it is responsible for developing an assessment and mitigation plan in line with current governmental restrictions and applicable health organization guidance.

Below are recommendations and best practices to help ensure the safety of the production, mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and manage situations in which an individual associated with the production demonstrates symptoms. These guidelines and protocols should be a part of the overall production risk assessment and mitigation plan and should be implemented as far as reasonably practical. Following these recommendations will not guarantee against a COVID-related event that requires a further shutdown of production, and each production company is responsible for its decision to resume production.

General Recommendations

Each production company should instruct individuals associated with the production to:

- Abide by all applicable governmental restrictions and guidelines for the filming location.
- Follow public health guidelines for social distancing and the utilization of PPE, such as masks.
- Consider wearing masks whether social distancing is possible or not.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds frequently, and especially after being in a public setting.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of the hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces or equipment.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - According to the CDC, symptoms can include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.
 - Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.
 - Keeping a distance (2 meters/6 feet) from others is especially important for those with preexisting health conditions.

Coronavirus Risk Mitigation Strategies

Production Locations

- Outdoor Locations - productions locations should be selected where access can be secured and isolated from the public and provide enough space for all production related activities. Locations should also allow for social distancing and provide facilities for hygiene measures.

- Indoor Locations - productions should avoid locations that have recently been occupied. Select facilities or buildings that can easily be cleaned and that provide enough space for social distancing and with facilities for hygiene measures. If possible, turn off air-conditioners and open doors and windows to increase fresh air circulation.

Production Staffing Levels

Productions should use the minimum number of essential team members needed on location at any given time. Production work should be arranged so that the number of people on site is kept as low as possible throughout the production. When possible, production teams should be organized and kept separate from each other to mitigate the impact if one overall member of the team develops symptoms. All production team members and any contractors associated with the productions should:

- Attend all daily production safety briefings
- Ensure they have a full understanding of guidelines and emergency protocols
- Be familiar with daily call sheet safety information
- Mindful of any changes for the production from the previous day

Production Travel

Stay abreast of all international and in-country travel restrictions. For international travel, be mindful of home country guidance for returning flights as well as the country destination for the production. Utilize credible intelligence sources or the appropriate diplomatic mission or foreign affairs office (e.g. Department of State, Foreign Commonwealth Office or Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

If possible, travel to the production location should be alone and by private transportation. If private transportation is not possible or available, then privately hired transportation such as taxis should be used maintaining social distancing and good health/hygiene practices. Ask for a car/taxi (when applicable) with a partition between driver and passengers, if available. Avoid using the recirculated air option for the car's ventilation during transport; use the vehicle's ventilation system to bring in fresh air and/or lower the windows. It is also recommended that the production company review the transportation company's hygiene protocols and verify that they are implemented in practice.

As a last option, production members should use public transport maintaining social distancing, hygiene best practices and minimizing the amount of time in close proximity to others. Where possible, travel should be arranged to avoid peak times.

Leased production vehicles – commonly touched surfaces on production vehicles should be cleaned and disinfected at the beginning and end of each shift and between transporting talent or crew members (specifically those with symptoms). Ensure cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly, including the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use. Doors and windows should remain open when cleaning the vehicle. When cleaning and disinfecting, wear disposable gloves compatible with the products being used as well as any other PPE required according to the product manufacturer's instructions. Use of a disposable gown is also recommended, if available.

Accommodations

Overnight accommodations should be avoided to the extent possible. If it is necessary, single occupancy accommodation should be obtained, and the hygiene and social distancing measures should be confirmed before use.

Health Declarations

A written declaration should be obtained from all production team members and contractors at the start of production stating:

- they are not suffering from any coronavirus related symptoms and have not had any symptoms within the previous 7 days
- they have not (as far as they are aware) been in contact with anyone with coronavirus symptoms within the previous 14 days
- they agree to immediately report the onset of any symptoms or contact with anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus.
- they consent to COVID-19 testing in the event that they become symptomatic and testing is available

Anyone developing symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell) or feels sick during a production assignment should isolate themselves at the production location, apply a mask and notify the medic or safety consultant. They should be sent home or sent to a designated self-isolation location (by private transport). Medical advice should be sought immediately.

Testing

It is unlikely that any clinical testing of production team members will be available or practical for productions. However, all production members should be monitored for symptoms (if possible, by a medic or designated trained person). Productions may want to consider checking the temperature of all team members on a regular basis. This can be done through self-testing or preferably by a trained medic or safety consultant on location wearing appropriate PPE. Test results should be recorded and anyone with a raised temperature (>37.8c or 100.4f) should be sent home (by private transport).

Productions should obtain consent from individuals for testing (as part of the declaration above) and the results along with any other personal details should be afforded all the normal data protection measures.

Physical Separation

Wherever possible physical separation of at least 2m/6 feet should be maintained. Production activities should plan to maintain this distance as the norm. If 2m/6feet separation cannot be achieved, consideration should be given if the production needs to continue. If so, the following control measures should be followed:

- **Eliminate.** Is the production activity needed? Are there other ways of achieving the same result?
- **Reduce.** Minimize the number of team members involved at any one time, for the shortest period of time (less than 15 mins ideally). Where and when possible, production members in close proximity should work side by side or back to back as opposed to facing each other.
- **Isolate.** Keep production members who must work within 2 m/6feet together as teams, separate from others production members if possible
- **Control.** Consider and enhance the authorization process for these activities and provide additional supervision as required.
- **PPE.** Use PPE (masks and gloves) as needed and immediately dispose of used equipment and wash hands.

Hygiene

Handwashing facilities should be provided wherever possible. Where handwashing facilities are not immediately available, hand sanitizer should be made available (at least 60% alcohol). Employees should wash or sanitize their hands regularly and immediately after handling equipment or objects. Productions will need extra supplies

of soap, hand sanitizer and paper towels to accommodate for these measures. If possible, hand sanitizing stations should be installed at convenient points throughout the production area. Hand hygiene is most important at the following times:

- Before eating or preparing food
- After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing
- Before and after contact with a sick or infected person (confirmed or suspected)
- After touching dirty surfaces such as doorknobs, phones, production equipment, tools, props, etc.
- After using the restroom

Laundry

For any production locations without an available laundry service, the following should be considered:

- Each production member should store dirty laundry in a plastic bag away from any common living area.
- Disposable gloves and masks should be worn when in direct contact with laundry (consider it contaminated).
- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Laundry should be thoroughly dried.
- Remove gloves and wash hands immediately.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

It is not a governmental guidance to wear protective masks or other PPE measures in the workplace other than in healthcare settings. However, production teams should make masks available to all talent and crew members when requested. Utilization of masks or other PPE measures should be considered for specific purposes when and where it is not possible to maintain social distancing for certain tasks or where equipment is to be handled and not possible to sanitize.

- If masks are to be worn, ideally be a N95, KN95 or FFP2/3 type which provide some protection against inhaled infection (particularly if properly fitted and tested). If these masks are not, surgical masks or cloth masks may provide some protection.
- Disposable gloves may also be useful for certain functions but again need to be used with care and disposed of carefully if they are to afford protection and not create an additional infection risk.
- All single use PPE including masks and gloves should be disposed of at the end of each task or shift so they cannot be re-used.
- After removing any PPE, the production member must wash their hands thoroughly with hand soap or sanitizer.

Equipment and Production Spaces and Offices

- Personal equipment (headsets, mics, radios etc.) should be cleaned before issue and then each day. When possible, personal equipment should be used exclusively by the same person for the duration of the production.
- Equipment should be cleaned as thoroughly as possible with antiseptic wipes regularly and whenever it is used by different crew members.
- Production sets, studios, dressing rooms, hair and make-up etc. should have an enhanced cleaning routine and should be regularly disinfected.
- Productions should consider the use of specific antiseptic fogging systems in addition to normal cleaning.
- All areas should be kept well ventilated. The length of time spent in any workspace should be limited and individuals should be allowed to take regular breaks for fresh air.

Catering and Eating Arrangements

- Dedicated eating areas should be identified on site to reduce food waste and contamination. Areas should be large enough to allow crew to sit at safe distances.
- Breaks and meals should always be staggered to reduce congestion and maintain physical distancing of 2 m/6 feet.
- People who are sick, their roommates, and those who have higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should eat or be fed in their room, if possible.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitizer should be available at the entrance of any room where team members eat and should be used by crew when entering and leaving the area.
- Production members should be encouraged to bring pre-prepared meals and reusable drink bottles.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or eating utensils. Non-disposable food service items used should be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher; wash hands after handling used food service items.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags and handling and disposing of trash; immediately wash hands.
- Stringent hygiene checks on caterers should be carried out prior to engagement including evidence of health monitoring and checking of catering staff.
- Where catering is provided:
 - One-way travel routes should be implemented where possible
 - Pre prepared and wrapped food should only be provided
 - Wrapped and disposable tableware, cups and eating utensils should be used
 - Tables should be sanitized between each use and at the end of the day

Reporting & Communication

If your program's talent has expressed any hesitation with travel or production, please have them contact their network Talent Management executive immediately.

If talent or a production team member develops symptoms and enters isolation, the onsite medic or safety consultant should complete an incident report. The ill crew member should be monitored and changes in conditions noted until they can be safely removed from the production location. If the production members condition worsens, information can be provided the medical professional providing further treatment.

Discovery production and talent management should be notified for any production team member that becomes ill on location or for any incident related to the production.

For more information visit:

- [WHO - Coronavirus](#)
- [CDC - Coronavirus](#)
- [OSHA - Coronavirus](#)
- [HSE - Coronavirus](#)