

COVID-19 Shooting Guidelines

Version 1.5 – 3rd June 2020

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, all employers have a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of anyone who has contact with their business (employees, freelancers, contractors, members of the public etc). The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 sit beneath this law and provide detail on what a safety management system should look like (e.g. how your business identifies and assesses its risks, takes steps to control them, trains relevant staff, and monitors/reviews its safety processes to ensure they are being carried out correctly and remain effective). The HSE has produced detailed guidance on this. Failure to comply with a business' health and safety duties is a criminal offence.

The purpose of this document is to assist production companies to assess and manage their COVID-19 risks on shoots and identify reasonable and practical steps to safeguard the health and safety of everyone attending a film shoot in relation to COVID-19.

Your business should therefore already have a safety management procedure in place, usually explained in your business' health and safety policy. COVID-19 will be a significant risk which should be controlled in accordance with your business' existing safety management procedure. This will ensure that your business is complying with the law. The latest government guidance on how businesses should control COVID-19 risks, as well as these Guidelines, should be considered (and relevant parts implemented) as you work through your business' safety management procedure, particularly when carrying out your COVID-19 risk assessment.

In addition, everyone working on the production and attending it has responsibilities in respect of COVID-19. They can meet them by working in accordance with these Guidelines.

This document will be updated regularly in response to feedback on how it works in practice, new Government law and regulation, and the potential availability of practical on-set COVID-19 testing. It is very important that you review Government updates in law and guidance so that your risk assessment and procedures are updated to reflect these changes.

If in doubt as to which is most up-to-date copy of this document, [Click Here](#) to view the latest version.

CONTENTS:

- > [GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES](#)
- > [MEDICAL INFORMATION](#)
- > [KEY PRINCIPLES](#)
- > [APA BEST PRACTICES](#)
- > [APPENDIX 1](#)
- > [APPENDIX 2](#)
- > [APPENDIX 3](#)

GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

Commercials production is not a sector which has been required to legally close as a result of COVID-19. On 11th May 2020, the government published new guidance entitled "[Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy](#)" which set out its roadmap to lift restrictions, including getting businesses which are allowed to be open back up and running safely. The guidance advises as follows:

"For the foreseeable future, workers should continue to work from home rather than their normal physical workplace, wherever possible... All workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open. Sectors of the economy that are allowed to be open should be open... As soon as practicable, workplaces should follow the new 'COVID-19 Secure' guidelines".

On the same date, the Government published its suite of "COVID-19 Secure guidelines". These comprise a general "[5 steps to working safely](#)" document plus eight, more detailed guidance notes focusing on specific work environments. The five steps to working safely are:

- Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment.
- Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures.
- Help people work from home.
- Maintain two metres social distancing, where possible.
- Where people cannot be two metres apart, manage transmission risks as per the Key Principles section below.

The more detailed guidance documents provide additional requirements for businesses' COVID-19 risk assessments and advise that companies must:

- share the results of their COVID-19 risk assessment with their workforce.
- consider publishing the results of their COVID-19 risk assessment on their company website (this is expected for employers with over 50 workers) - see template at Appendix 3 of this Guidance.
- display a downloadable "Staying Covid-19 Secure in 2020" notice in their workplace to show they have followed government guidance - downloadable from the HSE [here](#).

NB: These guidelines are applicable as at 3rd June 2020 and based on the law and guidance for filming in England. If you are shooting in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, laws and guidance can vary so should be checked to ensure that you are complying - they are available on the [GOV.UK website](#).

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Some medical context on COVID-19 (also read PHE's guidance [here](#)):

- The time between exposure to COVID-19 and the moment when symptoms start is commonly around five to six days but can range from one to 14 days.
- COVID-19 is transmitted from infected people's respiratory secretions (coughs/sneezes) reaching the nose, eyes or mouth.
- The most common symptoms are high temperature, continuous coughing and loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.
- Some people with COVID-19 suffer or show no apparent symptoms. Asymptomatic sufferers may still be infected and there is strong scientific evidence that they can transmit the virus too.
- COVID-19 can also survive on surfaces and be transmitted from them.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The purpose of social distancing, increased cleaning of hands and surfaces and PPE is to break transmission of the virus and reduce the risk of infection.

We should operate on the basis that we all have the potential to be asymptomatic carriers and must adhere to the safety principles to minimise risk. Therefore the following essential rules are based on current UK Government guidelines, and must be adhered to:

- Maintain social distancing wherever possible - two metres apart.
- Wash your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitiser (containing at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available, for at least 20 seconds as often as possible.
- Cough and sneeze in the crook of the arm or into a tissue and bin immediately.
- Report COVID-19 symptoms to employer.
- Work from home where possible.
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, productions should take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission by:
 - > considering whether an activity needs to continue for the business to operate.
 - > keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
 - > using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
 - > using back-to-back or side-to-side working whenever possible.
 - > staggering arrival and departure times.
 - > reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering'.

APA BEST PRACTICES

These are recommendations as to how to structure your live-action production, over and above Government guidelines and, again, they will be constantly reviewed and updated.

Both pre-production and production are likely to take longer to enable compliance as a result.

The number of people on location should be kept to a minimum. Anyone - production staff, cast, crew, agency and client - who is not absolutely necessary to have at the location to make the film should not attend. Furthermore, every person who will be attending the location - because it is necessary that they do so - shall sign the COVID-19 Health Declaration Form (Appendix 1, attached).

We have organised our best practices as follows:

- Pre-production
- Budget and Contract
- Production Office
- Casting
- The Shoot - General
- Talent on Set
- Location Shooting
- Studio Shooting
- Wardrobe
- Hair and Make-up
- Crewing Up
- Technical Crew
- Hired Equipment - General
- Catering
- Travel
- Health and Safety - General
- PPE and Sanitisation

PRE-PRODUCTION

- Scripts and treatments need to bear in mind the current restrictions in both their messaging tone and the mechanics of their production. Production companies should take every opportunity to advise agencies and advertisers as to how to create a script which can be shot in compliance with these guidelines, so it can be produced.
- Get approvals from agency/client as early as possible. Finalise as many creative decisions as possible no later than the PPM in order to reduce last minute changes on shoot days, and to plan for all sanitary accommodations.
- Encourage early confirmation of projects to allow for additional prep time. Also, encourage and explain the need to the agency and client the importance of sticking to scheduled confirmation dates.
- Where possible all pre-production processes should be managed remotely from home: including storyboards, production meetings, meetings with the agency and PPMs.
- Distribute these guidelines to all involved in the production.

BUDGET AND CONTRACT

- Cost the requirements of this protocol within your bids. Should regulations change, space needs to be made by agency/client to accommodate these if production incurs further costs, since insurance will not assist.
- State on your bid letter that anyone attending the shoot for the agency, client and/or production company will be required to adhere to the COVID-19 APA Shooting Guidelines.
- The production should be planned to minimise COVID-19 related disruption risks so far as it is reasonably practicable to do so. In respect of the COVID-19 related risks to production which remain:
 - > Make provision for what happens in the event of such disruption (e.g. an agreement that the director or cast will be replaced if they become unavailable because of COVID-19).
 - > Have an agreement with the agency by which the agency will meet such costs (according to the terms of such agreement) because insurance will not cover COVID-19 risks to the production.

PRODUCTION OFFICE

- COVID-19 can last 24 hours on paper. Avoid printing and paper distribution (eg: callsheets and shooting schedules) except for clear safety posters on set.

NB: for guidance on companies' office buildings (rather than temporary location production offices) please refer to the forthcoming APA COVID-19 Office Guidelines.

CASTING

- Casting sessions and callbacks can be done remotely via video link ups and self-casting.
- When casting children, their supervising adult should remain close at hand.
- Note: remote casting may prohibit rehearsal of interacting action.
- Those aged 70 or over, or with known pre-existing conditions should be given special consideration and enhanced measures.
- Consider what you will do if needing to replace talent.
- Do not confirm any cast until they have signed the Health Declaration form - Appendix 1.

THE SHOOT - GENERAL

- Stagger call times where possible to avoid congestion.
- Keep the unit as small as possible and minimise the number of crew/agency/cast on set at any one time.
- Departments should be organised in 'cohorts' and kept separate throughout. If necessary, have large enough areas for crew 'holding' to enable alternating teams in the working area.
- Wash and thoroughly dry hands on arrival and during the day at regular intervals. Alcohol-based sanitisers should be visible throughout location and soap and water provided wherever possible.
- Consider a video-conferencing facility relaying video village remotely to agency/client.
- Consider increasing video monitors on set to avoid clusters of people.
- All crew to adhere to any safety guidelines or notices given on the day.
- Consider any space markers where possible and one-way routes to minimise interaction.
- Walkies to be correctly sanitised, bagged-up and labelled with crew names before distribution - do not share radios.

TALENT ON SET

- Where social distancing of talent might not seem achievable on set due to creative or action required, you need to do all you can to minimise the risk of transmission. If possible, adapt the process (eg: use members of the same household, shoot individuals as separate plates and composite in post, use screens or barriers to separate talent from each other, shoot back-to-back or side-by-side, keep the activity time involved as short as possible etc) to achieve the aim within government regulations.

NB: Government regulations on working within social distancing state that you should do everything practical to manage transmission risks by considering whether an activity needs to continue for the business to operate, keeping the activity time involved as short as possible, using screens or barriers to separate people from each other, using back-to-back or side-to-side working whenever possible, staggering arrival and departure times, reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering'.

LOCATION SHOOTING

- Initial location research can be done remotely using location libraries.
- Social distancing must be used when visiting locations and meeting property owners/managers.
- Try and ensure common areas and holding areas are outside wherever possible.
- Preference for one location per day, without unit moves.
- Preference for location in a 4G area, where possible, to transmit live video over the internet.
- Locations to be well ventilated.
- When considering the use of atmosphere/smoke effects, discuss the use requirements with the manufacturer in advance to help assess any potential COVID-19 related risk.
- Locations where possible also required to share their COVID-19 preparedness plans.
- Locations to be cleaned prior and after shooting if possible.

- Avoid locations at a distance which would require overnight accommodation for those involved, also avoid locations which will not permit minimum social distancing.
- Director's recce and tech recce: minimum crew only (self-driving and maintaining social distancing throughout) to include a health and safety officer where possible. The health and safety officer will do a risk assessment specific to this location and production. Masks and gloves available for all attendees as required c/o production.
- Location Prep: Prelight/set-build/set-dress etc to be undertaken separately by one crew/department at a time if possible.
- Display [APA Covid 19 health and safety posters](#) around the set.

STUDIO SHOOTING

- All these guidelines apply to studio productions as well as locations. However, studios are likely to have their own risk assessment and COVID-19 preparedness plans which you will have to adhere to as well.
- Avoid creating crowded enclosed spaces with little airflow. Ventilate the space as often as is possible.

WARDROBE

- If fittings have to be done in person, then the wardrobe department can set up clothes and supervise fitting from a safe distance.
- If fittings can be done at home they should be, and relayed via video-call or photos.
- Wardrobe department to utilise existing/talent-owned options where possible (shops and hire companies currently closed through risk of infection).
- Wardrobe department to supply clothing in plastic coverings plus separate plastic covers for the talent's own clothes. Consider individual storage for costumes where they are limited to the individual wearing them.
- Discuss heat treatment/washing with your wardrobe department as necessary.
- Talent dress themselves wherever possible.
- If wardrobe crew need to break social distancing then they need to wear enhanced PPE (Tier 2 - see PPE and Sanitisation section below).

HAIR AND MAKE-UP

- HMU department to utilise disposable kit where possible.
- Kit should remain unique to each artist.
- Follow appropriate barbicide and other disinfecting processes.
- Talent to do their own touch-ups where possible.
- If HMU crew need to step in they should wear enhanced PPE (Tier 2 - see PPE and Sanitisation section below) as necessary.
- Keep HMU separate from Wardrobe. Provide sufficient space for both departments to maintain two metres distance.

CREWING-UP

- It is advisable to hire a medic/nurse depending on the size of the unit.
- For health and safety personnel see the Health and Safety – General section, below.
- Require all crew to notify you if they develop symptoms.
- Do not confirm crew until they have signed the Health Declaration form in Appendix 1.
- Provide crew with an email confirmation of their engagement for them to produce if the police question them on their travel to the location.

NB: a waiver of rights by a crew member in respect of their contracting COVID-19 is of no value - English law does not permit excluding liability for causing injury or death through negligence, so a waiver is not part of this guidance.

TECHNICAL CREW

- Boom sound where possible, or train talent to apply mics themselves if booming not feasible.
- Camera team to wear appropriate PPE if breaking social distancing around camera (see PPE and Sanitisation section below).

HIRED EQUIPMENT - GENERAL

- COVID-19 can survive up to 72 hours on plastic and steel, so try to work out advance collection/delivery/quarantine of kit/materials where possible. If that is not possible, apply a thorough sanitation process.
- All equipment hire facilities should have their own risk assessments and health and safety practices including their COVID-19 regimes and should provide you with copies.
- Refer to the technician or company's cleaning protocols and make sure they work for your production.
- As equipment is usually expensive and specialised, please rely on crew or companies to clean before hire and after with instructions how to wipe down during hire period for sanitation.

CATERING

- Consider individual hot box delivery instead of mobile kitchen.
- Meals pre-packed to avoid contamination, no self-service facilities.
- Offer per diems to crew bringing their own meals to work, should that be necessary.
- Everyone must wash their hands before entering any catering/dining area.
- Dining space requirement to ensure increased distance while eating with at least two metres space to be observed between people.
- Break and mealtimes should be staggered when possible to reduce congestion
- Disposable, recyclable plates and cutlery to be provided.
- Where possible hot drinks and water stations to be available.

TRAVEL

- Crew to drive themselves to set (one person per car) and be dissuaded from using public transport where possible. Note: from 15th June 2020 the Government requires all using public transport to wear face coverings.
- Where required, production to organise transport using drivers or car service able to demonstrate that they can socially distance passengers.
- Passengers should be positioned in the rear, furthest away from the driver and separated using a clear plastic sheet.
- Alcohol gel sanitiser and wipes should be made available within the vehicle for the passenger to wipe down the seat(s) and clean their hands.
- Consider other Government regulation, eg: anyone arriving into the UK after the 8th June 2020 must self-isolate for 14 days, so should not attend any set or place of business.

HEALTH AND SAFETY - GENERAL

- Carry out a full risk assessment for each production at the recce. We recommend that this is done by a Health and Safety Officer.
- You may choose to have a health and safety officer on the shoot (eg: on a larger shoot with multiple elements) but their expertise and value usually lie in attending the recce, carrying out the risk assessment and making recommendations to minimise COVID-19 risks. We recommend you have a COVID Supervisor to implement and monitor COVID measures as per Appendix 2. This person must have both the relevant authority to implement, monitor and, if necessary, enforce your COVID-19 arrangements and should have undertaken the APA COVID Guidelines Assessment Test.
- All HoDs should submit their own departmental risk assessments which sets out their COVID-19 precautions.
- Production cannot safely confirm any crew or cast who have travelled to, or had any contact with an individual returning from, high COVID-19 risk countries (as deemed by [UK FCO](#)) in the 14 days prior to a shoot.
- All crew and talent to provide contacts for family/household in case of emergency on the day of shooting.
- Individuals on the shoot should be contacted subsequently in the event that fellow workers/talent are found to have contracted COVID-19 within the two weeks following the shoot.
- Consideration should be given as to whether temperature checks should be carried out on all crew on arrival to set.
- If anyone suffers COVID-19 symptoms on set, they should inform the producer, isolate and seek medical advice.
- If COVID-19 symptoms occur while at home or in temporary accommodation, or the individual receives notification via the [NHS Track and Trace](#) system, the individual should isolate for 14 days and notify production immediately, who in turn will need to identify other crew, cast, agency staff and contributors who are deemed to have been in close contact and ask them to monitor their own symptoms.
- Avoid sharing hand tools and personal property (mobile phones, pens, walkies etc) - crew must be responsible for the safety and sanitisation of their own items.
- All employees have a responsibility to care for the welfare of others as they would themselves. As per [Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#), *"it is the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work."*

PPE AND SANITISATION

- The current PHE guidance does not recommend face masks (i.e. those designed to protect the wearer from infection) other than in care settings. In the UK, current advice on face coverings (i.e. those designed to protect others from the wearer) is:

"If you can, wear a face covering in an enclosed space where social distancing isn't possible and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet. This is most relevant for short periods indoors in crowded areas, for example, on public transport or in some shops."

We consider, on balance, that masks have a value in inhibiting the spread of infection and that PPE has a value in making those attending the shoot feel safer and demonstrating that COVID-19 is a live threat and that it is being treated as such. Production should therefore consider having supplies of PPE where available and after an assessment of risk, which we have divided into two tiers:

> Tier 1 – basic PPE: masks and gloves

If masks are to be worn, they should ideally be of the FFP2/3 type which afford some protection against inhaled infection (particularly if properly fitted and tested). If FFP type masks are not available, face coverings or surgical masks provide some protection against asymptomatic spread by the wearer. These should be regularly changed and cleaned, especially if they become wet. Gloves are only a 'second skin' and therefore wearers need to continue to apply hygiene precautions (not touching the face) and they should be hygienically disposed of and a new pair used as frequently as possible.

> Tier 2 – enhanced PPE: including visor and covering suit.

Those who need to break two metre distancing and for a length of time to carry out their duties may need to wear enhanced PPE depending on the level of risk involved and following an assessment of what is reasonably practicable for your company to provide. Departments likely to be required to wear enhanced PPE depending on circumstances will include (but are not limited to): camera if gathering around camera, wardrobe if needing to tend to talent, HMU if needing to work on talent, medic if needing to assess symptoms.

- Provide covered bins for safe disposal of tissues and PPE.
- Crew can be asked to bring their own PPE but production must have sufficient for all crew.
- Only remove talent's PPE when essential.
- Clearly visible and spacious hygiene stations for washing, with plentiful supply of hand sanitiser and wipes.
- Each department is responsible for keeping their own area and equipment clean.

APPENDIX 1

COVID-19 HEALTH DECLARATION FORM FOR CREW / TALENT / AGENCY / CLIENT ATTENDING SHOOT

As part of our commitment to provide a safe working environment for all on set during the unprecedented, fast-changing COVID-19 situation, we need to ask you to confirm in writing, by signing below, that:

- You have no cause to believe that you have COVID-19 (an NHS symptom checker can be found [here](#)).
- You have been meeting the Government COVID-19 guidelines and social distancing when not at work as defined [here](#).
- As far as you are aware, you have not been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or anyone who is showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within the last 14 days. Furthermore, you have not been contacted under the NHS Track and Trace system and told to self isolate.
- You have not travelled to, nor to your knowledge had any contact with any individual travelling from any high COVID-19 risk countries (as deemed by [UK FCO](#)) in the 14 days prior to the shoot.
- You have not had a cough, or a temperature of 37.8 degrees centigrade or above in the last 14 days.
- If you develop a cough or a temperature of 37.8 degrees centigrade or above at any point before or during or within 14 days following the shoot you will immediately inform the production company engaging you.
- If you are over 70 years of age or have any pre-existing condition which would put yourself at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, as defined by the Government [here](#), you must inform production.
- You will notify us immediately should anything change as regards to the above confirmations.
- You have read, understood and agree to abide by the [COVID-19 APA Shooting Guidelines](#).
- For the purposes of GDPR you consent to our sharing and retaining your data to the extent that it is reasonably necessary for the safety of you and everybody on the production.

We also need you to provide us with contact details of spouse / partner / home-dweller in the case of emergency on set, please provide those here.

Name of resident emergency contact:

Mobile of resident emergency contact:

Print your name:

Signed:

Job Title:

Date of birth:

Date:

Your contact details if we need to contact you in event that crew or talent show symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of our shoot:

.....

APPENDIX 2

TASKS TO BE ALLOCATED TO A MEMBER OR MEMBERS OF THE PRODUCTION TEAM OR CREW OR, DEPENDING ON THE NATURE AND SCALE OF THE PRODUCTION, BY A COVID SUPERVISOR ENGAGED TO PERFORM THEM:

- Make sure set is clean before shooting - oversee cleaners
- Ensure distance markers are on floor and remain clear throughout working day
- Make sure that hand-sanitising stations are set up correctly
- Make sure all areas have been set up correctly as needed - medic tent etc.
- Make sure that PPE is visible
- Make sure notices/posters are set up and visible
- Make sure toilets are set up and clean
- Coordinate temperature checking
- During shoot - keep eye on 2-metre distancing
- Replenish PPE
- Check communal areas are clean and not over-crowded

Note: this is a non-exhaustive list and production companies should add additional tasks they require depending on the circumstances of the production.

APPENDIX 3

This draft notice is to enable you to comply with your obligations under the Government COVID-19 Guidelines which require you to put details of how you are managing COVID-19 risks on your website.

Important note: This is an example document and must be tailored to your business and the results of your business' COVID-19 company risk assessment.

DELETE THE RED TEXT ABOVE BEFORE POSTING ON YOUR WEBSITE.

[INSERT COMPANY LETTERHEAD]

HELPING OUR PEOPLE STAY SAFE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As we return to production after lockdown, the safety of our cast, crew and contributors is our highest priority. In order to ensure the health and safety of our people during the continued pandemic we have carefully assessed the risks of COVID-19 during production with reference to government and industry guidance.

In order to reduce those risks identified, as far as reasonably practicable, we will implement a package of control measures that will be in place during all stages of our productions.

How we are keeping people safe.

We are focusing on the following areas to ensure we can manage the risks of infection from COVID-19, carrying out specific assessments where necessary.

IN OUR OFFICES:

- **Minimising** - minimising the number of people in our offices at any time.
- **Communicating** - ensuring those who have symptoms or are ill know not to come into work and to return home immediately if they become ill at work.
- **Commuting** - considering the risks in commuting especially on public transport, introducing mitigations such as staggered start times.
- **Social Distancing** - making every effort to ensure social distancing is adhered to from space planning to signage.
- **Cleaning** - increasing the frequency of cleaning.
- **Face covering** - supporting our people in the safe wearing of face coverings on a commute and in scenarios where they choose to wear.

DURING OUR PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES:

- **Travel** - seeking to minimise travel requirements and follow social distancing principles within travel arrangements, wherever possible.
- **Location** - considering the physical capacity of space used, given the requirements of social distancing, as well as ensuring the provision of adequate hygiene facilities.
- **Work Activities** - considering the activities that people are going to need to undertake across roles in a production and if these can be adapted or changed to reduce risk.
- **Work Equipment** - managing the sharing of work equipment which is key to production from cameras and headsets to edit suites. Focusing on good hygiene and managing potential issues with touchpoints.
- **Work Patterns** - reviewing work patterns to encourage small groups (cohorts) of people who don't come into contact with other groups.
- **Catering and Rest Areas** - reconfiguring catering provision and planning breaks to ensure our people are as safe as possible.
- **First Aid and Emergency services** - planning activities to reduce the risk of requiring emergency services to be called as well as advice to first aiders on COVID-19 risk.
- **Masks, Gloves and Other PPE** - as per the APA COVID Shooting and Office Guidelines.
- **Mental Health** - the COVID-19 risk and the response has had a potential Mental Health impact for those working on productions which should be considered.
- **Monitoring** - compliance will be monitored and if required people will be reminded of the new COVID-19 working practices (such as social distancing).