

COVID-19 APA Shooting Guidelines

Version 1 - 11 May 2020

The purpose of these guidelines is to enable production companies to take reasonable and practical steps to safeguard the health and safety of everyone attending a film shoot in relation to COVID-19 and to meet their obligations to do so under the Health and Safety at Work Act, and law, and Government regulations on COVID-19. Production companies have that responsibility which they can meet by following these guidelines.

In addition, everyone working on the production and attending it has responsibilities in respect of COVID-19. They too can meet them by complying with these guidelines. They will be updated regularly in response to feedback on how they work in practice, new Government law and regulation, and the potential availability of practical on-set COVID-19 testing.

If in doubt as to which is the latest version, [Click Here](#)

CONTENTS:

-
- > **GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES**

 - > **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

 - > **KEY PRINCIPLES**

 - > **APA BEST PRACTICES**

GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

The Government says: [\(Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): what you need to do\)](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home).
- If you go out, stay two metres (six feet) away from other people, where possible.
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

"The Government has said carry on with business (and work at home where possible - but commercials cannot be shot at home, with very limited exceptions) while making clear that social distancing should be followed in the workplace *"including, where possible, maintaining a two metre distance from others."*

They clarified further:

"With the exception of organisations covered above [this refers to pubs, restaurants etc] in the section of closing certain businesses and venues, the government has not required any other business to close - indeed it is important for business to carry on."

Source: [Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

And, from the Health and Safety Executive, a governmental organisation:

"Keep your business open. With the exception of some non-essential shops and public venues, we are not asking any other business to close - indeed it is important for business to carry on"

Source: [Social distancing, keeping businesses open and in-work activities during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Some medical context on COVID-19 (also read the [WHO's dedicated FAQ](#)):

- 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 fever, coughing, sneezing and shortness of breath, less common symptoms are diarrhoea and abdominal pain.
- 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 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 or use hand sanitiser 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.

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
- 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
- Transport
- 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.
- PPMs can be managed remotely.
- Distribute the APA guidelines to all involved in the production to all involved.

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.

OFFICE

- Avoid printing and paper distribution except for clear safety posters on set - note: COVID-19 can last 24 hours on paper.

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 In 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.
- 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.
- 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, if possible, adapt the process to achieve within regulations (eg: use members of the same household, shoot individuals as separate plates and composite in post, etc) - if not possible then, if agreed by talent, they may be filmed together for real.

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.
- Note that councils are unlikely to grant any filming permits at the moment.
- Try and ensure common areas and holding areas are outside wherever possible.
- Preference for one location without unit moves.
- Preference for location in a 4G area, where possible, to transmit live video over the internet.
- Locations to be well ventilated.
- Avoid the use of vapours, steam and hazers (including but not limited to dry ice, oil, mists or glycol) as they are likely to keep airborne infections in the atmosphere longer.
- 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 recces: 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.

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.

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).
- 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.
- A person must be allocated on set to be responsible for monitoring COVID-19 related matters whether that is a health and safety officer hired by production or a nominated crew member.
- Require all crew to notify you in advance 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 and should provide you with a copy.
- 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.
- Disposable, recyclable plates and cutlery to be provided.
- Where possible hot drinks and water stations to be available.

TRANSPORT

- Crew to drive themselves to set (one person per car) and be dissuaded from using public transport where possible.
- Where required, production to organise transport using drivers or car service able to demonstrate that they can socially distance passengers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY - GENERAL

- Full risk assessment, on a job by job basis, will be carried out by a Health and Safety officer during prep and tech recces.
- Consider having a health and safety officer on shoot days.
- Allocate someone from the crew to be a COVID-19 officer to supervise other elements of COVID-19 preparation.
- 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.
- Temperature checks will need to be done on all crew on arrival to set.

- If crew / talent feel ill on set, they should be referred to production / medic.
- All workers, if they have any symptoms associated with COVID-19 or in advance of work, should report to production and remain in quarantine at home, without going to their workplace.
- 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.

PPE AND SANITISATION

- Production to have supplies of PPE for those needing to wear it:
 - Tier 1 – basic PPE: masks and gloves
Note that wearing gloves needs to be managed correctly - wear for single use activities and remove, also in the event that masks become mandatory, the APA will update according to government guidelines.
 - 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. 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.
- Covered bins provided 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.
- Clear health etiquette to be on posters around set (eg: Wear appropriate PPE at all times / When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow / Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth + Put down and pickup items rather than handing / Don't shake hands, or hug + Maintain social distancing, etc).



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, as part of your agreement with the production company engaging you, that:

- You have no cause to believe that you have COVID-19 (an NHS symptom checker can be found [here](#)) or may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- 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.
- 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 38 degrees centigrade or above in the last 14 days.
- If you develop a cough or a temperature of 38 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 preexisting 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](#).

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:

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