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## FILM PRODUCTION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 – FILM SET SAFETY GUIDELINES

We present a set of guidelines for the organisation of a film set during the COVID-19 epidemic. It is intended to provide knowledge on the available safety measures and facilitate the creation of hands-on working policies. The range of solutions is broad enough to be easily used, also during the preparation and post-production period. **We recommend social distancing, minimising face-to-face contact and maximising remote work.**

In the time of COVID-19, it is crucial to establish clear working rules for safety at work on set. **We recommend that your rules should be as concise and transparent as possible.** You should avoid excessive regulation and having too many provisions in your set of rules 'just in case'. The rules should be really followed, so it is important to always have them tailored to your project and strictly enforced. **Whoever does not abide by the established safe working rules must not be admitted to work on set!**

The application of working rules designed on the basis of the following guidelines significantly reduces but does not eliminate the risk of COVID-19 infections (and other infectious diseases). **We recommend open communication about the risk.** We recommend that producers and their clients use appropriate contractual provisions to regulate the liability of buyers, producers and subcontractors. The Advertising Producers' Club offers suggested contractual clauses free of charge to anyone interested.

The reality of the COVID-19 epidemic is rapidly evolving in health, social and legal terms. These guidelines will be updated whenever possible, which does not absolve producers of the obligation to monitor any new administrative procedures and safety precautions and to incorporate them into their own rules of working. We would like to remind you that, aside from all applicable administration guidance on how to work in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 15 March 2011 on health and safety in film making is still in force.

## PRELIMINARY INFORMATION – BEFORE YOU ENTER THE SET

*To prepare for the production, implement the following recommendations:*

- Create film set working rules (you can use this resource freely) and inform everyone entering the set – first by email, then during the briefing, and finally display the rules conspicuously on set (do not print them in the form of leaflets);
- Follow the rule that only healthy people, without any symptoms of an infectious disease, can enter the set. Include a health statement in the information sent before the shoot, and collect it from each crew member together with a statement of consent for the processing of personal data concerning their health;
- Make sure that anyone who enters the set acknowledges and accepts the working rules by email;
- Appoint one specific person to be in charge of enforcing safe practices, have him or her prepare the working rules (or familiarise him or her with them) and expect strict enforcement, obtain a written confirmation that the recommendations have been followed at the end of the shoot;
- When creating the working rules, be open to suggestions from your colleagues and department heads, this will help you enforce the rules;
- Enforce the working rules firmly, people will get tired, and some will try to question them. It depends on your consistency to ensure the rules are really followed;
- Ensure that a working culture is created where people on set will be committed to respecting the rules;
- Familiarise yourself with the general government guidance applicable to work during shooting and with the new safety precautions - adjust your working rules accordingly, as the guidance and precautions can change frequently;
- Be aware that the new security procedures will slow down your work. Take this into account when preparing your work plans, inform the client, never prioritise urgency over health;
- Have a procedure in place in case someone falls ill, including telephone numbers of emergency medical services and sanitary and epidemiological stations, the address of the nearest COVID-19 designated hospital, and choose a person responsible for notifying medical and sanitary services.

When organising your work on set, think of it as a clean zone. Your task is to minimise the virus risk in the zone before you start working and then to keep this zone free from the epidemic while you work. All new rules should be aimed at minimising contact between people. Regardless of the nature of your tasks, make sure to adopt all the working practices from section A, and then, depending on the complexity of your project, supplement them with certain elements from section B. If you engage actors and you are going to film them without their masks on, follow the recommendations of section C. If someone falls ill on the set, follow the recommendations of section D.

The SARS-COV-2 virus is a new, extremely aggressive pathogen that causes a relatively mild disease in most cases, but susceptible individuals can develop severe complications, compromising their respiratory, cardiovascular and central nervous system, kidneys and immune system to the point of failure or death. **Whatever the circumstances may be, you should wash your hands often, using soap and water, use protective masks covering your nose and mouth, cover your eyes with any kind of glasses and avoid touching your face as much as possible.**

## SECTION A – MANDATORY

*When arranging the set, you should always:*

- Have the film set working rules prepared;
- Designate a specific person responsible for ensuring that the rules are followed;
- Minimise the number of people on the set as far as possible;
- Obtain appropriate statements from them about their health and having had no contact with sick people during the last 14 days, along with a statement of consent for the processing of personal data concerning their health;
- Make a list to register all people entering the set and keep it for at least a month after the shoot. If an infection is confirmed after shooting, you will make the work of sanitary services easier;
- Introduce the rule of keeping a distance of at least 1.5m between all people working on set whenever possible. The principle should be also firmly followed during breaks and by people who are idle at any given time;
- Introduce an obligation to wash hands frequently with soap and water and display [appropriate instructions](#) at washbasins along with the Chief Sanitary Inspectorate and Ministry of Health hotline numbers. Make sure that a sufficient number of toilets is available and soap and disposable towels are regularly refilled;
- Supply the set with a sufficient amount of hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol and require hand disinfection from everyone, each time before they enter the set, and during work. Make sure that the dispensers are regularly refilled;
- Provide certified disposable masks (FPP1 standard) and make wearing them permanently a rule. Note that the mask should cover the nose and mouth. Make sure that the masks are always worn properly and replaced according to the lifespan specified for the mask type. You can allow the use of people's own reusable masks;
- Promote the use of face shields, which do not substitute masks, but provide additional protection for the eyes, which can be easily penetrated by the virus. Other eye protectors such as glasses or sunglasses offer additional security, encourage crew members to wear them;
- Provide much more space for people who take breaks, so that they can always keep a distance of at least 1.5 m between them;
- Make it a rule that touch points should be minimised – the on-set equipment should be touched only by designated persons from relevant functions. The same applies to items which are usually not assigned to any specific functions, such as light switches, heating, mobile phones, cars, etc. Assign specific people to handle each component of the set;
- Require that all components of the set assigned to people, are disinfected before the start of the shoot and from time to time during shooting;
- Designate a person responsible for the regular cleaning and disinfection of common surfaces which are touched by people: such as tables, countertops, door handles, chairs, light switches, etc.;
- Agree with department heads on a rule that the equipment they are responsible for must be disinfected before it reaches the set. Obtain confirmation that any equipment delivered to the set has been disinfected;
- Make meal serving rules that minimise the number of people eating at the same time. Do not use any meal solutions involving self-service. You can order meals packed separately and have them delivered to the set. If you use a canteen bus, make it a rule that meals are served

outside. Organise the dining space to keep a distance of at least 1.5m between the people eating. Use disposable, environmentally friendly tableware and cutlery;

- Implement rules of transport to the set to minimise the number of passengers sharing a ride. Encourage people to use individual means of transport;
- Regularly air the rooms where the film is being made and where the crew are present;
- Use separate bins for potentially contaminated waste (masks and gloves);
- Reduce working time on set to a maximum of 12 hours.

## **SECTION B – ADDITIONAL RULES**

*Introduce extra safety procedures, adding the following recommendations to the essential rules:*

- Make the set a closed film set – no visits or visitors;
- Engage a medical consultant and/or paramedic, nurse, doctor, who will be responsible for the ongoing assessment of the health of crew members and the precautions used;
- Have stand-ins ready for your key personnel in case someone from your team falls ill;
- Avoid replacing crew members during a filming day, work with the same people all day long;
- Introduce an electronic document workflow and do not print any documents that might be passed from hand to hand;
- Require all third-party providers supporting the set activities who are not crew members to wait in their cars outside the set;
- Arrange for shooting in a studio rather than on location in order to make it easier to control the hygienic aspects of work discussed in this document;
- Order a thorough disinfection of the entire area where the shoot is to take place;
- Make at least 1.5m distance marks on the ground where people might be queueing (toilets, meals, dressing rooms, etc.);
- Designate separate zones for people from different functions in order to minimise unnecessary contact between members of different departments;
- Demarcate zones around the set, restricting access to each subsequent circle to less and less people;
- Set limits on the number of people that can stay together in different rooms;
- Establish one-way traffic routes to minimise people passing by one another;
- Enforce a rule that items must not be passed from hand to hand – they must be put down and picked up;
- Use remote viewing technology, do not invite your clients and advertising agency employees to the set, arrange for online streaming from the set instead;
- Provide more camera monitors to minimise the number of people sharing a monitor;
- Restrict the use of clip-on mics, use boom mics only to record sound;
- Rotate meal breaks to minimise the number of people eating together;
- Encourage people to bring their own meals and consume them in their own cars.

## SECTION C – ACTORS

*The Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 2 May 2020 establishing certain restrictions, requirements and prohibitions in connection with a state of epidemic (Dz.U. [Journal of Laws] item 792), which is now in effect, does not account for the specificity of working on a film set. A number of situations specified in the regulation where the face mask can be removed may correspond to the situation on the set, but the Ministry of Health has not offered any clear interpretation so far. We are unable to formulate any binding recommendations until we obtain an interpretation, and actors can only take off their masks at their own responsibility and that of the producer. If, when preparing the film set, you decide to allow your actors to take off their masks:*

- Make it clear to everyone that only people in front of the camera can temporarily take off their masks. Always keep the time without masks on to a strict minimum, use particular care whenever any close contact with the actors is required.
- Minimise the number of actors working without their masks on at the same time and make sure they keep the right distance.
- Introduce the requirement to always wear protective devices of a higher standard (FPP1 masks as a minimum), disposable gloves, eye protection (goggles, face shields) for people contacting actors during make-up, in dressing rooms and during shooting. Minimise the number of those people;
- Avoid close contact with actors during make-up. As far as possible, actors should put on make-up on their own, using their own make-up products;
- If a make-up artist must do the make-up, provide separate make-up product kits for every actor. Do not use the same kit for more than one actor. The make-up artists should use protective face shields and disinfect hands each time before any direct contact with the actor.
- The actors should change clothes or costumes on their own as far as possible. If they need assistance, use the same safeguards as above.
- The clothes and costumes for the actors should be washed before being delivered to the set and ironed immediately before the actor puts them on.

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF COVID-19

*Despite the safety measures listed here, it may happen that someone falls ill during or after work on the set. Prepare yourself for this by following the recommendations below:*

- Ensure that everyone working on the set knows whom they should approach if they are unwell (fever, cough, feeling sick) and make sure that people pay attention to how others feel;
- Make sure that the person in charge of enforcing the safety rules, understands what to do if someone is unwell (fever, cough, feeling sick) while working;

- Designate a separate labelled room for isolation and isolate the person who feels unwell from the others;
- Notify medical and sanitary services according to the established procedure;
- Keep a list of all people on the set for at least one month in case it is required by sanitary services.

### Testing.

*Once extensive and unobstructed access to SARS-COV-2 testing is available, everyone on the film set should be tested. The tests should be carried out by licensed medical personnel, having obtained prior consent to testing and processing of personal data concerning health.*

*This set of guidelines is valid as of 8 May 2020.*



Advertising Producers' Club  
SAR Marketing Communication Association  
ul. Czerska 8/10, 00-732 Warsaw  
[www.kpr.sar.org.pl](http://www.kpr.sar.org.pl)  
[klub.producentow@sar.org.pl](mailto:klub.producentow@sar.org.pl)

Legal consultation: Katarzyna Michalik, Esq, LSW Leśnodorski Ślusarek i Wspólnicy law firm  
Medical consultation: Professor Paweł Januszewicz, public health expert