

Motion picture and television production: Protocols for returning to operation

The following content was posted to WorkSafeBC's website on June 24, 2020. For the most current version, please visit [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com).

These protocols provide guidance to employers in the motion picture and television production industry. These employers may also benefit from reviewing other protocols if their workplace includes other work environments such as offices, personal services, and food and drink services.

Employers must also ensure they are abiding by any orders, notices, or guidance issued by the provincial health officer, and the appropriate health authority, that are relevant to their workplace.

Developing a COVID-19 safety plan

Employers are required to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures they have put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Employers must involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for their workplace.

The COVID-19 Safety Plan follows the six steps outlined on COVID-19 and returning to safe operation. You can also refer to the COVID-19 Safety Plan OHS Guideline for information about developing a safety plan, including the level of detail required and use of supporting documentation.

Employers are not required to submit plans to WorkSafeBC for approval, but in accordance with the order of the provincial health officer, this **plan must be posted** at the worksite and on their website, if they have one. During a WorkSafeBC inspection, we will ask employers about the steps they have taken to protect their workers or to see the plan if it has been developed.

One part of developing your COVID-19 Safety Plan is identifying protocols that everyone at the workplace must follow to keep workers safe. We've provided industry-specific protocols below to consider as you develop the plan for your workplace.

These protocols are not a list of requirements; however, they should be considered and implemented to the extent that they address the risks your workplace. You may need to identify and implement additional protocols if the protocols suggested here do not sufficiently address the risk to your workers.

Understanding the risk

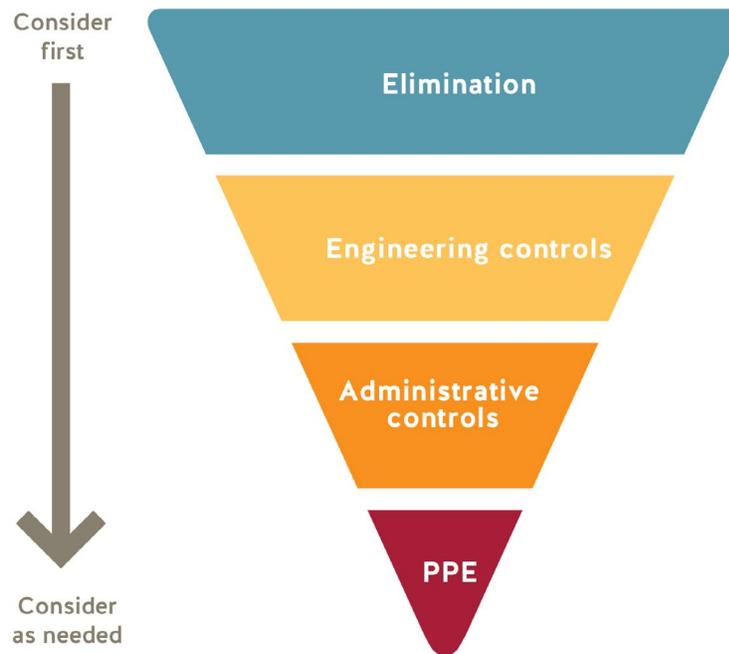
The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face. Higher risk situations require adequate protocols to address the risk.

- The risk of person-to-person transmission is increased the closer you come to other people, the amount of time you spend near them, and the number of people you come near. Physical distancing measures help mitigate this risk.

- The risk of surface transmission is increased when many people contact same surface, and when those contacts happen in short intervals of time. Effective cleaning and hygiene practices help mitigate this risk.

Selecting protocols for your workplace

Note that different protocols offer different protection. Wherever possible, use the protocols that offer the highest level of protection and add additional protocols as required.



First level protection (elimination): Use policies and procedures to keep people at a safe physical distance from one another. Limit the number of people in your workplace at any one time, and implement protocols to keep workers at least 2 metres from other workers, customers, and members of the public.

Second level protection (engineering controls): If you can't always maintain physical distancing, install barriers such as plexiglass to separate people.

Third level protection (administrative controls): Establish rules and guidelines, such as cleaning protocols, telling workers to not share tools, or implementing one-way doors or walkways.

Fourth level protection (PPE): If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to control the risk, consider the use of masks. Ensure masks are selected and cared for appropriately and that workers are using masks correctly.

Protocols for motion picture and television production

General

- Post your COVID-19 Safety Plan and other related policies or procedures for workers (e.g., cast and crew) on a company website with a member's login, on the set, and in the production office.
- Establish policies restricting access to the worksite for those who are sick, or who have travelled from outside of Canada. Ensure cast and crew have a process for identifying if they have developed symptoms.
- Include COVID-19 education in daily safety talks and meetings. COVID-19 protocols are to be communicated to workers prior to their arrival on site.
- Provide digital call sheets, production reports, and contracts when possible.
- Create policies on disallowing personal animals (i.e., pets), excluding guide and service dogs, in the workplace, especially as allergic reactions may be mistaken as COVID-19 symptoms.
- Establish and communicate handwashing and sanitizing policies. Provide adequate facilities and ensure these are stocked with supplies.
- Identify workers who may effectively be able to work remotely or from home for portions of prep, shoot, or wrap.
- Limit or restrict visitors to sets, studios, and post-production facilities.
- To facilitate communication between departments and workers while maintaining physical distancing, use devices such as two-way radios, mobile technology, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi.
- Where possible, stagger work schedules to reduce the number of workers required at one time.
- Limit the number of departments or working groups to one at a time when working within the physical constraints of a set. For example, the art department completes dressing before the lighting department lights a set.
- Designate traffic flow patterns in high traffic areas.
- Ensure trailers are cleaned and disinfected before being assigned to a new performer.
- Consider establishing small working groups (or cohorts) that work together routinely and exclusively to reduce the risk of broader transmission. Examples may include small groups or teams that require closer contact for filming or rehearsal, or dividing a large set into teams based on department.

Casting

- Travellers to BC from outside of Canada may not be permitted to enter the province, and if they do, they are required under order by the provincial health officer to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Cast remotely wherever possible by using virtual meetings or other means.
- Cast members of the same household in scenes where physical distancing cannot be maintained and where appropriate.
- Eliminate open calls and assign arrival times. Do not allow performers to enter the facility until scheduled time.

Delivering and receiving goods

- Establish a drop-off zone for courier drivers and ensure that physical distancing is maintained throughout the delivery and drop-off.
- Request contactless delivery to maintain physical distancing requirement (e.g., delivery person leaves packages in a pre-arranged location). This option may be limited if signing or proof of receipt is required.
- Establish pick-up and drop-off areas in production office, studios, and locations for suppliers, buyers, and runners.

Studios

- Refer to WorkSafeBC guidance for office protocols pertaining to office spaces.
- If there are other productions or existing tenants sharing the complex, establish joint protocols to facilitate the recommended physical distancing, hand washing, and enhanced cleaning of common areas.

Locations

- Restrict the number of people involved in location scouting. Consider how workers will travel during location scouting (see Transportation of workers).
- Where feasible conduct scouting using photo libraries and virtual scouting tools.
- Consider additional space requirements for the use of locations in public areas for workers to maintain physical distancing requirements.
- When scouting potential locations, sites should be treated as if they have contaminated surfaces and workers should frequently use hand sanitizer or wash their hands as soon as practicable.
- Consider the use of outdoor locations when appropriate.

Craft services and catering

On May 22, 2020, the office of the provincial health officer issued an order stating that places where meals and drinks, including drinks containing liquor, are prepared and served must not exceed 50 percent of their usual capacity of patrons at one time.

This order also restricts tables to parties of six people, and requires 2 metres between patrons sitting at different tables, and between patrons from different parties sitting at a bar or counter.

Employers are advised to remain apprised of orders issued by the provincial health officer as this information may change.

- Refer to WorkSafeBC guidance for restaurants, cafes, and pubs for additional protocols for food services.
- Establish and post occupancy limits for craft services tents or locations.
- Ensure adequate handwashing or sanitizing stations are located close to craft service and catering. Post signage around effective hand hygiene practices.
- Eliminate self-serve style systems, and replace with attended stations, catering or individually wrapped snacks and pre-packaged meals.
- Consider a continuous meal schedule or dividing the lunch hour into multiple time slots to reduce the number of people in craft services at one time.

- Use individually wrapped utensils, plastic-ware, straws and condiments.
- Ensure appropriate physical distancing is maintained in food service and eating areas. Consider the configuration of tables and seating to ensure distancing is maintained.
- Create delineated and designated eating areas. Use lines or cones to show proper physical distance when lining up for food or beverages.
- Mark one-way entry in and one-way exit out of eating areas and lunch tents.
- Do not allow personal containers to be used at either catering or craft service.

Transportation of workers

- Employers should assess the number of workers being transported or sharing vehicles at any given time and employ measures to ensure at least 2 metres of distance between workers is maintained.
- Whenever possible, workers should travel alone in their vehicles. Employers must implement all the necessary safeguards related to working alone or in isolation to ensure the safety of these workers.
- Measures that may be taken to ensure at least 2 metres of distance include the following:
 - » Seat workers in such a way that a physical distance of 2 metres is maintained wherever possible
 - » Stagger riders to allow for maximum distance
 - » Adjust the number of workers per trip and the overall number of trips needed to transport workers to a worksite
 - » If possible, use larger vehicles or multiple vehicles
- Track who drives which vehicles and minimize changes in teams or vehicle assignments. Consider creating consistency in crews of workers using vehicles together and performing shifts or work tasks together.
- If it is not possible to ensure 2 metres of distance between workers in a vehicle through these measures, the employer must consider other control measures, such as the use of masks.
- Employers must implement a process that allows for physical distancing when loading and unloading buses or other vehicles. Workers waiting for loading and unloading should maintain physical distancing while remaining safely away from traffic.
- Employers should have handwashing facilities or sanitizing stations available to workers as they enter and exit the vehicle.
- Employers must ensure that high contact surfaces within the vehicle are routinely cleaned and disinfected. These include seatbelts, headrests, door handles, steering wheels, and hand holds.
- Incorporate end-of-shift vehicle wipe downs, include a method for tracking end of shift cleaning and provide workers with appropriate supplies, like soap and water, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.

Tools and equipment

- Where possible, equipment should be assigned and kept with a specific department or working group. For example, only camera personnel should handle camera gear including carts, cases, tape, etc.
- Minimize the sharing of tools, equipment and products. Establish protocols for cleaning disinfecting shared tools before they are used by another person. Workers should wash or sanitize their hands before and after using shared tools.

- Assign personal visual and audio equipment such as microphones, radios, cameras, headsets, etc. to individual workers for their exclusive use. These can be stored in labeled, sealed bins or bags.
- Provide each worker their own set of tools (e.g., construction tools) if possible.
- Ensure shared tools and high-contact areas of the work area are included in cleaning and disinfecting protocols for the workplace. For electronics, follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consider using wipeable covers for electronics.

Hair, makeup, prosthetics and other personal services

- Refer to WorkSafeBC guidance for personal services establishments for additional protocols supporting hair and makeup services.
- Establish and post occupancy limits to hair and makeup rooms and trailers.
- Where dressing rooms or trailers are provided, restrict to single occupancy, unless provided to members of the same household. Use larger rooms where physical distancing can be maintained or barriers can be installed (arrange for at least 2 metres between work stations).
- Clean and disinfect tools and equipment between uses.
- Assign individual hairstylists and makeup artists to work on one performer at a time.
- For hair and makeup services where physical distancing cannot be maintained and other control measures such as barriers cannot be used, masks should be worn to reduce the risk of transmission. Ensure that masks are selected and cared for appropriately and that workers are using masks correctly. If the type of mask used does not offer adequate protection to the wearer, clients should also be encouraged to wear masks to protect workers.
- Consider alternative methods to reduce the overall amount of time spent in close contact while providing hair and makeup services. This may include applying special effects makeup such as facial prosthesis.
- Allow workers to wear gowns, smocks, or aprons to cover street clothing. Have these items removed and laundered.
- Establish handwashing practices that include washing hands before and after every personal service such as hair and makeup. Performers and artists should wash their hands before and after each session.
- Provide makeup application tools and supplies for each performer and use only on that individual. Keep in individual labeled bags.
- Use disposable make-up kits, applicators (cotton swabs, sponges, mascara wands) and brushes when possible.
- Disinfect tools with appropriate disinfecting solutions after each use. Makeup and all associated tools should be covered or stored in sealed containers whenever possible to avoid contamination.
- Avoid providing hair and make-up for background performers, if possible.

Costumes and wardrobe

- Only allow essential costume crew and performers present at fittings.
- Dressing facilities should be arranged to allow for physical distancing. If this is not possible, barriers should be installed.
- Where the scene permits, background performers can be asked to provide and wear their own clothing.

Filming

- Incorporate alternate shot set-ups, camera angles, lenses, etc. to allow for greater distance between performers.
- Consider alternative methods to achieve film sequences that necessitate close contact between workers. This may include intimate or fight scenes that require close contact over extended periods. Discuss protocols with appropriate person for performers who have scenes that require closeness or intimacy, and schedule those scenes strategically. The performer has the right to refuse close contact with other performers, such as hugging, kissing, and stunts requiring close contact.
- Scenes involving singing, loud yelling, or the use of wind instruments may increase the risk of transmission. Where possible, film these outdoors and/or ensure adequate distancing between people.
- Reduce the number of workers in large gathering areas such as video village. Establish and post occupancy limits. Limit access to essential personnel only.
- Mark the recording area to ensure that only permitted personnel have access.
- Access to the shooting space should have a defined entrance and exit area. Post entry and exit signage.
- Reduce the number of cast and crew in filming areas wherever possible.
- Film large crowd scenes outdoors where possible. Limit the amount of time spend filming these types of scenes. Do not keep people in crowded holding areas for extended periods of time.
- Consider reducing the number of background performers to a minimum and alter their appearances to recycle them. Minimize day players or develop strategies to film day-players in isolation from the main cast and crew to protect all workers (e.g. splinter or 2nd unit filming).

Post production

- Use digital delivery methods where possible. When physical media does need to be moved between sets or other post-production locations, ensure workers wash or sanitize hands after handling shared materials.
- Establish occupancy limits for post-production work location and ensure physical distancing is maintained.
- Client review and approval should be done remotely whenever possible.
- Use dedicated client review rooms (without workers or talent present).
- Artists should put on and adjust their own headphones and microphone to ensure physical distancing is maintained.

Related links

See the following links for additional information, guidance, or resources that may assist you in the development of your plan.

- [Actsafes Safety Association](#)
- [Creative BC](#)
- [Beauty Council of Western Canada](#)

For more information

The information on this page is based on current recommendations and may change. For the latest guidance, please see the health information from the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control and the latest news from the government of British Columbia.

If you have a question or concern

Workers and employers with questions or concerns about workplace exposure to COVID-19 can call WorkSafeBC's Prevention Information Line at 604.276.3100 in the Lower Mainland (toll-free within B.C. at 1.888.621.SAFE). You'll be able to speak to a prevention officer to get answers to your questions, and if required, a prevention officer will be assigned to assess the health and safety risk at your workplace.

Translated resources

Our key COVID-19 related resources are also available in Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), French, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese.