



## INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR MEDIA PRODUCTION DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

### When you have read this document, you can affirm at the bottom.

As of June 23, 2020

### Purpose

This Interim Guidance for Media Production during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (“Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Media Production”) was created to provide owners and managers of film, television, music, and other media production businesses and their employees, contractors, and vendors with precautions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19.

For the purpose of this guidance, “media production activities” encompass all activities undertaken in motion picture, music, television, and streaming productions on set, on location, or at any production or recording site.

Media production activities involve a variety of operations and owners/managers of media production businesses should reference relevant industry-specific Department of Health (DOH) guidelines where applicable. Specifically, any activities taking place in offices must operate in accordance with “[Interim Guidance for Office-Based Work during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#);” any activities related to construction must operate in accordance with “[Interim Guidance for Construction Activities during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#);” any activities related to hair and make-up must operate in accordance with “[Interim Guidance for Hair Salons and Barbershops during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)” and “[Interim Guidance for Personal Care Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)”, respectively; any activities related to food services must operate in accordance with “[Interim Guidance for Food Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#);” and any activities related to real estate for locations or property scouting must operate in accordance with “[Interim Guidance for Real Estate Services during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#).”

These guidelines are minimum requirements only and the owner/manager of any media production business is free to provide additional precautions or increased restrictions. These guidelines are based on the best-known public health practices at the time of publication, and the documentation upon which these guidelines are based can and does change frequently. The Responsible Parties – as defined below – are accountable for adhering to all local, state and federal requirements relative to media production. The Responsible Parties are also accountable for staying current with any updates to these requirements, as well as incorporating same into any media production activities and/or Site Safety Plan.

### Background

On March 7, 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202](#), declaring a state of emergency in response to COVID-19. Community transmission of COVID-19 has occurred throughout New York. To minimize further spread, social distancing of at least six feet must be maintained between individuals, where possible.

On March 20, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.6](#), directing all non-essential businesses to close in-office personnel functions. Essential businesses, as defined by Empire State Development Corporation (ESD) [guidance](#), were not subject to the in-person restriction, but were, however, directed to comply with the guidance and directives for maintaining a clean and safe work environment issued by DOH, and were strongly urged to maintain social distancing measures to the extent possible.

On April 12, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.16](#), directing essential businesses to provide employees, who are present in the workplace, with a face covering, at no-cost, that must be used when in direct contact with customers or members of the public during the course of their work. On April 15, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.17](#), directing that any individual who is over age two and able to medically tolerate a face-covering must cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when in a public place and unable to maintain, or when not maintaining, social distance. On April 16, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.18](#), directing that everyone using public or private transportation carriers or other for-hire vehicles, who is over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, must wear a mask or face covering over the nose and mouth during any such trip. It also directed any operators or drivers of public or private transport to wear a face covering or mask which covers the nose and mouth while there are any passengers in such a vehicle. On May 29, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.34](#), authorizing business operators/owners with the discretion to deny admittance to individuals who fail to comply with the face covering or mask requirements.

On April 26, 2020, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) a phased approach to reopen industries and businesses in New York in phases based upon a data-driven, regional analysis. On May 4, 2020, the Governor [provided](#) that the regional analysis would consider several public health factors, including new COVID-19 infections, as well as health care system, diagnostic testing, and contact tracing capacity. On May 11, 2020, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that the first phase of reopening would begin on May 15, 2020 in several regions of New York, based upon available regional metrics and indicators. On May 29, 2020, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that the second phase of reopening would begin in several regions of the state, and announced the use of a new early warning dashboard that aggregates the state's expansive data collection efforts for New Yorkers, government officials, and experts to monitor and review how the virus is being contained to ensure a safe reopening. On June 11, Governor Cuomo [announced](#) that the third phase of reopening would begin on June 12, 2020 in several regions of New York.

In addition to the following standards, all media production activities must comply with any applicable guidance and directives for maintaining clean and safe work environments issued by DOH.

Please note that where guidance in this document differs from other guidance documents issued by New York State, the more recent guidance shall apply.

### **Standards for Responsible Media Production Activities in New York State**

No media production activity can occur without meeting the following minimum State standards, as well as applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to such minimum standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The State standards contained within this guidance apply to all media production activities during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State. The owner or management of the media production business (in either case, "the Responsible Parties"), shall be responsible for meeting these standards. For the purposes of this guidance, references to "employees, cast, and crew" include all individuals involved in media production activities, including, but not limited to: performers,

laborers, craftspeople, musicians, writers, directors, visual effects, hair stylists, costume designers, and makeup artists.

The following guidance is organized around three distinct categories: people, places, and processes.

## I. PEOPLE

### A. Physical Distancing

- Responsible Parties must ensure that, for indoor media production facilities or locations, the presence of employees, cast, and crew members is limited to no more than 50% of the maximum occupancy for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy; and
- Responsible Parties must ensure that a distance of at least six feet is maintained between all employees, cast, and crew in all locations (e.g., meal areas, common areas, holding areas, trailers, video village, equipment areas) around the media production facility or location; provided that certain functions during media production may require coming within six feet of other individuals (e.g., wardrobe, hair, makeup, sound, filming, performing), Responsible Parties must identify such functions and implement a protocol for mitigation of risk for affected individuals.
  - Further, safety or the core activity (e.g., moving equipment, unloading materials) may require individuals to be within a shorter distance, in which case, individuals must wear an acceptable face covering.
- Responsible Parties must ensure that all employees, cast, and crew wear acceptable face coverings at all times within the media production facility or location, provided the individual is over the age of two and medically able to tolerate such a face covering.
  - Performers may temporarily remove their face covering during performances or rehearsals, or when it interferes with a core activity such as hair, makeup, or wardrobe. Performers must don face coverings as soon as practicable following the above activities.
- Responsible Parties must ensure that all employees, cast, and crew in close proximity to performers without face coverings (e.g., hair stylists, make-up artists, costume designers, sound technicians, studio teachers, stunt coordinators, special effects technicians) wear both an acceptable face covering and eye protection, such as a face shield or goggles, for the duration of the activity requiring proximity. All employees, cast, and crew should also wear gloves or practice hand hygiene before and after such activities.
  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose.
  - However, cloth, disposable, or other homemade face coverings are not acceptable face coverings for workplace activities that typically require a higher degree of protection for personal protective equipment (PPE) due to the nature of the work. For those activities, N95 respirators or other PPE used under existing industry standards should continue to be used, as is defined in accordance with [OSHA guidelines](#).
- Responsible Parties must limit the number of employees, cast, and crew to only essential individuals for both indoor and outdoor media production activities, and ensure that all social distancing guidelines are rigorously enforced. Any non-essential personnel and visitors (e.g., friends, family, guests, visitors) must be prohibited from entering the media production facility or location.

- Minors should be limited to two accompanying adults (e.g., one guardian or designated responsible person per 12 NYCRR 186-3.6(a) and one educator). Children should be prevented from touching or handling any media production items or equipment, unless necessary for the performance or rehearsal. Responsible Parties should consider moving minors to a secure off-set location, when possible, to limit their exposure to other employees, cast, and crew.
- Responsible Parties must ensure there is sufficient security to limit access to the media production facility or location to only essential individuals, and to implement a security plan to disperse anyone who gathers outside.
- Responsible Parties must take social distancing requirements into account when scouting or choosing media production locations. Responsible Parties must:
  - ensure that locations can be secured completely from the general public;
  - ensure that locations allow for enough space to adhere to social distancing requirements for all work areas and departments; and
  - be able to meet appropriate cleaning and disinfection and hygiene standards.
- Responsible Parties may modify the use and/or restrict the number of workstations and seating areas, so that employees, cast, and crew are at least six feet apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when facing one another) and are not sharing workstations without cleaning and disinfection between use. When distancing is not feasible between workstations, Responsible Parties may enact physical barriers (e.g., plastic shielding walls in areas where they would not affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation, or otherwise present a health or safety risk).
  - If used, physical barriers should be put in place in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
  - Physical barrier options may include strip curtains, plexiglass or similar materials, or other impermeable dividers or partitions.
- Responsible Parties should encourage the use of dedicated work zones within the media production facility or location and establish a system that prevents overlapping departments in the same work space. Consider a color-coded system or other visible indicators to facilitate identification of zones and appropriate employees, cast, and crew.
- Responsible Parties should prohibit the use of small spaces (e.g., elevators, mechanical areas, control rooms, editing rooms) by more than one individual at a time, unless all individuals in such space at the same time are wearing acceptable face coverings, or unless necessary for filming or performing. However, even with face coverings in use, occupancy must never exceed 50% of the maximum capacity of the space, unless it is designed for use by a single occupant. Responsible Parties should increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors), while maintaining safety protocols. Responsible Parties should take additional measures to prevent congregation in elevator waiting areas and limit density in elevators, such as enabling the use of stairs.
- Responsible Parties should put in place measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces, and post signage and distance markers denoting spaces of six feet in all commonly used areas and any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g., health screening stations, meal areas, costume trailers).

- Responsible Parties should perform media production activities remotely, to the greatest extent possible (e.g., meetings, casting, scouting, editing).
  - Responsible Parties should ensure that all scouting activities take place virtually, where possible. If individuals must travel in person, Responsible Parties should ensure that scouting takes place in small groups that can maintain social distance, with all individuals wearing appropriate face coverings.
  - Responsible Parties should ensure that casting and auditions are performed remotely, to the extent possible. If not performed remotely:
    - Responsible Parties must provide adequate time between appointments for cleaning and disinfection of shared surfaces.
    - Responsible Parties should ensure that performers arriving at casting locations wait in personal vehicles or outside the facility or location until the time of their audition.
    - Responsible Parties should eliminate open calls in favor of scheduled appointments.
    - Responsible Parties should ensure physical distancing is maintained during auditions, even when multiple individuals are auditioning simultaneously, to the extent possible.
    - Responsible Parties must ensure acceptable face coverings are worn, consistent with above provisions.
- Responsible Parties should limit the number of individuals traveling in vehicles at any given time to allow for adequate social distancing.
  - Responsible Parties should encourage individuals to drive alone and use private transportation, to the extent possible.
  - If more than one individual rides in a vehicle, Responsible Parties must ensure that all occupants wear face coverings, and encourage occupants to open windows and increase ventilation, to the greatest extent possible.
- Responsible Parties should consider taking measures to reduce close or proximate contact between performers, such as amending scripts or using digital effects where possible.
  - Where possible, Responsible Parties should limit scenes with prolonged close or proximate contact between individuals (e.g., fighting, dancing) or scenes requiring large crowds.
- Responsible Parties are encouraged to assign maintenance staff into fixed pairs or small groups, to limit the number of close or proximate contacts, where possible.
- Responsible Parties must post signs throughout the facility or location, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage. Responsible Parties can develop their own customized signage specific to their workplace or setting, provided that such signage is consistent with the Department's signage. Signage should be used to remind employees, cast, and crew to:
  - Stay home if they are feeling sick.
  - Cover their nose and mouth with a face covering.

- Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- Adhere to physical distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so.
- Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Follow appropriate respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

## **B. Gatherings in Enclosed Spaces**

- Responsible Parties must limit in-person employee, cast, and crew gatherings (e.g., production meetings, casting, scouting, editing) to the greatest extent possible and use other methods such as video or teleconferencing whenever possible, per CDC guidance "[Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)". When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, Responsible Parties should hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces and ensure that individuals maintain six feet of social distance between one another (e.g., if there are chairs, leave space between chairs, have individuals sit in alternating chairs).
- Responsible Parties should encourage social distancing by limiting occupancy or closing non-essential amenities and communal areas that do not allow for appropriate social distancing. If open, Responsible Parties must make hand sanitizer or disinfecting wipes available near such amenities (e.g., vending machines, communal coffee stations, water fountains, snack bars).
- Responsible Parties must put in place practices for adequate social distancing in small areas, such as restrooms and breakrooms, and should develop signage and systems (e.g., flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy when social distancing cannot be maintained in such areas.
- Responsible Parties should stagger schedules for employees, cast, and crew to observe social distancing (i.e., six feet of space) for any gathering (e.g., coffee breaks, meals, and shift starts/stops).

## **C. Workplace Activity**

- Responsible Parties should limit the number of extras on set, to the extent possible.
- Responsible Parties must prohibit live audiences unless they consist only of paid employees, cast, and crew. Employees, cast and crew may make up a live audience of no more than 100 individuals, or 25% the audience capacity, whichever is lower. Live audiences must maintain social distance of at least six feet in all directions.
- Responsible Parties should consider having casts, including any extras, arrive at the media production facility or location "camera ready," to the extent possible (e.g., having completed hair, makeup, and wardrobe off site or through remote instruction).
- Responsible Parties should ensure that employees, cast, and crew are provided adequate time throughout the day to periodically clean and disinfect their gear and equipment (e.g., cameras, props), if multiple people use or handle such equipment.
- Responsible Parties should make efforts to digitize all paper documents to the extent possible (e.g., contracts, tech scout packets, scripts, music sheets, sign-in/out, crew lists, call sheets). If digitizing is



not feasible, printed materials should be assigned for individual use and not shared among employees, cast, and crew.

- Responsible Parties must ensure that all employees, cast, and crew receive training on COVID-19 safety, hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection protocols.
- Responsible Parties must take measures to reduce interpersonal contact and congregation, through methods such as:
  - limiting in-person presence to only those staff who are necessary for relevant media production activities;
  - adjusting workplace hours;
  - reducing on-site workforce to accommodate social distancing guidelines;
  - shifting design (e.g., A/B teams, staggered arrival/departure times);
  - prioritizing tasks that allow for social distancing over those that do not; and/or
  - avoiding multiple crews and/or teams working in one area by staggering scheduled tasks and using signs to indicate occupied areas.

#### **D. Movement and Commerce**

- Responsible Parties should limit interactions at the media production facility or location (e.g., designate an egress(es) for employees, cast, and crew leaving their shifts and a separate ingress(es) for employees, cast, and crew starting their shifts) and movements (e.g., employees, cast, and crew should remain near their workstations or areas as often as possible).
  - Where practicable, Responsible Parties should limit the number of entrances to media production facilities or locations in order to (1) manage the flow of employees, cast, and crew into the building and monitor occupancy/capacity limits, and (2) facilitate health screenings while remaining in compliance with fire safety and other applicable regulations.
- Responsible Parties must develop a plan for employees, cast, and crew to maintain six feet of social distance while queuing inside or outside of the media production facility or location for screening, as applicable.
- Responsible Parties must establish designated areas for pickups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.
- For deliveries, Responsible Parties should implement a touchless delivery system whereby drivers stay in the cab of the vehicle while delivery takes place or, where not practicable, Responsible Parties must provide acceptable PPE appropriate to the anticipated activities that includes, at a minimum, a face covering to personnel involved in the delivery at no cost for the duration of the delivery process.
- Responsible Parties must ensure employees sanitize hands before and after transferring a load (e.g., from a delivery driver) of merchandise (e.g., sanitize hands before starting to load items; and once all items have been loaded, finish by sanitizing their hands again).

## **II. PLACES**

### **A. Protective Equipment**

- Responsible Parties must ensure that all employees, cast, and crew wear face coverings at all times within the media production facility or location, provided the individual is over the age of two and medically able to tolerate such a face covering.
- Performers may temporarily remove their face covering during performances or rehearsals, or when it interferes with a core activity such as hair, makeup, or wardrobe. Performers must don face coverings as soon as practicable following the above activities.
  - Responsible Parties must ensure that all employees, cast, and crew in close proximity to performers without face coverings (e.g. hair stylists, make-up artists, costume designers, sound technicians, studio teachers, stunt coordinators, special effects technicians) wear both an acceptable face covering and eye protection, such as a face shield or goggles, for the duration of the activity requiring close proximity. All employees, cast, and crew should also wear gloves or practice hand hygiene before and after such activities.
- In addition to any necessary PPE as required for certain workplace activities, Responsible Parties must procure, fashion, or otherwise obtain acceptable face coverings and provide such coverings to all employees, cast, and crew at no cost to the employee, cast, or crew member. Responsible Parties should have an adequate supply of face coverings, masks and other required PPE on hand should any employee, cast, or crew member need a replacement.
- Face coverings must be cleaned or replaced after use and may not be shared. Please consult the CDC [guidance](#) for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of PPE, as well as instructions on use and cleaning.
  - Note that cloth, disposable, or other homemade face coverings are not acceptable face coverings for workplace activities that typically require a higher degree of protection for PPE due to the nature of the work. Responsible Parties must adhere to [OSHA guidelines](#) for such safety equipment.
  - Responsible Parties must allow employees, cast, and crew to use their own acceptable face coverings but cannot require employees, cast, and crew to supply their own face coverings. Further, this guidance shall not prevent employees, cast, and crew from wearing their personally owned additional protective coverings (e.g., surgical masks, N95 respirators, or face shields), or if the Responsible Parties otherwise requires employees, cast, and crew to wear more protective PPE due to the nature of their work. Employers should comply with all applicable OSHA standards.
- Responsible Parties must train employees, cast, and crew on how to adequately don, doff, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings.

## **B. Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection**

- Responsible Parties must ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including ["Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,"](#) and the ["STOP THE SPREAD"](#) poster, as applicable. Responsible Parties must maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.
- Responsible Parties must provide and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout media production facilities or locations as follows:
  - For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.



- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Responsible Parties must make hand sanitizer available throughout common areas (e.g., entrances, exits, exhibits, and security/reception desks). Touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers should be installed where possible.
- Responsible Parties should place signage near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
- Responsible Parties should place receptacles around the facility or location for disposal of soiled items, including PPE.
- Responsible Parties must provide appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces and encourage employees, cast, and crew to use these supplies, following manufacturers' instructions, before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene.
- Responsible Parties must conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the media production facility or location and more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces (e.g., studios, production sets, hair and make-up stations, trailers, break areas, eating areas, vehicles). Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and should occur at least after each shoot, daily, or more frequently as needed. Please refer to DOH's "[Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19](#)" for detailed instructions on how to clean and disinfect facilities.
  - Responsible Parties must ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.
    - Responsible Parties must ensure distancing rules are adhered to by using signage, occupied markers, or other methods to reduce restroom capacity where feasible.
  - Responsible Parties must ensure that all media production equipment and tools (e.g., cases, cameras, eyepieces, lenses, monitors and touchscreens, dollies) are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. Refer to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) [list of products](#) registered in New York State and identified by the EPA as effective against COVID-19.
  - If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, Responsible Parties must put in place hand hygiene stations between use and/or supply disposable gloves and/or limitations on the number of individuals using such objects.
- Responsible Parties must provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event of a positive case of COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., shared surfaces, vehicles, hand railings, handles, and doorknobs).
- Responsible Parties must ensure that all props, costumes, and set materials are cleaned and disinfected between each use and stored in sealed containers between uses.
- Responsible Parties should ensure that costumes are collected and laundered or otherwise cleaned and disinfected between each use. All clean costumes should be sealed in individual bags. Consider supplying cast members with laundry bags to securely store used costumes between cleanings.

- CDC guidelines on "[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)" if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 are as follows:
  - Close off areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
    - Responsible Parties do not necessarily need to close operations, if they can close off the affected areas.
  - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
  - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared equipment.
  - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
    - Employees, cast, and crew without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the work area immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
    - Refer to DOH's "[Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#)" for information on "close and proximate" contacts.
  - If more than seven days have passed since the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.
- Responsible Parties must put in place measures to limit the sharing of objects, gear, and equipment (e.g., radios, camera equipment and dollies, stunt pads, wigs, costumes) between individuals and departments, as well as the touching of shared surfaces, such as railings and door knobs; or, must require employees, cast, and crew to wear gloves (trade-appropriate or medical) when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched surfaces; or, must require employees, cast, and crew to perform hand hygiene before and after contact.
- Responsible Parties should consider providing individual devices for communication (e.g., walkie-talkie, radios, microphones) to limit use of shared devices. Any such equipment should be appropriately cleaned and disinfected before being issued and before being returned.
- Responsible Parties must prohibit shared food and beverages among employees, cast, and crew (e.g., self-serve meals and beverages) and reserve adequate space for employees, cast, and crew to observe social distancing while eating meals.
  - Responsible Parties may provide food service via buffet, provided that they are not self-serve and that they are sufficiently staffed to ensure that there is no employee, cast, or crew touching of common objects (e.g., serving spoons, tongs) and that appropriate social distance is maintained.
  - Responsible Parties should consider providing food and beverage in pre-packaged containers to limit sharing between individuals. If providing food and beverage, Responsible Parties should also provide disposable or individually wrapped eating utensils.
- Responsible Parties should remove any unnecessary communal fixtures from the venue, such as newspaper or magazine stands, in favor of individual distribution upon request.

### C. Phased Reopening

- Responsible Parties are encouraged to phase-in reopening activities so as to allow for operational issues to be resolved before production or work activities return to normal levels. Responsible Parties

should consider limiting the number of employees, cast, and crew, and their working hours when first reopening so as to provide operations with the ability to adjust to the changes.

#### **D. Communications Plan**

- Responsible Parties must affirm that they have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that they will implement them.
- Responsible Parties should develop a communications plan for employees, cast, and crew that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide employees, cast, and crew with information. Responsible Parties may consider developing webpages, text and email groups, and social media.
- Responsible Parties must encourage individuals to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically face coverings, through verbal communication and signage.
- Responsible Parties should post signage inside and outside of the media production facility or location to remind individuals to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfection protocols.

### **III. PROCESSES**

#### **A. Screening and Testing**

- Responsible Parties must ensure that employees, cast, and crew members, whose job functions or roles involve close or proximate contact with cast members, have been tested for COVID-19 through a diagnostic test, prior to their participation in media production activities, and at least once per week thereafter, when on site or location.
- Responsible Parties must implement mandatory daily health screening practices for employees, cast, crew, and, where practicable, contractors and vendors, but such screening shall not be mandated for delivery personnel.
  - Screening practices may be performed remotely (e.g., by telephone or electronic survey), before individuals report to the facility or location, to the extent possible; or may be performed on site.
  - Screening should be coordinated to prevent individuals from intermingling in close or proximate contact with each other prior to completion of the screening.
  - At a minimum, screening is required of employees, cast, and crew members, and, where practicable, contractors and vendors, and must be completed using a questionnaire that determines whether the individual has:
    - (a) knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
    - (b) tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days; and/or
    - (c) has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Refer to CDC guidance on "[Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)" for the most up to date information on symptoms associated with COVID-19.

- Screening practices include:
  - If space and facility/location configuration allow, screen individuals at or near the entrance to minimize the impact in case of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.
  - Allow for adequate social distancing while individuals queue for screening and/or entry to the facility or location.
  - Admit only individuals who have been screened either remotely or upon arrival.
  - If temperature checks are performed, use contactless thermal cameras at entrances to identify potentially symptomatic individuals and direct them to a secondary screening area to complete a follow-up screening. If not possible or feasible, a temperature check may be performed, using contactless thermometers.
- Responsible Parties must require employees, cast, and crew to immediately disclose if and when their responses to any of the aforementioned questions changes, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of work hours.
- In addition to the screening questionnaire, temperature checks may also be conducted per U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines. Responsible Parties are prohibited from keeping records of employees, cast, and crew health data (e.g., the specific temperature data of an individual), but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared).
- Responsible Parties must ensure that any personnel performing screening activities, including temperature checks, are appropriately protected from exposure to potentially infectious individuals entering the facility. Personnel performing screening activities should be trained by employer-identified individuals who are familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols.
- Screeners should be provided and use PPE, including at a minimum, an acceptable face covering or mask, and may include gloves, a gown, and/or a face shield.
- Any employees, cast, and crew member, or vendor who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms must not be allowed to enter the media production facility or location and must be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing.
  - Responsible Parties should remotely provide such individuals with information on healthcare and testing resources.
  - Responsible Parties must immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if test results are positive for COVID-19.
- Responsible Parties should refer to DOH's "[Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#)" regarding protocols and policies for individuals seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the individual had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.
- Responsible Parties must designate a central point of contact, which may vary by activity, location, shift or day, responsible for receiving and attesting to having reviewed all employee, cast, crew, contractor, and vendor questionnaires, with such contact also identified as the party for employees, cast, crew, contractors, and vendors to inform if they later are experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms, as noted on the questionnaire.

- Identified point of contact should be prepared to receive notifications from individuals of positive cases and initiate the respective cleaning and disinfection procedures.
- Responsible Parties must designate a site safety monitor whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the Site Safety Plan, for all individuals.
- To the extent possible, Responsible Parties should maintain a log of every employee, cast, crew member, contractor, and vendor who may have close or proximate contact with other individuals at the media production facility or location; excluding deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means. The log should contain contact information, such that all contacts may be identified, traced, and notified in the event an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - Responsible Parties must cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing efforts.

## **B. Tracing and Tracking**

- Responsible Parties must notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by any individual at the media production facility or location.
- In the case of any employee, cast, crew member, or contractor testing positive, the Responsible Parties must cooperate with the state and local health department to trace all contacts in the media production facility or location and notify the state and local health department of all individuals (as applicable) who entered the media production facility or location dating back to 48 hours before the person(s) began experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive, whichever is earlier. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.
  - In the case of an individual showing symptoms while on site, Responsible Parties must notify employees in the surrounding areas or who may have been affected immediately with information on where the individual has been throughout the building and notify them if the symptomatic person tests positive.
- State and local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of infected or exposed persons including home isolation or quarantine.
- Individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted via tracing, tracking or other mechanism, are required to self-report to their employer at the time of alert and shall follow the protocol referenced above.

## IV. EMPLOYER PLANS

Responsible Parties must conspicuously post completed safety plans on site or location for employees. The State has made available a business reopening safety plan template to guide business owners and operators in developing plans to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

### **Additional safety information, guidelines, and resources are available at:**

New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website  
<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website  
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

**At the link below, affirm that you have read and understand your obligation to operate in accordance with this guidance:**

<https://forms.ny.gov/s3/ny-forward-affirmation>





# Reopening New York



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During the COVID-19 public health emergency, all owners/managers of media production businesses should stay up to date with any changes to state and federal requirements related to media production and incorporate those changes into their operations. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and standards.

	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ For indoor facilities or locations, ensure that the presence of employees, cast, and crew members is limited to no more than 50% of the maximum occupancy for a particular area.</li> <li>✓ Ensure that all employees, cast, and crew maintain 6 ft. of physical distance between each other in all locations (e.g. meal areas, common areas, trailers, video village, equipment areas) around the media production facility or location.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided that certain functions during media production require coming within 6 ft. of others (e.g. hair, makeup, sound, filming, performing), identify such functions and implement a protocol for mitigation of risk for affected individuals.</li> <li>• If safety or the core activity (e.g. moving equipment, unloading materials) requires individuals to be within a shorter distance, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Ensure that all employees, cast, and crew wear acceptable face coverings at all times within the media production facility or location, provided that they are over age 2 and able to medically tolerate one.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performers may temporarily remove their face covering during performances/rehearsals, or when it interferes with a core activity, such as hair, makeup, or wardrobe. Performers must don face coverings following these activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Limit the number of employees, cast, and crew to only essential individuals for both indoor and outdoor media production activities. Any non-essential personnel (e.g. friends, family, guests, visitors) must be prohibited.</li> <li>✓ Take social distancing requirements into account when scouting or choosing media production locations. Ensure that locations can be secured completely from the general public, allow for enough space to adhere to social distancing requirements, and maintain appropriate and cleaning and disinfection standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Perform media production activities remotely to the greatest extent possible (e.g. meetings, casting, scouting, editing).</li> <li>✓ Modify the use and/or restrict the number of work stations and seating areas, so that employees, cast, and crew are at least 6 ft. apart in all directions. Enact physical barriers, in accordance with <a href="#">OSHA guidelines</a>, when distancing between workstations is not feasible.</li> <li>✓ Encourage the use of dedicated work zones within the media production facility or location and establish a system that prevents overlapping departments in the same work space. Consider a color-coded system or other visible indicators to facilitate identification of zones and appropriate employees, cast, and crew.</li> <li>✓ Minors should be limited to two accompanying adults (e.g. one guardian or designated responsible person per 12 NYCRR 186-3.6(a) and one educator). Consider moving minors to a secure off-set location, when possible, to limit their exposure.</li> <li>✓ Encourage individuals to drive alone and use private transportation, to the extent possible.</li> <li>✓ Ensure all scouting activities take place virtually, where possible. If individuals must travel in person, scouting should occur in small groups that can maintain social distance, with all individuals wearing face coverings.</li> <li>✓ Ensure that performers arriving at casting locations wait in personal vehicles or outside the facility/location until the time of their audition.</li> <li>✓ Eliminate open calls in favor of scheduled appointments.</li> <li>✓ Ensure physical distancing is maintained during auditions, even when multiple individuals are auditioning simultaneously, to the extent possible.</li> </ul>

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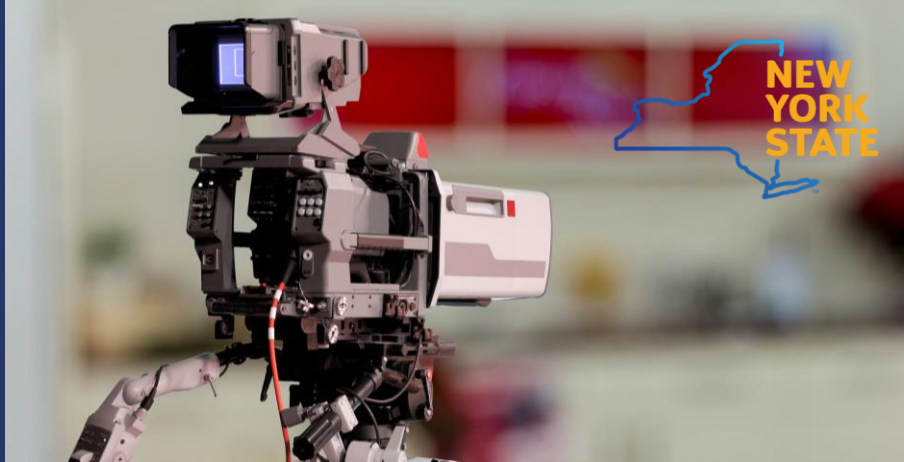
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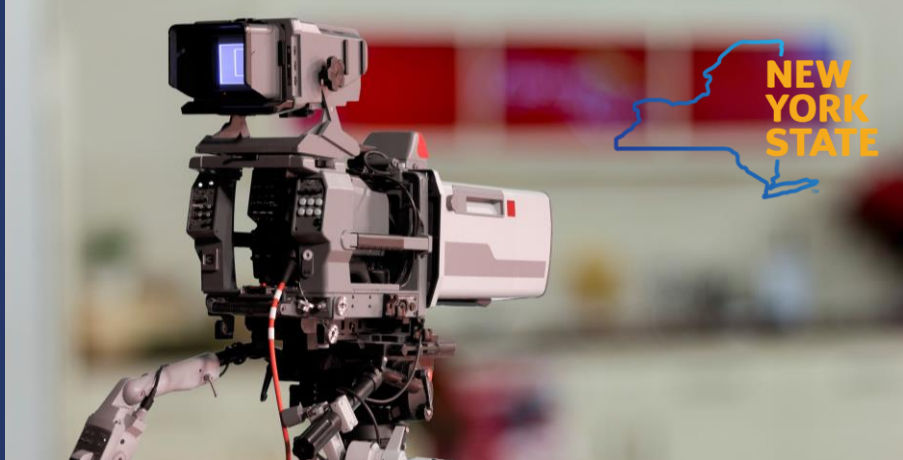
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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure there is sufficient security to limit access to only essential individuals and to disperse anyone who gathers outside.</li> <li>✓ Reserve adequate space for employees, cast, and crew to observe a distancing while eating meals.</li> <li>✓ If more than one individual rides in a vehicle, ensure that all occupants wear face coverings.</li> <li>✓ Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider taking measures to reduce close or proximate contact between performers, such as amending scripts or using digital effects where possible.</li> <li>✓ Assign maintenance staff into fixed pairs/small groups to limit the number of close or proximate contacts where possible.</li> <li>✓ Post distance markers using tape or signs that denote 6 ft. of spacing in commonly used areas and any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g. health screening stations, meal areas, costume trailers).</li> </ul>
<b>Workplace Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Operate in accordance with industry-specific DOH guidelines where appropriate.</li> <li>✓ Prohibit live audiences unless they consist only of paid employees, cast, and crew. Employees, cast, and crew may make up a live audience of no more than 100 individuals or 25% of the audience capacity, whichever is lower, and maintain 6 ft. of social distance in all directions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Limit the number to extras on set to the extent possible.</li> <li>✓ Have cast, including any extras, arrive at the media production facility or location “camera ready,” to the extent possible (e.g. having completed hair, makeup, and wardrobe off site or through remote instruction).</li> <li>✓ Ensure that employees, cast, and crew are given adequate time throughout the day to periodically clean and disinfect their gear/equipment (e.g. cameras, props) if multiple people use or handle such equipment.</li> <li>✓ Digitize all paper documents to the extent possible (e.g. contracts, tech scout packets, scripts, music sheets, sign-in/out, crew lists, call sheets). If digitizing is not feasible, printed materials should be assigned for individual use and not shared.</li> <li>✓ Designate an egress(es) for employees, cast, and crew leaving their shifts and a separate ingress(es) for those starting their shifts.</li> </ul>
<b>Protective Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure that all employees, cast, and crew wear face coverings at all times within the media production facility or location, provided the individual is over the age of 2 and medically able to tolerate one.</li> </ul>	

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# Reopening New York

## Media Production Guidelines for Employers and Employees

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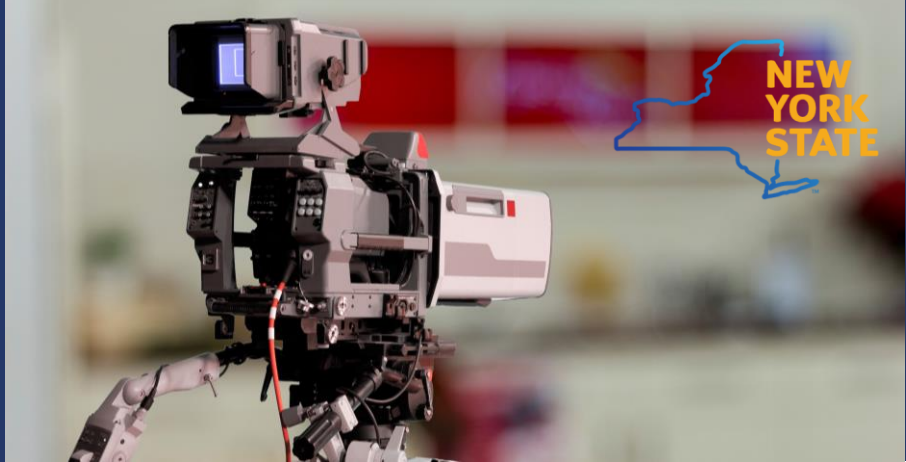
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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
<b>Protective Equipment (cont'd)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performers may temporarily remove their face covering during performances or rehearsals or when it interferes with a core activity such as hair, makeup, or wardrobe. Performers must don face coverings as soon as practicable following the above activities.</li> <li>Ensure that all employees, cast, and crew in close proximity to performers without face coverings (e.g. hair stylists, make-up artists, costume designers, sound technicians, studio teachers, stunt coordinators, special effects technicians) wear both an acceptable face covering and eye protection, such as a face shield or goggles, during the activity requiring close proximity.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide employees, cast, and crew with an acceptable face covering at no-cost to the employee, cast, or crew member.</li> <li>✓ Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose.</li> <li>✓ Face coverings must be cleaned or replaced after use or when damaged or soiled, may not be shared, and should be properly stored or discarded.</li> <li>✓ Train employees, cast, and crew on how to adequately don, doff, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to face coverings.</li> </ul>	
<b>Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the <a href="#">Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</a> (CDC) and <a href="#">Department of Health</a> (DOH) and maintain logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider providing individual devices for communication (e.g. walkie-talkie, radios, microphones) to limit use of shared devices. Any such equipment should be appropriately cleaned and disinfected before being issued and before being returned.</li> </ul>



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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout the facility or location, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible.</li> <li>✓ Hand sanitizer must be available throughout common areas.</li> <li>✓ Conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the media production facility or location including high risk areas and frequently touched surfaces (e.g. studios, production sets, hair and make-up stations, trailers, break areas, eating areas, vehicles).</li> <li>✓ Ensure that all media production equipment and tools (e.g. cases, cameras, eyepieces, lenses, monitors and touchscreens, dollies) are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. Refer to Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) <a href="#">products</a> identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19.</li> <li>✓ Ensure all props, costumes, and set materials are cleaned and disinfected between each use and stored in sealed containers between uses.</li> <li>✓ If cleaning or disinfection products or the act of cleaning and disinfection causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, put in place hand hygiene stations between use and/or supply disposable gloves and/or limitations on the number of individuals using such objects.</li> <li>✓ Prohibit shared food and beverages among employees, cast, and crew (e.g. self-serve meals and beverages) and reserve adequate space for employees, cast, and crew to observe social distancing while eating meals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Remove any unnecessary communal fixtures from the venue, such as newspaper or magazine stands, in favor of individual distribution upon request.</li> <li>✓ Consider providing food and beverages in pre-packaged containers to limit sharing between individuals. If providing food and beverage, also provide disposable or individually wrapped eating utensils.</li> </ul>

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Affirm you have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that you will implement them.</li> <li>✓ Post signage inside/outside of the media production facility or location to remind individuals to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of face coverings, and cleaning /disinfection protocols.</li> <li>✓ Notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by any individual at the media production facility or location.</li> <li>✓ Conspicuously post completed safety plans on site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop a communications plan for all employees, cast, and crew that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide licensed personnel with information. Consider developing webpages, text and email groups, and social media.</li> </ul>
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure that employees, cast, and crew members, whose job functions or roles involve close or proximate contact with cast members, have been tested for COVID-19 through a diagnostic test, prior to their participation in media production activities, and at least once per week thereafter, when on site or location.</li> <li>✓ Implement mandatory daily health screenings for employees, cast, crew, and where practicable, contractors and vendors (e.g. questionnaire, temperature check) asking about (1) COVID-19 <a href="#">symptoms</a> in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close or proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who was under isolation for COVID-19 or with anyone who tested positive or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19 within the past month.</li> <li>✓ Any employee, cast, crew member, contractor, or vendor who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms must not be allowed to enter the media production facility/ location and must be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Perform screening remotely (e.g. by telephone or electronic survey), before individuals report to the facility or location, to the extent possible.</li> <li>✓ Coordinate screening to prevent individuals from intermingling in close or proximate contact with each other prior to the completion of the screening.</li> <li>✓ Temperature checks may also be conducted per U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines.</li> <li>✓ Maintain a log of all employees, cast, crew member, contractor, and vendor who may have close or proximate contact with other individuals at the media production facility or location; excluding deliveries performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means. The log should contain contact information necessary to perform any contact tracing in the event an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19.</li> <li>✓ Refer to DOH’s <a href="#">guidance</a> regarding protocols and policies for employees seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.</li> </ul>

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