

COVID-19: self-regulatory guidelines

Self-Regulatory Guidelines to establish protection against the SARS-CoV-2 virus

Basic safety rules for preproduction and production of audiovisual works

This document defines a framework of general recommendations to help eliminate the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection during preparatory work and production of audio-visual works (hereafter AVW) among crew members, performers, and suppliers.

The recommendations are based on resolutions of the Government of the Czech Republic and extraordinary measures of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic and available epidemiological and hygienic recommendations. They will be continuously updated. Updates will be marked NEW.

These are recommendations – this means that individual production companies should apply them based on their own risk assessments for their own specific project, with the possible supplementation of “filming guidelines” from their partners (co-production or service).

A more precise framework cannot be set forth, as individual projects differ from each other, sometimes very significantly.

However, the primary concern is always to accept one’s own degree of responsibility and the fact that no one can predict the development of an epidemic with 100% certainty.

Basic facts

1.

AVW production is an economic activity – it is in essence an industrial operation which takes place in various exteriors and interiors

- there is no public access to filming
- it is not a cultural event
- it is not an assembly of a larger number of persons in public according to Act No. 84/1990 Coll.
- the film crew can be clearly defined as a “collective body” with limited and minimal contact with the general public
- similar to factory operations, it is therefore not necessary to address the number of people present for the production of the AVW.

2.

Basic procedures for determining the technical and organizational measures for infection prevention must be based on common sense and a responsible approach not only on the part of the producer but also of each crew member (including their behavior outside the workplace), i.e. each crew member must be aware of their own responsibility, as one person can send the entire crew into quarantine and disrupt production with a single irresponsible act.

It is necessary to accept the fact that the course of the disease can last up 3-6 weeks, even if there are no serious complications, and requires local quarantine measures.

Irresponsible behavior by crew members, including performers, can therefore jeopardize the entire shooting schedule. Therefore it is necessary to effectively reduce the risk to a minimum.

3.

Each production is different – it is not possible to define the same specific measures for all types of projects; it is always necessary to proceed on the basis of a risk assessment of a particular project.

4.

The risk assessment should be made in the context of the state of development of the epidemic – what is valid on April 30 may not be valid 14 days later. **Logic dictates that even after the government's emergency measures are reduced or terminated, the risk of infection – albeit to a lesser extent – will persist for weeks or months.** The following self-regulatory recommendations will be continuously supplemented and detailed based on the development of the epidemiological situation and the requirements of foreign productions/studies/platforms.

5.

As standard, risk assessments of individual departments should continue to be issued, as per usual (SFX, stuntmen, location managers, construction etc.).

6.

For reasons stated above, a documentation is required. Each production company should prepare risk assessment documentation and require it from all suppliers.

7.

Before filming begins, the production company, together with its suppliers and subcontractors, must familiarize itself with the risks and necessary measures set forth for filming. Confirmation of this familiarization must be made in writing. Obligations to comply with the measures and to undergo tests for SARS-CoV-2 should be implemented in contracts with individual crew members, including the definition of sanctions and liability for damage in the event of non-compliance.

Individual recommendations

1. Testing

- The production company should have a contract in place with an accredited laboratory to be able to test operationally any crew member or performer at any time, anywhere
- in the event of a positive result, ensure immediate isolation of the person concerned
- testing only by PCR test – smear or blood tests do not fulfill the desired purpose.

2. Sanitary set and base camp

- Creating a completely healthy environment on set and in the base camp
- controlled approach to these places
- continuous thorough disinfection for the entire duration of filming (excessive disinfection in enclosed spaces can, on the contrary, cause health problems; indoor spaces should be ventilated regularly in any case)
- catering – French shift system is suggested.

3. Temperature measurement

- Temperature measurement as an indicator may not be effective and is not authoritative for several reasons (shooting in the sun, pollen allergy sufferers, work fatigue)
- temperature measurement should be performed with a non-contact thermometer only if the individual does not feel completely well.

4. Protective equipment (system of issue, exchange and monitoring use)

(adjusted according to the current epidemiological situation and government recommendations)

- **Protective face mask** – for every 12 hours of working time, count on 4 masks per crew member. This applies to all people on the shoot, including external suppliers.
- **Protective half-mask with exhalation filter** – an alternative to face masks for crew members. It has an inhalation and exhalation filter, which makes breathing easier. The filters can be cleaned and masks disinfected. It offers a higher protection standard than FFP3, and the crew member can wear it for longer periods of time. For multi-day shootings, this means a reduction in costs.
- **Respirators** – ideally FFP3 class for actors
- **Gloves** – when using rubber or latex gloves, please be aware that wearing one pair of gloves for an entire shift completely negates their effectiveness – with contaminated gloves, you contaminate everything you touch. It is more effective to regularly disinfect and wash your hands.
- **Those crew members and performers who are irreplaceable, whose quarantine would interrupt the production of the project, should be provided with and use higher levels of personal protection. Higher levels of protection also means the minimalization of social contacts (voluntary quarantine outside work), in addition to the use of protective equipment.**

5. Waste management

- Single-use masks, gloves, etc. must be disposed of as hazardous waste – placed in heavy-duty plastic bags, handled with protective gloves and then disposed of
- crew members must have sealable plastic bags for cloth masks, as well as a means to sterilize the masks (generally by boiling).

6. Disinfection of workspace and objects

- **Personal disinfection** – crew members should carry personal disinfection in the form of disinfectant wipes or a 30 ml bottle of hand sanitizer.
- **Disinfection stands** – Stands with hand sanitizer must be placed near the toilets, at the catering station, in the base camp or directly on the set, if it is far from the base camp.
- **Disinfection of objects** – for filming public areas and in places with a high concentration of people, it is advisable to consider disinfecting the area by spraying.
- **Vehicle disinfection** – regular disinfection of fleet vehicles that carry the crew and actors must be provided.
- **Disinfection of exterior and interior workspaces** – at the end of each shift.
- **Disinfection of costumes, make-up tools and equipment, and wigs** – make-up artists and costume designers should disinfect workbenches and chairs before use. Costumes must undergo regular disinfection, the frequency of which should be determined individually in the risk assessment.
- **Disinfection of microphones and ports** – regularly, after each use.
- **Use of make-up and cosmetics** see below.

7.

We recommend outsourcing work relating to protection against the spread of the virus to a professional company or a designated individual(s), especially the creation and adherence to a risk assessment, disinfection of premises, removal of used PPE, etc.

8.

Contracts with crew members should include stipulations that responsible/sanitary behavior is required both on and off set and should clearly define the sanctions and liabilities should filming be interrupted/stopped due to quarantine or infection.

9.

Protection applies not only to the period of actual production, but also to pre-production, in particular location scouting and casting (both by the crew and the actors), as well as to post-production, where the general recommendations should apply mutatis mutandis.

10.

A transfer point for off-premises suppliers must be established.

11.

To the extent possible, preparations should be moved online or to open air spaces.

12.

Assign responsibilities within the crew: heads of the individual departments are responsible for their department and at the same time have a replacement. For example, the location manager is responsible for professional disinfection of premises before and after filming or every day after each shift.

13.

We recommend placing information boards at the shooting location / studio, such as:



Special regime for selected performers and crew members

a) Performers in the shot

- those who appear in front of the camera who must perform without masks, respirators, etc.
- performers also include extras and stuntmen
- NEW: we recommend PCR testing (every 14 days, it is not sensible more frequently), which replaces the need to use PPE
- off-camera, all safety rules and rules for the use of PPE apply as for the rest of the crew
- we recommend separating key crew members, actors, and difficult-to-replace professions from the rest of the crew (*for example, separate fitting room, bathroom, make-up room, dining area, etc.*)
- it is essential that they follow a quarantine regime after testing in order for the tests to be relevant
- testing must be taken into account when creating the shooting plan.

b) Professions with the exception of the mandatory distance of 2 meters

- the obligatory distance of 2 meters does not apply to professions that come into direct contact with performers from the definition of their profession (make-up, costumes, sound, etc.) – they are obliged to wear a facemask, shield and gloves

c) Make-up department

- make-up artists proceed in the regime that applies to hairdressing and cosmetic services (facemask and shield)
- we recommend separating make-up artists for actors and other performers
- make-up artists should have separate make-up sets for actors and other performing artists.

d) Location lockdown during shooting

- consistent closure of the area must be maintained in order to prevent the entry of unauthorized persons.

e) Management during shooting

- safety rules related to anti-infection measures must be coordinated at the shooting location by a health and safety officer or by a trained authorized person who will be responsible for coordinating and supervising the anti-infection measures. It is up to each production company to determine who will be in charge of health and safety compliance – whether the person is a medical practitioner, ambulance staff, the producer himself, the production manager, etc.

f) Extras

- as a general rule, it can be stated that the use of extras clearly disrupts the closed nature of the film crew collective, and resolving issues surrounding the use of extras will be complicated. Production companies must work individually with casting companies to ensure clean bills of health for working without face masks, as ensuring a 2 m distance not only from the actors, but also between individual extras is not always possible
 - extras work in the same mode as a) the performers in the shot.
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Cross-border passenger transport in the audiovisual industry

This document aims to propose self-regulatory measures that would reduce the risk of the spread of SARS-CoV-2 during the cross-border transport of foreign members of film crews and actors for filming in the Czech Republic.

Two phases of safe cross-border transport

The Czech production company will resolve all requirements for cross-border entries and exits of foreign crew members and performers and will be responsible for the implementation of AVW production in the Czech Republic.

Phase 1

Preparations prior to cross-border transport

1.

Before the cross-border transport of foreign crew members, the Czech side should have an accredited laboratory contracted for the implementation of tests upon arrival and subsequent inspections throughout the entire production period.

2.

The Czech production company will appoint an occupational health and safety coordinator for the film shoot to handle all measures related to the current epidemiological situation, carry out the necessary risk assessments, and communicate with hygienic stations in the areas where film shoots take place.

3.

NEW: We recommend the foreign partner should provide the Czech production company with proper and timely confirmation from all crew members of negative PCR test results for SARS-CoV-2, which should not be older than 4 days.

4.

Temperature measurement may not be effective and is not authoritative for several reasons (such as pollen allergy sufferers).

5.

The entire procedure will be recorded and archived by the health and safety coordinator.

Phase 2

Measures upon arrival

The risk assessment will define the specific measures to be taken during AVW production and the following points will be met:

1. Testing

NEW: We recommend all foreign members of the crew should be quarantined upon arrival and re-tested for SARS-CoV-2 in the Czech Republic within 72 hours of arrival, regardless of the presentation of a negative SARS-CoV-2 test result from their home country. They will remain in quarantine until the test results are received. NOTE: The result of the test is usually available within 24 hours or earlier. If the test is taken right after the arrival, the quarantine takes up to these 24 hours ONLY. We recommend the actors / performers (who do not wear face protection in front of the camera) to be tested repeatedly every 14 days throughout the shoot.

2. Personal protective equipment

All members of the foreign crew must be equipped with FFP3-level personal protective equipment during transport (*protective masks / respirators with exhalation filter / protective half masks with exhalation filter*) and hand sanitizers.

3. Restrictions on access for at-risk persons

Approach to specific foreign crew members with PPE will be set forth in the risk assessment.

4. Logistic measures

All vehicles in which foreign crew members will be transported must undergo regular disinfection, using the method and at the intervals set forth in the risk assessment. The OSH coordinator will keep records of vehicle interior disinfection.

5. Behavior while off the set

All crew members must be housed separately to prevent any possible spread of the disease, and to observe quarantine restrictions and behave aseptically during off-shoot hours. The Czech production company will provide foreign crew members with stable accommodation and health care for the entire period of their stay in the Czech Republic.

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