



THE BC MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY
COVID-19 PANDEMIC
PRODUCTION GUIDE

7J PERFORMERS

August 2020

This is an excerpt from [The BC Motion Picture Industry COVID-19 Pandemic Production Guide](#)

These guidelines are intended to provide guidance to employers/producers, supervisors and workers on identifying and mitigating potential COVID-19-related workplace hazards applicable to performers including: actors, animation performers, background performers, choreographers, dancers, narrators/commentators, photo-doubles, puppeteers, singers, stand-ins, stunt coordinators/performers/riggers, vocal/dialogue coaches, voice over performers, and musicians.

Also refer to the Hair/Makeup/Costume Guidelines, the [Office Guidelines](#), the Camera Guidelines, and the Transportation Guidelines, and the General Technicians Guidelines (VFX: Scanning and Motion Capture) as appropriate.

Performers interact with multiple departments on a production and there is a high likelihood that they will be required to work in close contact with other performers and crew. A suite of controls should be considered in order to protect the health and safety of performers and minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

In general, physical distancing requirements between performers does not apply to performers who reside in the same household.

GENERAL WORKPLACE POLICIES

In addition to guidelines in Section 2.A., consider the following:

1. 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.
2. Filming large crowd scenes outdoors where possible and limiting the amount of time spent filming these types of scenes.
3. Requiring that animals and their trainer only enter set when immediately needed and that interaction with the animal is limited to the trainer and the performer(s) who interact with the animal in the scene.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Have protocols in place to permit performers to maintain physical distance from other performers and from other workers whenever possible. In addition to guidelines in Section 2.B., consider the following:

4. Limiting access to set to essential personnel only.
5. Setting up remote viewing where permitted to reduce the number of individuals who are working near performers while on set. Continually assess each set and adjust the number of people on set (e.g. near performers) where necessary.
6. Setting the camera at least 2 metres from performers, where possible.
7. Incorporating alternate shot set-ups, camera angles, lenses, etc. to allow for greater distance between performers.
8. Whenever possible, permitting performers to perform tasks that would usually require a worker to be closer than 2 metres from the performer, while the qualified worker provides instruction/direction.
9. Using boom microphones instead of LAV microphones, whenever possible.

10. Providing single-occupancy dressing rooms, wherever possible. Limit occupancy/ stagger use of shared dressing rooms. Shared dressing rooms should be cleaned, disinfected, and aired out in between uses by performers.
11. Limiting access to cast trailers to essential persons only.

CLOSE CONTACT AND INTIMATE SCENES

To minimize the risk of infection in close contact or intimate scenes (such as kissing, fighting, and stunt work that requires physical contact), employers must develop and implement effective controls. If eliminating close contact is not practicable, control measures to consider may include:

12. Consider alternative methods to achieve film sequences such as shooting scenes at angle such that physical distancing can be maintained. Consider scheduling those scenes strategically and seek the advice of trained specialists (i.e. for stunt and/or intimacy) to discuss protocols and reduced risk options for the preparation and performance of such scenes. The performer has the right to refuse close contact with other performers, such as hugging, kissing, and stunts requiring close contact.
13. Limiting intimate scenes (e.g. kissing, touching) where possible. There may be special considerations for intimate scenes, both in planning and execution such as testing in advance of such scenes.
14. Intimate and close contact scenes should be camera blocked and/or limited to body parts easily sanitized (e.g. mouth-to-mouth kissing could be redirected to the neck).
15. For intimate scenes involving kissing, consider requiring performers to rinse their mouths with a hydrogen peroxide-based oral rinse (such as that used by dentists) just prior to filming.
16. Minimizing the number and duration of scenes involving close contact and touching. Minimize the duration, number of takes, and extent of performer close contact while scenes are being shot.
17. Where performers will touch one another during a scene, require the performers to wash or sanitize their hands immediately before and after each take.
18. Creating cohorts for scenes involving close physical contact so that performers are working with the same people in every shoot.
19. Scheduling close contact work activities as close together as possible in time and minimize the interaction that these performers have with others between scenes.
20. Shooting different angles that could allow for barriers (e.g. plexiglass) or masks to be used by the performers.
21. Performers, including stand-ins, wearing personal protective equipment (e.g. face masks and shields) whenever possible.
22. Requiring any individuals who interact in close proximity with a performer to wear a mask and face shield and to wash/sanitize hands. Any such interactions, especially if the performer is not able to wear a mask, should be kept as brief as possible.
23. Where performers cannot wear PPE, other measures that are appropriate to the risk in the circumstances must be in place to mitigate the risk of exposure or transmission.
24. Avoiding face-to-face shots as much as possible.

EQUIPMENT AND PROPS

Have protocols in place to limit the risk of transmission of the virus due to multiple individuals touching or interacting with the same surface(s) or object(s). In addition to guidelines in Section 2.E. , consider the following:

25. Permitting the performer handling a prop to reset the prop between takes.
26. Cleaning and disinfecting shared props and surfaces before takes, whenever possible.
27. Establishing protocols for the cleaning and disinfection and maintenance of LAV microphones, which should include disinfecting the microphones before/after each use, replacing any mounting components that cannot be disinfected, and labelling microphones with performer assignments.
28. Assigning and labelling props for individual performers.
29. Temporarily removing from circulation any props that cannot be cleaned between users.
30. Developing protocols for 'food props' to ensure safe food preparation, handling, and storage to limit the risk of contamination. Utensils, plates, cups, should be disinfected prior to use and in-between uses, where appropriate.

CASTING, REHEARSALS AND FITTINGS

Consider the following:

31. Conducting remote casting, rehearsals, and fittings (e.g. via videoconference or self-tapes), whenever possible. In-person interactions with performers should be limited.
32. Putting appropriate measures in place in circumstances when 2 metres of physical distance cannot be maintained. Such measures should include having performers and other individuals unable to maintain this physical distance wear PPE (e.g. face masks and shields).
33. When in-person auditions, rehearsals or fittings are required, consider the following additional measures:
 - a. Avoiding open calls.
 - b. Scheduling sessions for longer periods or in such other manner as to avoid congestion (e.g. allow more time for auditions, schedule breaks between sessions or assign set times).
 - c. Limiting the number of casting/production representatives physically present at the session.
 - d. Arranging for performers to wait in their vehicles until they are notified to enter the studio. If this is not possible, ensure that all performers are provided with a safe, clean, holding area that allows for 2 metres of physical distancing
 - e. Arranging waiting areas to allow for physical distancing.
 - f. Avoiding the use of shared props or wardrobe. Permitting performers to use personal items as props or clothing, where feasible. Such items or clothing should only be handled by the performer or disinfected before and after use by others.
 - g. If providing paper copies of sides, not sharing them between performers and providing a recycle bin for performers to dispose of them.
 - h. Cleaning and disinfecting any surfaces touched by a performer and any props that will be re-used.

- i. Encouraging the use of digital headshots and resumes.
 - j. Cleaning and disinfecting of spaces, areas and/or set pieces must occur before and after intimacy rehearsals.
 - k. Providing musicians personal copies of the sheet music and their own music stands.
34. Performers should be advised in advance of audition if close contact or intimacy is a requirement of the script. Those performers engaged without an audition, such as stunt performers, stand-ins, photo-doubles and background performers should be advised in advance of booking.
35. Casting members of the same household in scenes of intimacy where appropriate.

BACKGROUND PERFORMERS AND STAND-INS

Consider the following:

- 36. Utilizing the same background performers in different scenes when possible.
- 37. Do not keep people in crowded holding areas for extended periods of time.
- 38. Providing background holding and change areas that allow for at least 5 square metres/person, including arranging for background holding to be outdoors, if possible, and weather permitting.
- 39. Providing sufficient space or storage for personal effects and extra changes of costumes that may be required by production to help with physical distancing and prevent cross contamination of performers costumes.
- 40. During intimate scenes, consider 'morph suits' or appropriately coloured gowns that can be removed after blockings.
- 41. Providing various skin toned masks that will not hinder lighting.
- 42. Chairs and/or personal belongings should not be touched or moved by crew members while Stand-Ins are blocking on set. Consider providing a storage area or allow time for Stand-Ins to move their 'stand-by station' as needed.

STUNT PERFORMERS

Policies and protocols for productions involving stunt performers should consider the unique aspects of stunt performance and the specialized equipment and personal gear that is used. Allocating time to adequately clean and disinfect stunt equipment should also be considered. Reference should be made to Section 7.C. Construction and Pre-production, and Section 7.F. General Technicians for guidance on the sharing of tools, equipment and cleaning and disinfecting protocols. Section 7.L. Transportation should be referenced for guidance on the use of Picture Vehicles.

Consider the following:

- 43. Engaging Stunt Coordinators early in the pre-production process to establish strategies for managing stunt doubles, utility stunt performers, rehearsals, actor involvement, equipment, scheduling, and facility needs.
- 44. Prioritizing continuity of performers within the stunt department for multiple roles in the same production (stunt doubles, ND and/or utility stunts) if applicable.

45. Special considerations will be needed for the cleaning/disinfecting of all SCUBA equipment and how to best maintain physical distancing while implementing all water safety protocols and rescue procedures.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

46. Areas dedicated and isolated for training and rehearsals should be large enough to allow for ample physical distancing and ventilation.
47. Plan the space requirements and installation timeframe to establish the stunt rigging area/footprint to prevent department crossover.
48. Consider designating one member of the rigging team to assist with harness issues or attach lines to actors and stunt performers. Riggers must wear appropriate PPE and minimize time in close proximity with any performers.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

49. Stunt mats should be cleaned and disinfected before and after being used by different performers.
50. When harnesses must be shared, they should be cleaned in between uses with sufficient time for natural drying. Alternatively, develop a rotation schedule that contemplates the length of time viral loads may remain active on the harnesses.
51. Take extra precautions with cleaning and disinfecting agents/solvents around stunt harnesses or fall protection (lanyard or harness), as the agents/solvents may damage the equipment or void the warranty.
52. Protective padding worn on set should be bagged after use and washed/disinfected by the performer unless supplied by costumes.

TOOLS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

53. No other crew or departments should have contact with stunt equipment without prior approval from the Stunt Department.
54. Protective padding should be provided by production for each actor's dedicated use. Consult with the Stunt Coordinator in pre-production to provide sufficient time to order or source any protective padding for actors.
55. Stunt performers should provide their own protective padding.
56. Any harnesses provided by production or the stunt rigging team should be dedicated to a single performer for their exclusive use if possible.

MINORS

Consider that minors will need specialized attention and communications should be oriented to their age group to follow COVID-19 protocols.

Consider the following:

57. When establishing policies and protocols to address COVID-19 for productions involving minors, producers should consider the unique and specific obligations with respect to minors, and parents/guardians, where applicable. Reference should be made to [Employment Standards Regulation, Children in Recorded Entertainment Industry](#) and any applicable collective agreement.

58. Consider that parents/guardians may require additional time to review and understand COVID-19 requirements.
59. Consideration should be given to extra time, planning, and diligence that may be required when child performers will be on set (for e.g. for young children who may find physical distancing difficult).
60. Interaction between child performers and others on set should be limited as much as possible.
61. When possible, a separate holding area should be provided for child performers and their parent/guardian.
62. Virtual/remote tutoring should be considered.
63. Access to wi-fi for minors should be provided in order to comply with the remote learning safety protocols mandated by the BC Ministry of Education.
64. When possible, tutoring locations should not be used for other purposes. Tutoring locations should be appropriately cleaned and disinfected in between each use.
65. Careful planning and risk mitigation should be implemented when working with infants.
66. Technology solutions such as remote video monitoring may allow parents/guardians to observe the set while maintaining physical distancing from others. When this is not possible, provide a space for parent/guardian that ensures their ability to physically distance themselves while remaining within sight and sound of the minor.
67. Frequent hand washing is preferable for young children whenever possible to promote hygiene.
68. Hand sanitizer recommendations for children include:
 - a. Read labels carefully as some products are for adult use only and should not be used by children.
 - b. Children under the age of 6 should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.
 - c. Never apply hand sanitizer over broken skin or on scrapes or rashes.
 - d. Hand sanitizer is NOT recommended for use on infants as their skin is still developing/changing.
69. Ensure appropriate sizes of PPE are made available for minors and that they are trained in their use.
 - a. Children under the age of 2 should not wear face masks.
 - b. For younger children over the age of 2, masks are generally not recommended as they can be irritating and may lead to increased touching of the face and eyes.
 - c. If wearing PPE is not an option, additional safety measures must be implemented to minimize the risk of exposure.

VOICE PERFORMANCE AND MUSIC RECORDING

Consider the following:

70. Consider whether recording sessions can be conducted remotely, for example via self-records, using conferencing technology or by having disinfected recording kits delivered to performers.

71. If in-person recording sessions are required, implement measures to maintain physical distance. Such measures may include:
- a. Avoiding group recording sessions that require more than one person to be in the recording booth at a time, especially when singing or vocal projections are required.
 - b. Limiting the number of people present at the session by having staff observe the session remotely.
 - c. Arranging for performers to wait in their vehicles until they are notified to enter the studio. If this is not possible, ensure that all performers are provided with a safe, clean, holding area that allows for 2 metres of physical distancing
 - d. Arranging equipment to permit performers to be at least 2 metres apart.
 - e. Scheduling in-person sessions to avoid congestion and to allow appropriate disinfection and ventilation to occur in between sessions.
72. If in-person sessions are required, have appropriate measures in place to avoid transmission of the virus through touching of persons, objects or surfaces. Such measures may include:
- a. Disinfecting all surfaces and equipment performers come into contact with before and after each session, including microphones, POP filters, script or music stands.
 - b. Limiting the sharing of equipment as much as possible.
 - c. Using disposable covers for microphones.
 - d. Allowing performers to use their own headphones or provide disposable earphone covers.
 - e. Providing musicians personal copies of the sheet music and their own music stands.