

**IATSE LOCAL 700**  
**Health and Safety Protocols/Guidelines for Post Production**  
**in Motion Picture, Television, and Streaming Productions**  
**During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Motion Picture Editors Guild, IATSE, Local 700 has compiled the following protocols/guidelines for adoption under a future resumption of motion picture, television, and streaming productions and post production in an environment that minimizes the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

In addition to the already established Industry-Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee Task Force Phase One protocols/guidelines, which include the reopening process, ensuring proper infection control, physical distancing, and training and education, the principles in Phase Two, when adopted, will also be adhered to in conjunction with the protocols/guidelines contained herein.

The intent of this document is to establish guiding principles and minimum requirements for governments to authorize the safe resumption of motion picture and television post production activities within IATSE Local 700's jurisdiction. Local 700 has nation-wide jurisdiction throughout the United States for post production. In addition, however, within Los Angeles County, Local 700 also represents Story Analysts. Story Analysts work in development and when they work on the studio lots they do so in typical office environments. Specific protocols/guidelines adopted for these areas of work will apply to them. In Los Angeles County and within the New York region, Local 700 represents Technical Directors who work on live broadcast productions and, unscripted/non-dramatic shows and, only in Los Angeles County, in sports broadcasting. Specific protocols/guidelines adopted for these various genres of work shall encompass the work of Technical Directors.

Given the dynamic and evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, these interim protocols/guidelines will likely need to be modified and adapted as circumstances change. For example, additional revisions and requirements regarding various elements including testing and PPE are subject to further discussion and agreement between the Employers and the IATSE and Local 700.

This document contains detailed department-specific operational protocols/guidelines and workflows involving post-production.

Leave policies shall be flexible, non-punitive, and paid in order to allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers. Paid leave policies shall also account for employees who

need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.

**Note:** Numerous different job roles are involved in the post production industry. To avoid confusion, the term “crew” is used throughout to refer to any/all individuals who are involved in the post production process.

While these protocols and guidelines address many elements of post production, specific work in a particular geographic jurisdiction must consult applicable state and local public health orders as well as applicable Federal and State OSHA Standards.

The Union will be notified of all employees who are being asked to return to a worksite in advance and allow for adequate time to address any concerns.

The Employers are prohibited from asking or otherwise requiring any crew to sign liability waivers.

For the sake of the health and safety of all of their co-workers, all crew will be required to abide by the Phase One and any subsequent jointly-agreed upon protocols/guidelines applicable to their work environments.

It is imperative that these safety protocols/guidelines not be used to allow for age discrimination or violation of health privacy issues.

Post production work shall be halted periodically (every 4-6 hours) to facilitate a break for hand hygiene and high-touch wipe down.

High-touch surfaces shall be wiped down throughout every shift with EPA-registered disinfectant, following the manufacturer’s instructions (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, concentration, contact time). Examples of high-touch surfaces are tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, phones, faucets, stairway handrails, elevators, etc.

Management shall work with all departments/crews to review and implement specific plans for high-touch wipe down of department-specific equipment. Departments shall review specific workflows and identify ways to ensure disinfection of equipment and physical distancing (e.g. keyboards, hard drives, microphones, etc.).

Post Production areas shall designate specific qualified and trained individuals to perform high-touch wipe down, with an emphasis on shared spaces and equipment.

All shared workspaces shall be cleaned daily and between shifts with an emphasis on high-touch surfaces, including but not limited to post production offices, break areas, and eating/meal areas and trash receptacles will be emptied at the end of every shift.

Dedicated cleaning crews shall clean common spaces between shifts on a 24-hour basis.

Those responsible for preparing and distributing food (including Post PAs) must clean their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer prior to beginning food preparation or distribution and regularly thereafter.

As shared use of plates, cups and eating utensils shall be prohibited, in an effort to eliminate unnecessary waste, compostable containers, plates and utensils should be provided by the Employer. The use of plastic water bottles should be discouraged.

Crew are discouraged from leaving the job site to obtain food during the course of the workday, whenever possible. Many crew work at locations where food is not available; therefore, food will need to be made available to the crew in accordance with the safety protocols/guidelines for handling of food. For those who would be more comfortable bringing their own food, a refrigerator will be supplied by the Employer.

Post production offices, editorial rooms, stages, meeting rooms and other workspaces shall have infection control protocols/guidelines for providing impromptu meals, snacks, and coffee. Likewise, breakrooms, microwaves, dishes and food deliveries will require regular disinfecting and physical distancing. Post Production shall provide adequately trained personnel, equipment, materials, and space to enable crews to execute these protocols/guidelines.

## GENERAL INFECTION PREVENTION ISSUES

Limit the duration of workdays and excessive consecutive workdays whenever possible and extend turnaround times whenever possible to ensure crew remain healthy and receive adequate rest.

## MEETINGS

Use phone, teleconferencing or similar technologies for meetings as much as possible. Beware of people gathering around a computer to watch together. Consider virtual post production meetings whenever feasible.

## SHARED WORKSPACES

Reduce overcrowding of shared workspaces, such as editorial rooms and post production stages, by increasing the size of the workspaces and/or number of small workspaces allowing for employees to not be required to share offices and to maintain at least six feet of distancing between employees. Additional consideration shall be given to crew who have to walk through office environments to get to worksites, exposing them to small work areas, hallways too narrow to distance at least six feet and coming in contact with other personnel employed, sometimes by a third-party facility, including those who handle gear and equipment on post production stages.

This will allow the improvement of room layout and increase the ability for physical distancing so the necessary number of personnel needed to produce a professional product can be maintained. It is imperative that all persons wear face coverings and practice hand hygiene.

The Union and Employers will work cooperatively together to address specific facility-related issues.

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## VENTILATION

A primary concern of all post production crews is adequate and healthful ventilation systems. Therefore, the following protocols/guidelines will be in place.

- All work will be done in buildings/work spaces with adequate ventilation of one of two types:
  - A recirculating system designed to the standards of the American Society of Heating, Air-conditioning and Refrigerating Engineers (ASHRAE). In older buildings the system should meet the ASHRAE 62.1 - 2001 standard. Newer buildings may comply with either the 2001 standard (preferred) or the 2019 standard.
  - A natural ventilation system used in older buildings (usually from the 1960s or earlier) which rely for fresh air on open windows, doors, and diffusion of air through unsealed windows and uninsulated building materials. If such buildings have been made more energy efficient by insulating them, a qualified heating and air-conditioning engineer will be retained by the employer to assess the air quality in the building.
- If the building's ventilation was shut down for a week or more, an engineer must be retained to guide the restarting of the system and a check for potential presence of *Legionella*, mold, and other microorganisms. General guidance for restarting can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>
- When the system has been successfully restarted, an engineer's report will quantify the fresh air per person delivered by the system for people at the maximum allowed occupancy in each room/work area (editing rooms, mixing stages, etc.). The rate will be provided in cubic feet per minute (cfm/person) and will be consistent with the applicable standard, either ASHRAE 62.1 - 2001 (20 cfm/person) or in ASHRAE 62.1 - 2019 (5 cfm/person). This report will be provided to management and the business representatives (as per 29 CFR 1910.1020).
- The engineer's report will include the filtering capacity of the recirculating system with respect to particles at 0.3 microns. If this capture rate is below 85 percent (MERV rating 15 or 16), the possibility that virus aerosols (much smaller than 0.3 microns) may be recirculating must be considered. An engineer should report on the possibility of adjusting dampers to exhaust only and estimate the resulting heating and cooling costs. If 100 percent exhaust is not feasible, additional precautions to prevent possible virus transmission should be in the reopening plan.

- Any complaints about general air quality will be resolved by having the carbon dioxide levels measured at the end of a day in which occupancy has been at or near the maximum. Ideally the carbon dioxide level should be at or below 800 ppm. The ASHRAE standard of 700 ppm above outdoor levels (usually between 900 and 1200 ppm) are acceptable provided occupants have been informed about research that indicates symptoms of discomfort, tiredness and reduction in mental acuity occur at levels above 1000 ppm.
- Complaints of chemical or unidentifiable odors will be resolved with air quality tests. The tests will be recommended by an industrial hygienist based on a workplace inspection and interviews of personnel to determine which tests are warranted (such as a broad Total VOC and identification of the types of VOCs).
- Complaints of a mold odor will be resolved by hiring a Certified Mold Inspector who will generate a report with recommendations and provide it to management and the business representatives.
- All engineering and air quality reports will be provided to management and to the union business representatives and their consultants (as per cr CFR 1910.1020), who will in turn make them available to workers at their discretion.
- Actions taken by employers on the basis of these air quality reports will be transparent to workers and the Union.

## UNIQUE POST PRODUCTION-SPECIFIC CONCERNS

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRAVEL

Crew traveling for productions shall be aware that, should circumstances change in the location, they may be subject to travel restrictions, including enforced quarantine. If quarantines are enforced, the traveled employee(s) will be paid wages for the time spent in quarantine. Employers must notify the Union in advance of any traveling and be allowed adequate time to address any concerns.

### IN PERSON COLLABORATION

Adequate staffing and space for social distancing is essential for an effective health and safety plan.

In-person collaboration with others is an important part of the work of many post production classifications. Sufficient space of at least six feet of distancing for the numbers of individuals who need to be in any given workspace at the same time needs to be provided. In the alternative, the number of people who are essential to the collaboration process should be

minimized to allow for at least six feet of distancing. Further details are below in section, Unique Post Production-Specific Concerns by Classifications.

## REMOTE WORK

On a temporary basis and without diminishing work opportunities, consider remote work/telecommuting opportunities for employees. This shall only apply to those who can do so effectively without interference in performance of their job duties, and without minimizing their role in the process. In addition, if working remotely, engineering resources must be made available to resolve technical problems and provide emergency equipment in a critical failure. Sound Editors must have access to the studio sound effects libraries. Crew shall be reimbursed for additional expenses incurred as a result of working at home (for internet use, for upgrade to adequate internet speeds, if necessary, to adequately perform required job functions, electricity use, room rental, purchase of office equipment/desks/chairs, etc.). Employees will not be required to have their own equipment, but if they do own their own equipment and are willing to use it, they must be provided with equitable, market-rate standardized box rental fees. The type and sophistication of equipment vary greatly, and the Employers and the Union will need to work jointly and cooperatively to establish equitable rental fee amounts. Employees working remotely cannot be held accountable for any security violations of media as long as they follow the basic protocols/guidelines provided to them by the Employer.

Vendors and engineering personnel from the studios or facilities who need access to a crew member's home for set up or maintenance of equipment will be required to follow all of the safety protocols/guidelines within both Phase One and any subsequent jointly-agreed upon protocols/guidelines applicable to their work environments.

Clear instructions for submitting timecards and granting necessary overtime must be clearly established and communicated to the crew.

The Union will be notified of all crew who are currently working remotely and in advance of any crew being asked to work remotely in order to have adequate time to address any concerns.

## COVID-19 COMPLIANCE OFFICER

As post production personnel work in various locations - on and off studio lots, at independent facilities and third party leased facilities - and work very late hours, with some departments operating three shifts within a 24-hour period, the matter of having access to a designated COVID-19 Compliance Officer is paramount. A mechanism must be put in place to address this for all work areas and all shifts. In addition, all crew will be provided with copies of safety protocols/guidelines upon commencement of employment and updates as they are drafted.

## UNIQUE POST PRODUCTION-SPECIFIC CONCERNS BY CLASSIFICATION

### PICTURE EDITORIAL

- Personnel: Picture Editors, Visual Effects Editors, Assistant Editors, Apprentice Editors/Editing Room Assistants, Studio Technicians / Engineers. On animated TV series, a Local 839 Director is present in the assistant editorial rooms.
- Additional Considerations: Picture editorial rooms must be large enough to both contain the necessary office/editorial equipment and furniture to accommodate the personnel who need to be within the Editor's room in different phases throughout the editorial process. Each will need to be considered individually and addressed accordingly as editorial rooms vary a great deal in size and many will not allow for at least six feet of distancing in traditional groupings of people. In addition, editorial rooms are often rented in office buildings and/or editorial rental facilities.
- Regardless of the location, wherever the crews work, those facilities must be held accountable for all of the adopted safety protocols/guidelines. Elevators are common in office buildings; therefore, disinfecting of the elevators and at least six feet of distancing must be maintained within elevators. Handrails of stairways, likewise, must be regularly disinfected. Office buildings also have shared hallways, bathrooms and kitchens often times with other occupants and visitors within the building who are not affiliated with the entertainment industry or may not otherwise be subject to any adopted safety protocols/guidelines. Employers must be responsible for assuring crew working in these situations are fully protected in accordance with these agreed upon safety protocols/guidelines. Precautions should be taken for Directors and all personnel who have been working on a set then entering editorial rooms, assuring masks are worn and hands are washed prior to entering the editorial rooms/offices. Assistant Editors handle media (cards/hard drives) that have come directly from the set or from an outside facility. Those cards and hard drives must be properly disinfected according to manufacturer's standards upon arrival in the editorial rooms/offices prior to being touched by Assistant Editors (or others).
- There are routine phases of the process that require the gathering of personnel, often within small office spaces. Examples of this in the picture editorial departments are:

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## FEATURES & SCRIPTED TELEVISION

- Workflow meetings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, production crew, studio
- Editorial office facility meetings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, PA, and facility staff
- Production staff meetings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, PA, production crew, and office staff
- Editorial room setup
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, PA, and rental house crew
- Dailies delivery
  - Personnel: PA or Runner and Assistant Editor
- During Director's cut
  - Personnel: Director, Editor, Assistant Editor
- During Producer's cut
  - Personnel: Producer, Editor, Assistant Editor
- VFX spotting sessions
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Producer / Director, Post Producer / Supervisor, VFX Producer, Supervisor, Coordinator, and VFX Editor
- VFX review
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Producer / Director, Post Producer / Supervisor, VFX Producer, Supervisor, Coordinator, and VFX Editor

Outside of the editorial rooms where personnel gather in rooms with others:

- Dailies house meetings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, and dailies staff



- Equipment rental house meetings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer/ Supervisor, and equipment rental staff
- Sound/Music spotting sessions
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Post Producer / Supervisor, Music Editor, Composer, Music Supervisor, and Sound Supervisor
- D.I. / Color reviews
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Producer / Director, Post Producer / Supervisor, Colorist, D.I. house staff
- Preview screenings
  - Personnel: Editor, Assistant Editor, Producer / Director, Post Producer / Supervisor, studio staff, preview staff, and audience

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## UNSCRIPTED TELEVISION

- Additional Personnel: Loggers
- These editorial rooms tend to be smaller than those in scripted television and features and many will not be sufficient in size to have anyone in the editing room other than the Editor whose room it is in order to maintain at least six feet of distancing. Story Producers, Executive Producers and other members of the editorial team are examples of those who need to collaborate. Larger editorial rooms will need to be provided. Assistant Editors and Loggers generally share rooms “bullpen style” in tight quarters that generally will not allow for at least six feet of distancing. These rooms need to be larger or crews will need to be split up in multiple rooms and plexiglass shield guards shall be provided at each crew’s workspace. Those shields will be subject to the disinfecting/cleaning protocols/guidelines and responsibilities of the Employer.

## SOUND EDITORIAL

- Personnel: Supervising Sound Editors, Sound Editors, Assistant Sound Editors, picture editorial
- Additional Considerations: Sound Editors spend time on ADR, Foley and re-recording stages and come in contact on any given day with Supervising Sound Editors, Assistant Sound Editors, Actors and Recordists (for ADR), Producers, Foley Artists,

Re-recording Mixers, Directors, Picture Editors, and Studio Technicians / Engineers and clients. Adequate room and stage sizes will need to accommodate these interactions and/or only essential personnel should be allowed at any given time sufficient to provide adequate space for at least six feet of distancing. In addition, Sound Editors come in contact with support staff at editorial houses. Those outside facilities need to be held to the same safety standards. Sound Editors generally have their own equipment assigned to them that is often used only by them, but there are concerns about the common use of keyboards, copy machines, the various desks and credenzas on stages.

## MUSIC EDITORIAL

- Personnel: Music Editors and Assistant Music Editors, Studio Technicians / Engineers
- Additional Considerations: Various personnel interact with the Music Editors – Picture Editors and Assistants, Directors, Post Supervisors, Music Supervisors, Music Executive/Producers. For the time being, only essential personnel shall be allowed in the Music Editor's room and only to the extent there is sufficient room for at least six feet of distancing. When a Music Editor is working on a dub stage, the equipment is shared and sanitizing it between uses is not always efficient, so additional equipment should be brought in so this does not need to occur. Music Editors also work at recording studios, Composer's studios/homes/writing rooms and attend meetings in office rooms for spotting sessions. Those work locations must be held to the same safety standards.

## POST PRODUCTION AREAS AND DEPARTMENTS

### STAGES

Generally, television mix rooms are smaller, so extra consideration needs to be given to the ability to keep at least six feet apart within them. iPads are often used for equipment control, such as volume on speakers, and are touched by multiple individuals. One person shall be designated as the only one who can utilize that iPad.

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### MIX/DUB STAGES

- Personnel: Entire mix team, several executives (studio, Producers and/or Director), Post Producer / Supervisor, Music Supervisor, Music Editor, Sound Editors, Picture Editors, Assistant Picture Editors, clients, Studio Technicians / Engineers

- Additional Considerations: The number of people on the stage at any given time may need to be reduced to allow for at least six feet of distancing. Disinfecting equipment when used by multiple people including phones, computer keyboards, consoles, remote controls, microphones, etc. is a priority. After Mix Techs set up the mixing stage, a professional cleaner/sanitizer trained for COVID-19 protocols/guidelines shall wipe down all of the equipment prior to utilization by the Mixers. Theaters or mixing stages can be linked and material streamed in real-time for remote playback and review to temporarily minimize personnel to allow for adequate safety distancing.
- Mix/Dub stages for television are much smaller than for features as are crew sizes. But even so, keeping at least six feet of distance on television dubbing stages may be problematic; while the typical crew size is three people, they are each essential to the process.

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#### ADR STAGES

- Personnel: Mixer, Recordist, Actor, group ADR, Sound Editors, Sound Supervisors, Director, clients
- Additional Considerations: All microphones and the podium used by Actors shall be disinfected between Actors. ADR Mixers need to access other work sites – machine rooms, engineering departments, Editor's rooms and ADR listening rooms. Those areas will fall under the same safety standards.

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#### FOLEY STAGES

- Personnel: There is generally a team of two Foley Artists (each rotating), and a Mixer who is usually in a separate booth. Interaction between the Foley Artists and Mixer is required sometimes and on the smaller stages it is not always possible to stay safely distanced, so additional precautions should be implemented. On occasion, a Sound Supervisor or Editor may come on the stage to discuss certain scenes, but that should be discouraged for the time being as this can be successfully done remotely.
- Additional Considerations: Microphones, cue sheets and props are touched by various crew and shall be disinfected between use.

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## MUSIC SCORING STAGES

- Personnel: Engineer, Mixer, Pro Tools Operator, Recordist, Scoring Mixer, Composer, Music Editor, executives, Director
- Additional considerations: A Microphone Boom Operator sets up risers, microphone stands and microphones / headsets for the musicians. Testing is performed by an Engineer. Precautions need to be taken so they do not touch the same equipment without proper disinfecting. Often times, the Microphone Boom Operator remains on the floor during recording. If the stage is large enough, he/she may be able to remain, as long as they maintain at least six feet of distance. Precautions for proper distancing, PPE wearing, disinfection of work equipment and areas, playing of wind instruments by musicians shall be developed and adhered to in conjunction with the AFM in order to protect the safety of all crew. Control rooms while occupied by several personnel are generally large enough to keep at least six feet of distance and the equipment each uses is not shared. Once recording is complete, all items touched by the musicians must be disinfected before the Boom Operator does the take down.

## ENGINEERING DEPARTMENTS

- Personnel: Engineers
- Additional Consideration: Engineers generally, but not always, operate from a shared, “bullpen style” office space with other Engineers. The number of Engineers varies depending on the size of the facility. Plexiglass shield guards shall be provided at each crew’s workspace. Those shields will be subject to the disinfecting/cleaning protocols/guidelines and responsibilities of the Employer. Equipment within the engineering area is often utilized by multiple people and different people on each shift. Therefore, the applicable general safety protocols/guidelines that apply to all shall be strictly applied. Importantly, equipment used by personnel on different shifts shall be disinfected between every shift, as well as throughout each shift. Engineers move throughout an entire studio/facility to service and set up equipment on stages and in editorial rooms, although some troubleshooting can be done remotely and should be encouraged. Those responsible for moving the equipment must also abide by the safety protocols/guidelines for disinfecting equipment. All work sites where they are required to perform services shall be disinfected prior to them working on any equipment that has been utilized by anyone else and afterwards, before other personnel utilize the equipment.

## DIGITAL POST PRODUCTION DEPARTMENTS

- Personnel: Including, but not limited to, Colorists, Assistant Colorists, Encoders, Digital Technicians, Digital Restoration Operators, Duplication/Tape Operators, Digital Vision Imaging Technicians, Scanning and Film Recordists, Quality Control Operators, Digital Operators, Lead Digital Operators, Senior Digital Operators, Digital Media Operators, Data I/O Operators and Cinetechnicians.
- Additional Considerations: Sharing the same workspace and work equipment from shift to shift is the greatest concern. Therefore, the applicable general safety protocols/guidelines that apply to all shall be strictly applied. Importantly, equipment used by personnel on different shifts shall be disinfected between every shift, as well as throughout each shift. In addition, hard drives and thumb drives are passed around within the departments and between departments, all of which will need to be wiped down regularly with disinfecting wipes. Accommodations must be made to allow for at least six feet of distancing and plexiglass shield guards shall be provided at each crew's workspace. Those shields will be subject to the disinfecting/cleaning protocols/guidelines and responsibilities of the Employer.

## VAULTS / LIBRARIES

- Personnel: Librarians, Media Archivists, Metadata Analysts, Media Prep/Media Transformation Servicing, Vault Clerks, Shipping & Receiving Clerks
- Additional Considerations: Sharing the same workspace from shift-to-shift is the greatest concern. Therefore, the general safety protocols/guidelines that apply to all shall be strictly applied. In areas where there are physical elements that are touched regularly by various people, a mechanism must be put in place to disinfect the elements when passing between people and departments and for all elements to be disinfected when they are returned to the vaults/libraries for storage. The same application should be in the departments where the elements are digital and hard drives and thumb drives are moving within the departments and between departments, all which will need to be wiped down regularly with disinfecting wipes. Film elements present in the vaults will require specific and specialized handling instructions.