

IATSE LOCAL 700
Health and Safety Protocols/Guidelines for Live 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 live productions and 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 following principles will also be adhered to, in addition to the IATSE-adopted protocols/guidelines for these types of productions.

The intent of these protocols/guidelines is to establish guiding principles for the safe resumption of live productions. Local 700 has nation-wide jurisdiction throughout the United States for post production. In addition, however, 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. Specific protocols/guidelines adopted for these various genres of work shall encompass the work of Technical Directors, Switchers and Loggers, where applicable.

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.

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 these types of productions. To avoid confusion, the term “crew” is used throughout to refer to any/all individuals who are involved in the production process.

While these protocols and guidelines address many elements of 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.

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

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, router panels, headsets and computers, etc.).

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 the control room, 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, if the production operates on a 24-hour basis.

Those responsible for preparing and distributing food 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. Therefore, food will need to be made available to the crew in accordance with the safety protocols/guidelines for handling of food.

Production offices, control 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. Production shall provide adequately trained personnel, equipment, materials, and space to enable crews to execute these protocols/guidelines.

Productions that have Switchers as part of the crew face special circumstances because they direct the competitions, ceremonies and special events that occur on the show, necessitating meetings with Art, Competitions, Story, Construction, Props, outside vendors, etc., as well as frequent set visits to give notes on set construction and to set temporary camera installations.

Some of this can be done remotely, but there would not be a way to keep them from interacting with all of these departments in person at some point, so emphasis must be on the ability to control their physical distancing of at least 6 feet.

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. Consider virtual meetings whenever feasible.

SHARED WORKSPACES

Reduce overcrowding of shared workspaces, such as control rooms, 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.

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.