

Safe execution of audiovisual productions

This guide contains guidelines for an infection protection plan for audiovisual productions. It is an addition to the Film Industry Council's general guidelines for safeguarding those involved in audiovisual productions against Covid-19. The guidelines have been developed with support from the Norwegian Film Institute.

Developed by Virke - Film Producers' Association, [the Norwegian Film Workers Association](#), [Norwegian Film Directors](#), the [Writers Guild](#) and the [Norwegian Actors Guild](#).

These guidelines are based on the current recommendations of the Directorate of Health, The Public Health Institute ("the Health Authorities") and the Labor Inspection Authority, and therefore will be subject to continuous updates at all times.

Any input or feedback from the industry regarding these guidelines are welcomed and should be addressed to Virke - Film Producers' Association.

See current recommendations from the [Health Authorities](#) and the [Labor Inspection Authority](#).

1. Background

In March 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic crippled the entire audiovisual sector, causing employees and employers to suffer major consequences. Large parts of the industry wish to get back on track as soon as possible, provided that authorities can begin easing restrictions while properly protecting the health and safety of those employed in the industry.

The producer is ultimately responsible for protecting those involved in the production from infection. The producer may, however, delegate infection prevention-related tasks to a designated infection control officer.

Infection protection, like other types of risk assessment, is largely situational and requires individualized adaptation to accommodate the wide range of different types and sizes of productions present in the Norwegian audiovisual sector.

Therefore, these guidelines are not intended to provide a solution for all types of conditions, but aim to assist and reflect on the preparation of the infection protection plan for each production.

For further information, please refer to the [Film Industry Council's general guidelines for safeguarding everyone involved in audiovisual productions against Covid-19 infection](#).

2. Covid-19 infection and infection protection plan

When drafting an infection protection plan, special attention must be paid to how Covid-19 spreads:

- *Through the air.* The sick person sneezes or coughs. Nearby people breathe in the virus, or the virus comes into contact with the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose or mouth.
- *Through direct contact.* The sick person has the virus on their hands and transmits it through physical contact with others. The next person carries the virus from their hands to the mucous membranes of their eyes, nose or mouth.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- *Through indirect contact.* The virus has been transmitted to inventory, objects or contact surfaces (such as door handles, keyboards, film equipment, props and the like) through a sneeze or a cough, or because an individual has touched an object/surface with virus particles on his or her hands. Other individuals come into contact with the contaminated object/surface.

In order to prevent infection and limit spreading in the workplace, the Health Authorities' Action Council is particularly focused on two points:

- Reinforced sanitation measures (both hand sanitation and contact surface/equipment hygiene)
- Measures to limit contact between employees

The current guidelines are based on these comprehensive directions and exemplify how this can be achieved through the various phases of production and within the various departments.

An infection protection plan follows the same format as any other risk assessment in the workplace, and focuses on three core issues:

- What can go wrong?
- What can we do to prevent this?
- What can we do to reduce the consequences if this happens?

Feel free to use the [Labor Inspection Authority's document templates](#) to prepare an infection protection plan adapted for the individual production.

Regardless of what stage the production is in, and based on the [FHI guidelines](#), people with respiratory symptoms should not go to work.

Most people with mild respiratory symptoms are not tested for Covid-19, but should still avoid any contact with colleagues until at least one day after symptoms have ceased.

3. Project development/preliminary pre-production

Measures the producer and project manager should implement during the early stages of the process:

- Appoint or hire an infection control officer.
- For larger productions, there may be a need to delegate infection control responsibilities related to the set as well as production office accordingly.
- Review the [FHI guidelines](#).
- Review the Film Industry Council's "General Guidelines for Safeguarding Everyone Involved in Audiovisual Productions against Covid-19 Infection".
- Review this guide.
- Start working on creating an infection protection contingency plan designed to safeguard everyone involved in production against Covid-19 infection.
- Evaluate whether changes can be made to the idea/script in order to better protect the infection protection measures and conditions.

4. General measures

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- Each individual associated with the production is responsible for familiarizing themselves with – and following – the production's routines and guidelines, as well as the current guidelines provided by the Health Authorities at any time.
- Production should ensure that infection protection measures are distributed in several languages, as needed.
- Minimize the number of physical meetings. Instead, prioritize communication via telephone or digital platforms. If a physical meeting is absolutely necessary, the FHI guidelines on personal distance must be followed.
- Lifting, carrying and packing props/furniture/equipment may involve several people and should be subject to infection protection procedures.
- To avoid unnecessary traffic through filming zones all props, set decor and the like should be pre-approved to the greatest extent possible, prior to the actual filming day.
- Evaluate whether your office and/or meeting facilities are able to fulfil the Health Authorities' personal distance recommendations. Feel free to encourage home offices.
- Restrict the use of physical paper that circulates between multiple people (scripts, contracts, call sheets, etc.), and use digital solutions for signatures and joint document work.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- Introduce stricter cleaning procedures for work areas and bathrooms, as well as routines for wiping down frequently affected areas such as doorknobs, counters etc.
- Contact surfaces around toilets and sinks should receive extra attention during the production's cleaning routines. If possible, each team/department should be provided with its own bathroom.
- The production may employ their own cleaners, which will specifically help reduce the risk of spreading in accordance with the infection protection plan.
- All employees should wear clean clothes every day.
- Employees should refrain from wearing rings, earrings and other jewelry/watches at work.
- Employees should cut their nails short and refrain from using nail polish.
- Personal belongings such as glasses, pens, etc. should have a dedicated space to avoid "floating around" on the film set. Feel free to use glasses-chains and other devices to help with this.
- The infection control officer should prepare an infection protection procedure for the use of all gloves – both disposable gloves intended for infection protection and work gloves/mittens – based on the FHI guidelines regarding the use of gloves. If disposable gloves and masks are necessary, proper training must be carried out by the infection control officer.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- Infection protection equipment such as face masks and disposable gloves (latex) shall be provided by the producer. Call sheets should specify situations where the use of masks and gloves are required. Avoid unnecessary use of face masks and disposable gloves according to the [Health Authorities' recommendations](#).
- Work gloves or mittens should not be shared between work teams or departments. When an individual wearing gloves travels from one filming zone to another, he or she should change into a clean pair of gloves to avoid bringing contaminants from one filming zone into another.

5. Pre-production

Measures that the producer and project manager should implement during pre-production:

- Analyze infection risks and review the project's measures based on the production schedule and filming schedule, alongside the department heads and infection control officer. This should be done as early as possible, preferably before or during the start of production.
- The infection protection plan should include procedures for hygiene measures such as hand washing, sanitizing stations, wipe-downs of contact surfaces etc. and outline which employees are responsible for implementation of these measures.

- The infection protection plan should include a special risk assessment of any close contact between performers/actors. Close contact is defined as interaction within the FHI recommended proximity limit.
- Complete and enact the infection protection plan for the production – as early as possible. Remember that the infection protection plan both can and should be adjusted if deemed necessary.
- Adjust the project’s budget and execution plan when all visible consequences of the overall infection protection plan have been analyzed.
- Distribute the production’s enacted infection protection plan to all involved: employees/contractors, subcontractors, short-term contractors, visitors on set etc., and clearly communicate what new requirements, routines and expectations the individual must adhere to.
- Where physical deliveries are required (rented equipment, rental cars, catering, etc.), consider whether it is possible to arrange for contactless delivery, payment, etc.
- If there is any special need for close contact between two or more key persons (crew/actors), consider discussing the possibility that those key persons may need to voluntarily quarantine themselves for a period of time before or after the close contact

6. Filming

Filming is the most challenging stage of an audiovisual production with respect to infection control. The size of the crew should be considered in regard to the filming location/size of the studio in order to ensure compliance with the most current recommendations of Health Authorities.

The crew should be divided into different working teams. Members of each working team should avoid physical contact with each other to the greatest extent possible. In addition, the different working teams should not interact with each other. This reduces the risk of infection spreading from members of one working team to members of another.

The crew can be divided into working teams based on departments or by establishing separate physical zones on set, or a combination of both. For example, one team might be restricted to movement within a designated inner zone, while another team may be restricted to movement within an outer zone. Objects like equipment or props should move between zones as little as possible.

Other measures that should be considered before filming commences:

- In addition to the overall infection protection plan (which should be distributed at the start of production), the production company should attach specific procedures for each production day to the call sheet, which is to be reviewed during the morning meetings. The infection control officer should be available for questions/comments during these briefings, and any adjustments should be made in consultation with the 1st AD.
- The location or studio should be washed before rigging.
- If possible, departments should not share production assistants. However, if sharing of production assistants is absolutely necessary, then production

assistants should wash their hands thoroughly when switching between different zones, work teams or departments.

- Equipment should be handled only by the department to which it belongs and should be restricted and enclosed within the department to prohibit contact surfaces from "floating around".
- If equipment comes into contact with several different people, the department is responsible for the proper cleaning of said equipment before, during and after filming. Remember to build in extra time for cleaning when planning the daily schedule.
- Request a plan of action from equipment suppliers in regard to how their equipment is handled and stored between production days. Measures should be taken to ensure that gear vehicles do not need to be emptied after each production day, but are parked inside a locked area for insurance purposes with charging opportunities for the equipment.
- Research whether catering providers are able to deliver portioned meals to each crew member wherever possible. Alternatively, each crew member can bring their own lunch.
- In order to facilitate the enforcement of measures such as zone allocation and distance between the people involved, increased use of walkie-talkies on set is encouraged. This applies to crews of all sizes.

7. Post-production

- Assess whether the post-production facilities are able to meet the personal proximity recommendations of the Health Authorities. For example, can the editing equipment be moved to a larger room temporarily? Can editors work in separate rooms?
- Viewing and approval of clips, grade, audio and online/vfx should be done externally/digitally if possible.
- Use a private or specifically-dedicated keyboard and mouse. If this is not possible, each user must disinfect the equipment before and after use.
- Implement improved routines for cleaning offices, workstations and bathrooms. Introduce routines for continuous wipe-downs of frequently affected surfaces such as doorknobs and counters.
- During ADR and sound-sync, ensure proper ventilation of the facilities between actors. Each actor should use their own private headset if possible. If providing individual equipment to each actor is not possible, equipment should be disinfected between each user. Pop filters, microphones and headsets are especially vulnerable. An on-screen script is preferable to a printed script, and the actor may bring their own tablet for this purpose.

8. Special guidelines for various departments

8.1. Infection Control Officer

The producer is responsible for ensuring infection control. This responsibility is enforced by an infection control officer, who is specifically appointed for this individual project before the pre-production phase commences.

For larger productions operating with several active teams, it may be best to appoint a lead infection control coordinator who will manage representatives on each team.

For companies that have several productions in effect, it could make sense to have a central infection control officer available for several productions at the same time during the pre-production phase, and to use appointed infection control officers for each production during the more labor-intensive phases.

In cases where the design and format of the production makes it suitable, for example in productions with few crew members, the infection control officer can be appointed by an available resource from within the production.

The infection control officer reports to the producer and must ensure that the production is applying reasonable routines and guidelines for the project that comply with the [Health Authorities' guidelines](#), as well as the Film Industry Council's general guidelines.

The infection control officer prepares the production's specific infection control plan in consultation with the producer, production manager(s) and 1st AD, with input from the department heads. Where necessary, the infection control officer should consult with outside experts in the health field.

The infection control officer should ensure that the infection protection plan is followed through his or her daily presence, communication with the production crew and others involved, and inspecting and documenting the production's routines and various workplaces (including production offices, post-production facilities, catering areas, set/location, studio etc).

Minor divergences and violations of the infection protection plan or the Health Authorities' current guidelines should be reported to the producer, who is responsible for taking the necessary corrective actions.

If the infection control officer concludes that the producer is not following the infection protection plan properly, for example by neglecting the infection protection plan or serious violations thereof, and/or neglecting the Health Authorities' current guidelines, the infection control officer must immediately notify the safety representative, who then will make an assessment regarding further measures against the producer/production.

8.2. 1st Assistant Directors/ Production Managers

The 1st AD and production manager play key roles in planning and implementing a proper infection control plan in collaboration with the infection control officer. Individuals in these positions are usually involved in the production's overall risk analysis, and therefore possess knowledge that may be relevant to the infection protection plan. In addition, it is important that individuals in these positions are included in estimating the additional time necessary to carry out infection control measures during production.

In addition, the department heads should be consulted when the infection control plan is being prepared, so they can provide input on behalf of their respective departments.

See section 9 on guidelines for various formats.

8.3. Makeup/Wardrobe

After April 27th, the authorities will allow businesses that offer one-on-one services to re-open. Authorities will, in connection with this planned re-opening, draft guidelines for hairdressers, skincare technicians, and other businesses offering one-on-one services. These guidelines will help guide the makeup department. We therefore recommend that you use these guidelines as a starting point when creating a plan of action for makeup and wardrobe departments.

Until these guidelines are in place, we have the following recommendations:

- If possible, the actor should apply his/her own makeup under the guidance of the makeup/mask artist. Testing and practice rounds should be arranged in advance of filming. If the makeup/mask artist is required to apply the makeup, protective equipment must be used in accordance with the FHI recommendations for drip infection prevention.
- Actors should dress themselves. The dresser will provide costumes and the actor will dress themselves according to instructions. If the dresser needs to make adjustments, protective equipment must be used in accordance with the FHI recommendations for drip infection prevention. A plan of action must be submitted by the costume department to ensure that the arriving costumes are clean and have not been exposed to any other sources of infection.
- A dedicated area serving as a wardrobe/changing room for actors should also include a shower for use before and after filming.

8.4. Production Designer/Scenographer

The production designer/scenographer is responsible for everything from construction to rigging and dressing the set. This work usually involves a number of different departments, and the production designer/scenographer should consider how to organize the work in order to avoid as much contact with each other possible. They should also plan how to complete the tasks of one particular department or work team before engaging the next.

After a set is dressed, defined contact surfaces must be cleaned before the camera crew and actors arrive.

8.5. Prop Master

Suggested measures:

- Hand props (pens and the like) must be disinfected in between each user.
Alternatively, hand props should be handled by one actor only. The actor should reset props by his or herself, under the guidance of the prop master. The prop master should maintain a safe distance from the actor at all times.
- Lifting, carrying and packing up items may involve more people and should be subject to infection control procedures.
- Be aware of possible opportunities for contamination during deliveries, such as shipments from overseas: Consider quarantining objects immediately after delivery and refer to studies on how long the virus can survive on different materials.
- For larger productions, consider dividing the department into separate work levels where, e.g. set-dresser is at the forefront preparing new locations, but is not present on the day of recording when the prop master assumes responsibility.

8.6. Actors/Performers

8.6.1 Before filming

Suggested measures:

- Audition/screen test should be done through self-tape or videoconference, to the extent possible.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- Table reads should be conducted digitally, to the extent possible. However, if physical meetings are absolutely necessary, follow the recommendations of the Health Authorities in regard to proximity guidelines.
- For any makeup tests, check with the Health Authorities' one-on-one services guide.

8.6.2 For actors during filming

Suggested measures:

- Actors should avoid wearing their own accessories or jewelry on set. Private glasses should be stored in a separate case and should not be handled by anyone other than the actor/performer.
- To the extent possible, the actor/performer should apply his or her own makeup under the guidance of the makeup artist (see the FHI one-on-one services guide).
- Private clothing should be kept in a separate, closed bag/box handled only by the actor/performer.
- Close contact (interaction within the current proximity limit) with other actors/performers should be limited to what is deemed necessary for the execution of the specific scene. Any close contact must be planned for in advance and subject to risk assessment by the infection protection officer.
- Intimate scenes must always be subject to risk assessment.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- The actors should preferably have access to the script on their personal tablet in order to avoid the use of printed scripts.
- When using a printed script, all actors must have their own personal copy. Actors' personal copies of scripts should not be shared or leave the actor's dedicated zone.

8.7. Sound Recordings

Suggested measures:

- If possible, only a boom should be utilized. If this is not possible, the actors will mic themselves.
- Mics/lavalier belts should be used by one person only, or must be cleaned between each user.
- The audio manager must ensure that belts and furs are disinfected and stored safely.
- Listening should be handled by only one dedicated operator who receives batteries from the audio manager when needed.
- One should work wirelessly towards the camera (guiding sound/TC). If this is not possible, as few people as possible should work in this section, and cables should be cleaned between each use.
- When using a multi-cable for audio in smaller teams /LET-Team /2nd unit: the cinematographer should arrange the audio settings on the camera, while the audio technician plugs in the cable.

8.8. Cinematography/Grip

People traditionally work closely together in this department, and the infection control officer should – in collaboration with the head of the department – consider how to adapt work routines in order to avoid close contact.

Suggested measures:

- Use of wireless focus tracking to ensure necessary distance between cinematographer and 1st AC. Alternatively, consider whether the camera operator can manage the focus on his or her own.
- If the camera operator needs to be closer to the actor/performer than the current FHI guidelines recommend, then he or she must wear protective equipment.
- In smaller teams/LET-teams/2nd unit: The cinematographer should handle their own equipment and rig it themselves. The cinematographer should arrange his or her own lighting if there is no gaffer available on set.
- The cinematographer should use a private/personal headset.
- When using a multi-cable for audio in smaller teams/LET-teams/2nd unit: The cinematographer should arrange the audio settings on the camera and plug in the cable.

8.9. Lighting

Although one should try to minimize crews as much as possible, increasing the number of people can be an option in departments such as lighting. This would be beneficial in establishing an "outside" team and an "inside" team, in

order to avoid the same people crossing multiple zones repeatedly while adjusting the lighting.

8.10. Directing team

Directing is one of the key functions in audiovisual production, and members of the directing team are often in contact with members of all of the different departments. Any illness on the directing team tends to lead to interruptions in production and presents an increased risk of infection for many other members of the crew. It is therefore extremely important that those on the directing team limit physical contact with each other and with members of other working teams.

The director should:

- Utilize digital communication solutions whenever possible.
- Bring his or her own headset.
- Use a wireless monitor and listening devices.
- Store all of his or her equipment (walkie-talkies, receivers, headsets, scripts, tablets, bags, pens, etc.) in a clearly labeled plastic box with a lid, which should not be handled by anyone else. The equipment should be handled by the director only, including battery replacement.
- Avoid touching any other equipment.
- Wash his or her hands thoroughly when moving between zones/departments.
- Instruct the actors from a safe distance.
- Communicate with the cinematographer, 1st AD and other crew members from a safe distance.
- Utilize a walkie-talkie in order to communicate on set when it is applicable.

- For larger productions or productions where the producer/director is crucial, extended measures beyond the day of filming should be considered.

8.11. Casting

Preliminary casting rounds can often be completed through self-tape and/or casting via digital platforms.

For smaller roles and/or shorter assignments in e.g. commercials where close contact between the actors is required, consider casting members from the same household if possible.

8.12. Stunts

- Stunt performers must have a dedicated wardrobe, footwear and any wigs.
- Props such as glasses, umbrellas, handbags or any equivalent must be disinfected in between each use (among the actor and the stunt performer) if double props cannot be provided.
- Training with performers/actors must be organized and in a large enough indoor area or possibly outdoors.

9. Special guidelines for various formats.

9.1. Commercials

- Consider booking backups for crew and actors.

- Those who, for various reasons, have to follow the production but do not have an active role on the set, should do so via video link (e.g. the agency and client).

9.2. Feature Film / Dramatic Series

- In order to limit contact within a larger crew, efforts should be made to create separate zones on location that the different departments/working teams have access to. A minimal amount of contact surfaces should move between these zones.

9.3. Entertainment/Reality Shows

- Each person uses their own appointed or private headset.
- One should aim to operate within a permanent work team (see point 6).
- Crew/staff should keep a safe distance from each other in accordance with the current FHI guidelines, both while working and during breaks.

9.4. Studio Production/Live Broadcast

- Individuals arriving at the studio should be required to pass through an infection control area. Each individual arriving should undergo a disinfection routine.

- The studio should be divided into zones. Each crew member should remain within his or her dedicated zone and should not enter other zones.
- A marked zone plan should be prepared for the studio, providing an overview of where people can move around, where they can stay and who can be where.

Examples of contingency plans or zone plans:

1. Everyone who comes into the studio must hang their clothes before entering, in the same place each time and at a reasonable distance.
 2. Each person must undergo a proper disinfection routine.
 3. Those who are going to rig equipment must wear gloves.
- Employ the smallest crew possible. Ensure that all crew members adhere to the current FHI guidelines regarding physical distance. This also applies to those sitting in the control room.
 - Editorial staff: divide the editorial team into separate rooms to ensure that some members of the editorial team remain operational in case anyone happens to fall ill.
 - Guests and program hosts shall always adhere to the current FHI guidelines regarding physical distance while in the studio, also during broadcast.
 - Guests should receive drinks/snacks securely wrapped in individual packaging.
 - Specifically appoint designated employees who are responsible for cleaning door handles and other contact surfaces throughout the day of recording.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>

- The crew should bring their own food. Alternatively, the production should provide each crew member with an individually-wrapped lunch.
- Appoint an individual responsible for serving coffee/team/water within each established zone. The specifically-appointed server may serve over a counter after performing the necessary disinfection procedures.
- Assign separate bathrooms to each group. For example, provide crew members with a designated crew bathroom and guests with a designated guest bathroom.

9.5. Documentaries / News Programs

- Daily reports from the director to the editor should happen digitally.
- Each crew member should use an individual or private headset.
- Divide the crew into permanent work teams and decrease contact between members of different work teams (see point 6).
- Each work team should maintain proper distance between each other and the participants, in accordance with the Health Authorities' current proximity guidelines. Continue to maintain a safe distance during breaks.

9.6. Smaller productions/short films/student films

All productions, regardless of size, must appoint an infection control officer, see section 8.1.

Student film productions must adhere to the guidelines provided by their educational institution, as the institution is considered to be the producer.

It is recommended that the educational institution follow the Film Industry Council's general guidelines for safeguarding everyone involved in audiovisual productions against Covid-19 infection, as well as these guidelines.

10. Transportation

To the extent possible, individuals should not share vehicles. If vehicles must be shared, vehicles should be thoroughly ventilated and all contact surfaces should be wiped down/disinfected between each user.

Crew members and actors should be encouraged to arrive on location via their own mode of transportation. If so, additional parking should be arranged.

Gear trucks should have one dedicated driver per vehicle.

11. Quarantine

In our opinion, quarantine is generally not a recommended safety measure for audiovisual productions.

The effects of a quarantine that ends at the start of production will decrease rapidly for each day that passes during production. It will probably only take a few days before personnel who have been in quarantine are just as exposed to outside infection as those who have not been in quarantine.

As large productions usually last over a long period time, any quarantine initiated prior to a large production would be even less effective than it would for a smaller production.

Additionally, quarantining can be incredibly burdensome on some individuals, and such a measure requires a great deal of motivation to be carried out properly. If one or more employees are unable to complete the quarantine, the effect of the measure will diminish severely. For film workers who frequently switch between assignments on productions, such a measure will be very difficult to implement, both psychologically and practically.

Exceptions may include:

- Actors who are going to have a lot of necessary close contact over a long period of time. In order for the quarantine to have a lasting effect, it is expected that these actors are thoroughly screened throughout the production. However, it is doubtful that this is an attainable goal for most productions. Under certain circumstances it may be a realistic measure, for example by shooting at a restricted location throughout the entire filming period – or a large part of it – so the actors can maintain quarantine during production.
- Productions where participants and crew members stay within a confined area throughout the production and avoid movement in and out of this area to the greatest extent possible. A collective quarantine may then be carried out 14 days prior to recording and/or on location, in cases where this is appropriate and sensible. This measure may be relevant to some people.

In such cases, it is assumed that the quarantine is both voluntary and financially compensated, and that all people who are in contact during production (members of the same work team/department or those working in the same zone) carry out the quarantine on equal terms. If not, this measure will lose its effect.

12. Other resource documents

- [Sound equipment hygiene.](#)
- [Labor Inspection Authority](#), measures in the workplace to avoid infection.

Source : <https://www.virke.no/bransjer/producentforeningen/guide/>