audio▶uk
the audio producers association

Keeping Workers and Customers Safe during COVID-19 - Guidelines for use by UK audio production companies

Updated 24 February 2022

About this version:

From our last version (published on 20 January 2021) there have been changes/additions made to:

Section 1: Para 1.9
Section 3: Para 3.5
Section 4: Para 4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Section 6: Para 6.7
Section 8: Para 8.27

As always we welcome feedback on the usability and content of this document. Please send any feedback to admin@audiouk.org.uk

1. **About this guidance**

    1.1. AudioUK's guidance was prepared in consultation with the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) with input from audio professionals, content producers and broadcasters, the music industry, industry bodies, unions and the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It has been regularly updated using latest the government guidance.

    1.2. This guidance provides background information and risk assessment guidance for professional audio production, including making audio content for radio broadcast, podcasting, audiobooks and activities such as studio hire for the above. These guidelines do not cover music recording – separate guidance has been issued for this (see section on Recording Music).

    1.3. The guidelines include detail on compliance with essential requirements as well as additional considerations which may need to be addressed depending on the nature of your business or activities. We would ask all producers to keep checking https://www.audiouk.org.uk/audiouk-covid-19-production-guidelines for any updates to this guidance, and also that you make it available to any freelancers and talent with whom you are working.

    1.4. **Commenting on this guidance**: if you would like to make any suggestion on how we could improve this guidance please email admin@audiouk.org.uk

    1.5. **Meaning of 'Workers' and 'Customers'**. Please note that 'Workers' includes staff, freelancers and contributors. 'Customers' includes clients of those hiring studios and providing similar services.

    1.6. Please note that public health is devolved in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; this guidance is based on English guidance and therefore should be considered alongside local public health and safety requirements and legislation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. For advice to businesses in other parts of the UK please see separate guidance for Northern Ireland, the Scottish Government, and the Welsh Government.

    1.7. The latest government guidance and information for business can be accessed by following the links provided in the final section of this document, and signing up to the Government's email service for businesses at:

    https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDECC/subscriber/new

    1.8. You may wish to make use of this online Government manual for business: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19

    Audio Production in England

    1.9. In February 2022 it was announced that England would remove remaining restrictions of its COVID-19 response strategy, with an emphasis on people continuing to take voluntary precautions.

    See more here: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

    1.10. Any audio production company should note this and take appropriate measures. If your

production has been commissioned by a third party, then you should make sure you read this guidance in conjunction with any guidance your commissioning organisation has also produced. Please talk to your commissioning lead about this.

1.11. This document sets out guidance on how to work safely while minimising the risk of spreading COVID-19. It gives practical considerations of how this can be applied in the workplace.

1.12. Each business will need to translate this into the specific actions it needs to take, depending on the nature of its business, including the size and type of business, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated.

1.13. This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important that as a business, an employer or a self-employed person you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. It contains non-statutory guidance to take into account when complying with these existing obligations. When considering how to apply this guidance, take into account agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees.

2. Thinking About risk

2.1. To help you decide which actions to take, you need to carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment, just as you would for other health and safety related hazards. This risk assessment must be done in consultation with unions or workers. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm.

2.2. You can make your risk assessment available to clients and staff for their reassurance. Make sure to discuss your risk assessment plans with your commissioning lead. It is also important to talk to the executive producer or project lead at the start of planning a production and make sure they sign off the risk assessment.

2.3. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19, and in particular businesses should consider the risks to their workers and customers and visitors to premises such as delivery drivers and to anyone who could be affected by the way they run their business. As an employer, you also have a legal responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them, recognising you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19.

2.4. You should make sure that the risk assessment for your business addresses the risks of COVID-19, using this guidance to inform your decisions and control measures. You should also consider the security implications of any decisions and control measures you intend to put in place, as any revisions could present new or altered security risks that may require mitigation. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. If you have fewer than five workers, or are self-employed and work alone or with others who live with you, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need to. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm.

2.5. Employers have a duty to consult their workers (this can include contractors in some

cases) on health and safety. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the work and how you will manage risks from COVID-19. The people who do the work are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to work safely. Involving them in making decisions shows that you take their health and safety seriously. You must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if there isn't one, a representative chosen by workers. As an employer, you cannot decide who the representative will be.

2.6. At its most effective, full involvement of your workers creates a culture where relationships between employers and workers are based on collaboration, trust and joint problem solving. This is perhaps particularly important where work is carried out in a home environment. As is normal practice, workers should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer.

2.7. Employers and workers should always come together to resolve issues. If concerns still cannot be resolved, see below for further steps you can take.

2.8. Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law.

2.9. How to raise a concern:
- Contact your employee health and safety representative where there is one
- Contact your trade union if you have one.
- Use the HSE form available at https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm
- Contact HSE by phone on 0300 003 1647.

Managing risk

2.12. Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected. In the context of COVID-19 this means protecting the health and safety of your workers and customers by working through these steps in order:

- In workplaces, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.

- No work should be carried out in a household which is isolating because one or more family members has symptoms or where an individual has been advised to shield - unless it is to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household or to public safety.

2.13. Further mitigating actions include:

- Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
- Keeping the activity or in-person time involved as short as possible.
- Using screens or barriers or other rooms or areas to separate people from each other.
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible if working close together.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).

2.14. Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.

2.15. In your assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 and be mindful to include them where some workers are working in-person and some remotely.

2.16. The recommendations in the rest of this document are ones you must consider as you go through this process. You could also consider any advice that has been produced specifically for related sectors, for example by trade associations or trades unions.

2.17. If you have not already done so, you should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace as soon as possible. If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already. We recommend that you use this document to identify any further improvements you should make.

2.18. It's important that you continue to put measures in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, including frequent cleaning, good hygiene and adequate ventilation, even if your employees have:

- received a recent negative test result
- had the vaccine (either 1 or 2 doses or more)

2.19. Provide adequate ventilation for people in enclosed spaces. This can be natural ventilation (opening windows, doors and vents), mechanical ventilation (fans and ducts), or a combination. You can find more information in the section on ventilation and the [HSE guidance on ventilation and air conditioning during the COVID-19 pandemic here](#).

2.20. You must share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (it is expected for employers with over 50 workers to do so).

3. Who should go to work

3.1. In England employees are no longer being told by the Government that they should work from home if they can, meaning people are free to begin returning to the workplace. Employers should start speaking to their staff about arrangements for returning to workplaces, whilst continuing to follow this guidance.

3.2. However it would be advised to allow other options for those who do not wish or cannot work in a close environment with others. This would of course include those who are required to self-isolate.

3.3. Online interviews, user generated content (UGC), delivered equipment (following delivery protocols – see below) where necessary for contributors / presenters to use etc. should therefore continue to be considered as an alternative to having all of the contributors to a programme present in the same studio.

Workplace Testing

3.4. About 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not have symptoms but can still infect others.

3.5. You can no longer order free rapid lateral flow tests for your employees. Instead you can:

- buy your own tests and set up your own workplace testing
- pay an approved provider to provide tests or run a test site for you

If you cannot provide testing, you can ask your employees to get a rapid lateral flow test at home or at a test site: Test can be ordered here: https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

3.6. Where you are providing testing on-site, you should ensure that workplace testing is carried out in a safe manner, and in an appropriate setting where control measures are in place to manage the risk of COVID-19 transmission during the testing process. These include maintaining social distancing where possible, frequent cleaning, good hygiene and adequate ventilation. You should also ensure that an appropriate setting is available for individuals to wait in while their test is processed.

Ordering COVID-19 tests for employees with no coronavirus symptoms

3.7. You can choose to:

- Pay an approved provider to provide tests or run a test site for you
- Ask your employees to check if they can get a rapid lateral flow test to do at home or at a test site on NHS.UK

Protecting People at Higher Risk

3.8. You should introduce an appropriate way to identify anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or at increased risk from the illness as they are in a clinically vulnerable group. The NHS information on higher-risk groups can be found at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/

3.9. Ask everyone involved on the production to confirm their current health status and regularly check that the status of individuals' health hasn't changed. Government

[guidance on protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#) must be followed.

3.10. Check if anyone is self-isolating.

3.11. Check whether anyone is in a 'clinically vulnerable' category (i.e. those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus) as set out in the government guidance, or is living with, or caring for someone in this category. This includes:
- Aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions).
- Under 70 with an underlying health condition
- Those who are pregnant.

3.12. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (see definition in Appendix) are advised not to work outside the home.

3.13. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix), have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role.

3.14. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, pregnant people who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

3.15. Avoid recording with anyone self-isolating unless this can be done without compromising their health or isolation, or the health of the production staff.

3.16. Consider providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include advice or telephone support

Equality in the workplace

3.17. In applying this guidance, employers should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers or individuals.

3.18. It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic such as age, sex or disability. Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and pregnant people, or those who have recently given birth. Advice for supporting equality in the workplace includes:
- Understanding and taking into account the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics.
- Involving and communicating appropriately with workers whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk, or might make any steps you are thinking about inappropriate or challenging for them.
- Considering whether you need to put in place any particular measures or adjustments to take account of your duties under the equalities legislation.
- Making reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled workers being put at a disadvantage and assessing the health and safety risks for pregnant people, or those who have recently given birth.
- Making sure that the steps you take do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments.

4. Social distancing at work

4.1. While it is no longer required by law in England to maintain a certain social distance, the government states that *"in order to minimise risk at a time of high prevalence, you should limit the close contact you have with those you do not usually live with, and increase close contact gradually."* It is therefore advisable where possible to consider encouraging people to remain a certain distance apart, e.g. 1m or 0.5m+ with risk mitigation where 1m is not viable).

People who need to self-isolate

4.2. From 24 February 2022 people in England were no longer legally required to self-isolate if they test positive for COVID-19. However if they do, they are advised to stay at home if they can and avoid contact with other people. People will not have to take daily tests or be legally required to self-isolate following contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
The Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme has come to an end. People who were told to self-isolate before 24 February you can still make a claim up to 6 April.

4.3. Steps that will usually be needed include:

- Enabling workers and participants to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.
- Communicating clearly that individuals self-isolating should not come to, or near to, audio production activities. If feasible, providing alternative means such as video link for them to participate.
- See current guidance for employees and employers relating to statutory sick pay due to COVID-19.

Adapting creatively

4.4. Seeking to work as safely as possible will necessarily continue to make some types of production more difficult, for example large ensemble casts for an audio drama. Producers should consider reexamining scripted content to adapt it for practical recording limitations where possible. If your production is one which has been commissioned, have a conversation with the commissioner about how this can be done. If you can't come to a satisfactory arrangement then contact AudioUK at admin@audiouk.org.uk. Alternative forms of recording should continue to be considered including home recording or the use of studios which allow for complete separation of actors and of crew.

4.5. For detailed guidelines relating to advice on recording music (including guidelines related to singing and playing wind and brass instruments"), specialist guidelines are available from the BPI at https://www.bpi.co.uk/coronavirus-information-hub/

4.6. You may also wish to refer to the guidance on events and attractions: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions

Travel to and from production premises / locations

4.7. For up-to-date detailed information on safe travel guidance in England visit Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers.

4.8. If you are contractually required to arrange private transport you will have to make that aspect of your business COVID-19 compliant (e.g. conducting a risk assessment and introducing mitigating measures). Where you are not contractually required to arrange private transport for staff and freelancers, we recommend you consider the use of local staff and contributors to reduce travel and consider recording locations that offer parking for cars and bicycles. In addition, it is recommended that all staff and freelancers are reminded of the following guidance on travelling to or from productions:

- Wearing a face covering on public transport is no longer mandatory in England, except in London where Transport for London has stated that the wearing of masks on any of its services remains mandatory. In general the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.
- Wash hands before and after using any public transport, including taxis or shared vehicles. You are advised to wear a face covering when using taxis or private hire vehicles.
- When travelling take methods of observing good personal hygiene, for example sanitiser and hand wipes
- Consider use of bicycles or walking where possible in the first instance.
- Wipe down vehicle touch points.
- If a car or other private vehicle is required, use single occupancy vehicles where possible (remember to assess risk from tiredness/fatigue).
- If there is need to stop to re-fuel, use "pay-at-pump" facilities and contactless payment where possible. Hands should be sanitised after using the fuel pump.

4.8. If public transport has to be used, try to schedule people so they are travelling at quieter times of day but don't forget the personal safety risks. Outside of London, there is no longer a legal requirement that face coverings must be worn on public transport, but the government recommends and expect passengers to do so. Transport for London has stated that the wearing of masks on any of its services remains mandatory – see more at https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/face-coverings

4.9. If you or staff/freelancers do not have an alternative to using public transport as part of the production work during the course of the working day, you can offer to make face coverings available for use.

4.10. Where appropriate make arrangements to ensure those travelling can observe good personal hygiene (for example sanitising wipes and hand gel).

4.11. Maintain hygiene standards in use of security access devices, such as keypads or passes, and adjust processes at entry/exit points to reduce risk of transmission. For example, clean pass readers regularly and asking staff to hold their passes next to pass readers rather than touching them.

4.12. When planning the recording try to avoid overnight stays - schedules should be considered accordingly to manage this. Contact the person in charge of the production if this poses a challenge. When overnights are essential, ensure that accommodation is appropriately sanitised and avoid sharing rooms where possible.

4.13. Where staff cannot work alone on location/travelling, minimise the number working together and keep the same team together to avoid multiple contacts. Follow the social distancing rule wherever possible and when travelling in the same vehicle maximise distance between occupants - passenger should sit on the rear passenger seat diagonally away from the driver. Where possible drive with windows down to increase

air movement.

4.14. Government rules on passengers flying into and out of the UK are changing regularly and we would advise that if relevant you should sign up to the updates: https://www.gov.uk/email-signup/?topic=/transport/aviation-passenger-experience

International Travel

4.15. For the latest guidance on international travel you can refer to:

- Guidance on Travel abroad: step by step

- Red, amber and green list rules for entering England

Workplaces and workstations

4.16. For office environments, it is advisable where possible to position workstations to allow workers to maintain some social distancing.

4.17. Workstations should be assigned to an individual as much as possible. If they need to be shared, they should be shared by the smallest possible number of people.

4.18. If it is not possible to keep workstations apart then businesses might consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate. Note that in law, duty-holders are obliged only to reduce risks so far as it is reasonably practicable to do so.

4.19. Reviewing layouts to allow workers to work further apart from each other.

4.20. Avoiding people working face-to-face. For example, by working side-by-side or facing away from each other.

4.21. Using screens to create a physical barrier between people.

4.22. Using a consistent pairing system if people have to work in close proximity. For example, maintenance activities that cannot be redesigned.

4.23. Avoid passing objects or documents between people or touching shared surfaces (e.g. door- handles, table-tops, consent forms etc.) without a regular cleaning regime and maintaining the correct social distance. Documentation can be emailed and read on personal devices and applications such as 'DocuSign' utilised. Any physical documents should be placed in a cleanable plastic wallet.

4.24. Where corridors are narrow, reduce the need for people to pass each other e.g. create a one way system. Where this is not possible, turn to face the wall as the other person walks past.

Workforce management

Shift patterns and working groups

4.25. As far as possible, where workers are split into teams or shift groups, fix these teams or shift groups so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people.

4.26. Members of fixed teams should observe social distancing amongst themselves, and between fixed teams

4.27. Identify areas where people have to directly pass items to each other and find ways to remove direct contact such as by using drop-off points or transfer zones.

4.28. Create zones to separate groups, for example sound operators from other production team members and performers.

Meetings

4.29. Meetings should as much as possible be conducted using remote online services such as Zoom, Google Meet and so on.

4.30. If meetings are held in person, it is advisable to consider an element of social distancing and avoid transmission through passing objects to others, e.g. pens etc.

4.31. Hold meetings outside where possible.

4.32. Provide hand sanitiser in meeting rooms and open any windows to improve ventilation.

Common Areas

4.33. Use safe outside areas for breaks.

4.34. Create additional space by using other parts of the working area or building that have been freed up by remote working.

4.35. Installing screens to protect workers in receptions or similar areas.

4.36. Reconfigure seating and tables to optimise spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions.

4.37. Considering use of social distance marking for other common areas such as toilets, showers, lockers and changing rooms and in any other areas where queues typically form.

Accidents, security and other incidents

4.38. In an emergency, for example, an accident, provision of first aid, fire or break-in, people do not have to stay the correct social distance apart if it would be unsafe.

4.39. People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

4.40. Review your incident and emergency procedures to ensure they reflect the social distancing principles as far as possible.

4.41. Consider the security implications of any changes you intend to make to your operations and practices in response to COVID-19, as any revisions may present new or altered

security risks which may need mitigations.

4.42. Consider whether you have enough appropriately trained staff to keep people safe. For example, assign dedicated staff to encourage social distancing or to manage security.

4.43. Follow government guidance on managing security risks at https://www.cpni.gov.uk/staying-secure-during-covid-19-0

Necessary work closer to someone

4.44. It is advisable to consider whether some social distance can be maintained between individuals. Where this is not achievable due to the task the next step is to review whether the activity really does need to be undertaken. Where it is considered essential, separation should be as far as possible from each other to allow the task to be carried out safely. Other controls which should be taken into account as part of the planning process are provided below. Remember controls should be identified in the risk assessment that is completed as part of the planning process. Senior management should approve any significant variance on your company's stated practices. Your safety adviser or equivalent should also be consulted in this case.

4.45. Note. The measures identified below should be additional to the standard arrangements around returning to work such as individuals not demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 or having been in contact with someone within the their household who has demonstrated symptoms. Furthermore, anyone who falls into the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' group who is shielding should not be working outside of their home. For 'clinically vulnerable' individuals, extra care must be taken in observing social distancing.

4.46. Allow for good ventilation where possible. For example, opening windows and doors frequently, where possible

4.47. Establish regular cleaning of the area and equipment taking into account the types of surfaces that are present. Avoid sharing touch points. Do not share equipment unless it is cleaned before each use. Asking people to bring their own equipment if possible. Where touch points will be shared, ensure that all staff have washed their hands thoroughly prior to entering the space. Remind them to try not to touch their faces, and if they do they should wash their hands prior to completing the task.

4.48. Increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning

4.49. Reduce the number of people in the area as far as practicable. This may mean moving some functions to a space outside of the area.

4.50. Reduce the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others). Consider staff rotation.

4.51. Plan the task in order to keep the activity time involved as short as possible. Consider carrying out the work at a planned time e.g. beginning or end of the day so that fewer people are present.

4.52. Try to plan the work so that people do not face each other - using back-to-back or side-to- side working instead whenever possible.

4.53. Change the working space / or adjust the lifting method / tasks to remove the

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requirement for staff to work face to face… but remember work should be carried out safely do not increase the risk by introducing awkward stances, postures etc.

4.54. Where staff must work in close proximity, consider the use of partition screens to reduce direct exposure to aerosols from coughs and sneezes. The height of the screen should be at the correct social distance and the width should allow for the person to stand and leave the seated position in the studio or OB truck without affecting any fire evacuation procedures. Where screens are used you should consult your safety adviser or equivalent so that any limitations are clearly understood. Note that screens can create false sense of security, and must be used in conjunction with the other measures.

4.55. All premises should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes - but is not limited to - refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission - particularly from aerosol and droplet transmission. We will develop further guidance, based on scientific evidence, to enable these activities as soon as possible.

5. Cleaning the workplace

Before reopening

5.1. Clean and wipe down all work areas and equipment prior to first use and in between subsequent uses

5.2. Check whether you need to service or adjust ventilation systems, for example, so that they do not automatically reduce ventilation levels due to lower than normal occupancy levels.

5.3. Most air conditioning systems do not need adjustment, however where systems serve multiple buildings, or you are unsure, advice should be sought from your heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) engineers or advisers.

Keeping the workplace clean

5.4. Methods of keeping the workplace clean should include:
- Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between use, using your usual cleaning products.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including desks, door handles etc., and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements for cleaning products.
- Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift.
- Enhancing cleaning for busy areas.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.
- Plan recording activities to allow adequate time for cleaning between sessions

5.5. If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19, refer to the specific guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

5.6. To ensure that toilets are safe to use, help maintain good hygiene, social distancing and

cleanliness as follows:

- Consider the use of social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
- Consider making hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable hand washing facilities including running water and liquid soap and suitable options for drying (either paper towels or hand driers) are available.
- Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.
- Put up a visible cleaning schedule can keep it up to date and visible.

Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.

Hygiene

5.7. Make arrangements to ensure people can practice good personal hygiene. It is recommended this is reiterated during the day.

5.8. Use signs and posters to build awareness of good hand washing technique, the need to increase hand washing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.

5.9. Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.

5.10. Wash hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds, using soap and warm water.

5.11. If soap and water are unavailable use hand sanitiser gel (at least 60% alcohol).

5.12. Wash your hands before and after eating, drinking or smoking, and as soon as you get home.

5.13. Try to avoid touching your eyes, mouth or nose if you haven't recently washed your hands.

5.14. If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands).

5.15. Dispose of the tissue straight away and wash your hands as soon as possible.

5.16. If someone has symptoms whilst at work they should go home immediately, minimising contact with others and avoiding public transport if at possible. The person should inform their line manager and keep them informed of their health status. Those with whom they have been in contact should be informed of the situation so that they can be more vigilant and can seek medical advice if required.

5.17. Avoid contact with people who have symptoms.

6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

6.1. PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and

safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment, such as face masks.

6.2. Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so.

6.3. When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through voluntary social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

6.4. The exception is clinical settings, like a hospital, or a small handful of other roles for which Public Health England advises use of PPE. For example, first responders and immigration enforcement officers. If you are in one of these groups, you should refer to the advice at:

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-protective-equipment-ppe-strategy-stabilise-and-build-resilience

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

6.5. Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

6.6. Unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is extremely limited. However, if your risk assessment does show that PPE is required, then you must provide this PPE free of charge to workers who need it. Any PPE provided must fit properly.

Face coverings

6.7. In England, face coverings ware no longer required by law in any setting, although public health guidance will remain in place recommending individuals should continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where they may come into contact with people they do not normally meet.

6.8. A face covering can be very simple and may be worn in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible. It just needs to cover your mouth and nose.

6.9. Face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including minimising time spent in contact, using fixed teams and partnering for close-up work, and increasing hand and surface washing. These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace and government would therefore not expect to see employers relying on face coverings as risk management for the purpose of their health and safety assessments.

6.10. It is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off. You should be prepared to remove your face covering if asked to do so by police officers and staff for the purposes of identification.

6.11. Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one. This means telling workers:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with Manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
- Practice social distancing wherever possible.
- You can make face-coverings at home and can find guidance on how to do this and use them safely on GOV.UK.

7. Working in Studios

7.1. While social distancing is no longer mandatory it is advisable to consider how your company can best continue to reduce the chances of any spread of COVID-19 in the studio. This can involve some or all of the following methods:
- Establish how much physical space would be required to meet the production demand.
- Factor in the reduced staff numbers and available recording techniques as identified in the earlier framework considerations.
- Keep time in the studio space to a minimum (i.e. after the work task has finished, leave working area and continue conversations over the phone/on zoom or skype)
- Plan access and deliveries and schedule so that you do not have large numbers of staff/participants arriving or working at the same time. Allow enough time for this, as likely to take longer than pre-COVID-19.
- Utilise all available studio space to help to maintain the correct social distance.
- Factor in the time it will take to record with staggered access, any agreed social distancing etc.
- Seek to allow time between each contributor (presenter/artist/narrator) visiting the studio to allow for cleaning booths in between recording, including wiping down surfaces, cleaning and replacing mic shields and so on.
- Encourage contributors to bring their own laptop/tablet for reading prepared material.

7.2. For deliveries, drivers to remain separate to and socially distant from production staff and contributors where possible.

7.3. Where face-to-face contact is essential and therefore any agreed social distance will be breached (e.g. during a manual handling task or fixing a technical issue in a gallery during live output), this should be for the minimum time possible and good hygiene practices followed (washing hands before and after manual handling/any activity). If this is foreseen or a requirement you should consult in advance with senior management.

7.4. Where operatives need to work in pairs, 'buddy' them together and ensure that (so far as is possible) the same pair work together to avoid multiple contacts – this type of activity may require senior management authorisation and you should contact your safety adviser or equivalent.

7.5. Hand washing should be undertaken before entering the studio and again on completion of tasks – those in charge of the production should remind staff/participants

of the need for regular hand washing in line with government guidance. The need for alcohol based (60% minimum) sanitiser should be considered and provided to compliment hand washing.

7.6. Ensure frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, paying particular attention to frequently handled items such as console touchpoints, headphones, or microphones. Care is needed to ensure sensitive equipment is not damaged during the cleaning process.

<u>Bookings policies for studio hire</u>

7.7. It may be helpful to have a bookings policy to provide clarity to clients and staff ahead of studio hire sessions. These should:
- Set out the maximum capacity for each studio (control room, live area) under social distancing.
- Communicate policies on food and drink / break times etc in advance of the session
- Advising clients they might need to book more time than usual to complete a project due to restrictions
- Ensuring staff/contributors do not share equipment (ie different headphones / mic / popshield for each session), and have all equipment thoroughly cleaned between bookings
- Arrange additional car parking facilities with neighbouring businesses etc to minimise public transport use by staff and clients
- Allow for extra time for getting in and out of the building for larger groups

8. Location and performance recording

8.1. While social distancing is no longer mandatory it is advisable to consider how your company can best continue to reduce the chances of any spread of COVID-19 while on location or while recording a performance.

Location Recording

8.2. Where staff cannot work alone on location, try and keep the same team together to avoid multiple contacts.

8.3. Outdoor recording is preferable, but if you need to record indoors, try to use a large open space with good ventilation. Avoid working with more than one person in a small, poorly ventilated room where possible. By taking into account working proximities, consider whether it is achievable to undertake the production.

8.4. Maintain any agreed social distance between all individuals, e.g. separating presenters/contributors in the studio or on location.

8.5. Routes into the recording setting should be as direct as possible and a cleaning regime should be established for handles and any surfaces used – if you need a table for equipment try and take your own or agree a surface with the premises owner that is reserved for your use and which can be easily wiped, controlling risks using alcohol (60% minimum) wipes.

8.6. Consider using building features to separate people e.g. windows, glass door, screen, but bear in mind that a screen in an interior area (e.g. an edit suite, portacabin, etc.) can provide a false sense of safety and must be used both in conjunction with other measures and as a last resort.

8.7. The use of boom or fixed microphones to be considered over lapel/personal mics in order to avoid contact, reduce the need for handling and in order maintain the correct social distance. Microphone windshields / pop shields should not be shared and headphone covers should be considered. Safely clean windshields after each use.

8.8. The producer will need to consider a range of factors when calculating how many people should be able to work at a given location, including:

- Size of the space(s) where production staff, contributors etc. will be required to work (e.g. a minimum of 4m2).

- Movement around the space and where activity will take place (for example large venue but all work to take place in one section).

8.9. The travel to and from location(s) to facilitate any agreed distances and mitigation such as single driver (risk assess fatigue), and the availability of car parking spaces (especially as use of public transport is not recommended).

8.10. Additional facilities such as greenrooms, dressing rooms, rehearsal space and refreshments, should be regularly cleaned and facilitate adherence to the correct social distance

8.11. Be clear on what additional resource is needed to implement additional cleaning regimes especially in communal areas such as toilets and rest/eating areas. If you are renting studio space in part of a building check your building manager's responsibility for this.

8.12. Be clear on what additional space requirements are needed for technical areas considering whether any departments/roles work remotely from the studio, e.g. OB trucks.

8.13. Reduce the need for production staff to regularly pass each other by making restricted spaces "one way".

Catering

8.14. Where larger productions require catering to be provided, adopt safer practices in line with UK Government guidance on catering-related COVID-19 safety. For example:

- Ensure hand-washing facilities or hand-sanitising stations are readily accessible
- No communal food preparation, storage areas or serving, e.g. buffets or platters
- A pre-order system for food where possible
- Use single-serving, pre-packaged food
- No unwrapped food or snacks to be left out
- Use single-serving drinks
- Use single-use cutlery
- Formulate a plan for the use and cleaning of shared appliances such as drinks dispensers
- Maintain any agreed social distancing when queuing for food and drinks
- Stagger meal and break times, or run a continuous day system, to avoid congestion in eating areas
- Use a one-way system for navigating the eating area if possible

- Keep catering crew separate from wider crew wherever possible
- Use screens to separate catering from other cast and crew
- Dedicate one catering staff member to handle all pre-packaged snacks
- Remind catering staff to follow the hand washing procedure, even when handling pre-packaged food
- Making environmentally friendly choices wherever possible

8.15. Provide clear guidance for cast and crew members who choose to bring their own food and drinks into the workplace.

8.16. Ensure eating areas are set out to facilitate the required social distancing and are disinfected between use.

8.17. Take care in managing and disposing of food (or other) waste in catering and eating areas

Recording in people's homes

8.18. Where it is not possible to self-record or manage the production activity by members of the household, recording should generally take place in commercial/business premises or an outside location rather than someone's home.

8.19. Recording at someone's home is subject to specific consideration and risk assessment with members of the household. UGC, delivered technical equipment or alternative ways to capture content must be utilised. Care homes should be considered separately due the vulnerability of the occupants.

8.20. Entering homes is now permissible if there are no alternatives, but alternatives should be sought wherever possible. Consult senior management for approval. For safety advice contact your safety adviser or equivalent. Controls must be established and identified on the risk assessment if you do plan to enter a residential property.

8.21. Recording in a presenter's/contributor's garden or external space is still advisable provided the correct social distance can be maintained. Access to their garden/external space should be by a rear or side access (if available) rather than through the living areas of their property. If there is no rear/side access, control measures must be established and identified on the risk assessment and you should contact your safety adviser or equivalent.

8.22. Other considerations such as establishing that no one in the household has displayed symptoms (new, persistent cough or high temperature) in the last 7/14 days etc. will need to be taken into account. You can order a test for use if you meet certain criteria: https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

8.23. Also establishing whether any members of the household are 'vulnerable' or 'shielding' (extremely vulnerable). If they are 'shielding' then do not enter their home.

8.24. For further information, please see the Government guidance on working in other people's homes:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes

Recording music

8.25. For detailed guidelines relating to advice on recording music (including guidelines

related to singing and playing wind and brass instruments"), specialist guidelines have been prepared by the music industry and are available via the BPI: https://www.bpi.co.uk/coronavirus-information-hub/

Live performance/audiences

8.26. For live performances, venues should take account of the Events and Attractions guidance in organising outdoor performances. Singing and wind and brass playing should be limited to professional contexts only.

8.27. In England, venues and events are no longer be required by law to use the NHS Covid Pass. However, the Pass will remain available on the NHS App as some venues may still voluntarily choose to require proof of COVID status as a condition of entry to reduce risk for attendees and staff. More on the NHS COVID pass here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-covid-pass

9. Equipment, technical kit and vehicles

Equipment

9.1. Wipe down touch points and equipment regularly within your workspace or on location e.g. with alcohol-based sanitising wipes), for example:
- faders, hardware controllers
- mice, keyboards, touchscreens,
- door handles, shared surfaces
- mobile phones & payment cards
- vehicles – fixtures such as door handles (outer and inner), window controls, door pocket, seatbelt and clip, seat adjustment controls, steering wheel, horn, controls stalks, gear stick, central controls, keys/power button.

9.2. Wipe down relevant areas at the beginning and end of a recording session, or if space/equipment is passed between users.

9.3. Remote editing should be employed to help reduce numbers and avoid social contact.

9.4. Remember to check the manufacturer's advice on cleaning specialised recording equipment.

Sending or receiving equipment

9.5. When sending or receiving microphone/recording equipment or other kit by courier to contributors the following should be applied:

9.6. Before sending out packages invite recipients to let you know if they have special requirements or concerns about delivery.

9.7. Establish the couriers' delivery protocol and inform the recipient on what to expect i.e. the courier/delivery driver is likely to leave the parcel on the doorstep, ring the doorbell/knock on the door and step back to maintain social distancing. The courier will then sign on your behalf or take a photo of the delivered-package. This approach should be adopted in all cases.

9.8. Sanitise all the equipment, making sure hands are washed before and after handling equipment – before sending and upon receiving/opening. Make sure you refer to the equipment manufacturer's advice before using any specific cleaning solution.

9.9. After disinfecting the kit ensure that wipes/cleaning materials are safely disposed of and wash hands thoroughly after the cleaning process too.

9.10. The process of receiving/cleaning/disposal/cleaning/hand-washing applies upon receipt of the kit once returned to production at the office/at home.

9.11. If your risk assessment shows there is a risk of transmission via the kit being sent out then consider sending alcohol-based wipes.

10. Communications and training

Returning to work

10.1. When people return to work premises it is important to make sure you are:
- Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working.
- Engaging (in advance if possible) with workers and worker representatives through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
- Developing communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.

Ongoing communications and signage

10.2. Steps that will usually be needed:
- Ongoing engagement with workers (including through trade unions or employee representative groups) to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments.
- Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing
- Using simple, clear messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, giving consideration to anyone for whom English may not be their first language.
- Using visual communications, for example whiteboards or signage, to explain changes to production schedules, breakdowns or materials shortages to reduce the need for face-to-face communications.

11. Where to obtain further guidance

Government guidance and support

11.1. Further government guidance can be found using the links below. Note this is regularly updated:
- Government email updates service from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS):

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDECC/subscriber/new

- Government brief guide to reopening your business (based on brief details of your own business): https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening
- COVID-19: UK government advice on a range of areas https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus
- HSE guidance on sanitisers: https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/hand-sanitiser/choosing-hand-sanitiser-surface-disinfectant.htm
- Support for businesses and employers during coronavirus (COVID-19) https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support
- General guidance for employees during coronavirus (COVID-19) https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-and-support-for-employees-during-coronavirus-covid-19
- Guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing

Other media industry guidance

11.2. If your production involves recording music performances you should refer to the guidance issued by BPI at https://www.bpi.co.uk/coronavirus-information-hub/

11.3. There is also specific guidance produced for events and attractions: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions

11.4. If you are undertaking other media content production, e.g. shooting a video, you may wish to refer to the guidance produced by other content production sectors:

- TV industry standard guidelines: https://dlo6cycw1kmbs.cloudfront.net/media/media_assets/TV_Production_Guidance_COVID-19_18-5-20v2.pdf

- BFC Film and high-end TV production: https://britishfilmcommission.org.uk/guidance/regarding-covid-19-coronavirus/

Appendix: Definitions

Common Areas	The term 'common area' refers to areas and amenities which are provided for the common use of more than one person including canteens, reception areas, meeting rooms, areas of worship, toilets, gardens, fire escapes, kitchens, fitness facilities, store rooms, laundry facilities.
Clinically extremely vulnerable	Clinically extremely vulnerable people will have received a letter telling them they are in this group, or they will have been told by their GP. Guidance on who is in this group can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19
Clinically vulnerable people	Clinically vulnerable people include those aged 70 or over and those with some underlying health conditions, all members of this group are listed in the 'clinically vulnerable' section here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-dohttps://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do