

# STATE OF GEORGIA FILM & TELEVISION PRODUCTION BEST PRACTICES TO REDUCE CONTAGION OF COVID-19



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## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

As we are in the midst of navigating the response and recovery phase of the coronavirus pandemic, **The Georgia Film Office** encourages film and television companies to develop strategies to support the health and safety of their cast and crew as production activity restarts. It is advised that before filming commences, all production personnel and suppliers become familiar with potential risks and strategic measures for filming. We encourage individuals to take personal responsibility as well as an active role in maintaining a clean and healthy set.

In addition to the recommendations included in this document, the **Georgia Film Academy** is offering COVID-19 safety training courses at no cost to Georgia productions.

***The GFA FILM PRODUCTION TRAINING PROGRAM COVID COMPLIANCE COURSE*** offers best practices and procedures for film production during the COVID-19 national outbreak, featuring preventive practices approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), and developed for industry-specific needs. The course may be presented entirely online for employees, and on-site for producers, showrunners and key personnel. Each production will receive individualized training based on the scale and specific needs of their production and will receive a Handbook of Procedures and Protocols tailored to their production.

For information regarding these courses, please visit <https://www.georgiafilmacademy.org>.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the transmission from person-to-person most frequently occurs via respiratory droplets by parties within 6 feet of one another (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>). Additionally, evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. **The aim of this document is to provide a set of non-binding best practices** for the film & television industries to use to combat the spread of COVID-19. We do not expect this document to be the sole set of guidelines. **We believe that guilds, unions, production companies, and studios may also have their own regulations. Additionally, it is likely that individual jurisdictions within the State may enact their own rules. Please be sure to consult local officials to ensure you are following any mandates specific to their area.**

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO BE TAKEN AGAINST COVID-19

**Frequent hand washing** should be mandatory, and **hydroalcoholic gels** should be made available throughout the production office, workspaces or filming location.

Workers should utilize appropriate **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**, including but not limited to goggles, face shields, and masks that cover the nose and mouth. **To locate Personal Protective Equipment and Critical Supplies in Georgia please visit: <https://www.georgia.org/covid19suppliers>.**

Disposable face masks should be disposed of in closed bin receptacles.

**Control sneezing and coughing.** Endeavor to cover your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze using a tissue, throw it away immediately afterwards, and then wash your hands. If this is not possible, cover the sneeze or cough with the inside part of your elbow and wash your hands and arms immediately afterwards.

**Avoid touching body parts such as eyes, nose and mouth.** Endeavor to avoid any hand contact with the eyes, nose or mouth to avoid possible infection.

**Sharing objects such as mobile phones, computers, pens, work tools, etc. of another person should be avoided.**

Opt for digital call sheets, production reports and contracts when possible. **Avoid handshakes, kisses, hugs** and actions that encourage physical contact between people.

**The use of private and individual transportation should be encouraged.** In case of use of public or shared transport, masks should be worn, and social distancing requirements should be adhered to as much as possible.

Identify who may effectively be able to work from home for portions of prep, shoot, or wrap.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PRODUCTION OFFICES, LOCATIONS, AND OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS**

Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

Facilities should be disinfected in accordance with the procedures advised by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>.) Surfaces frequently touched (tables, chairs, doorknobs, surfaces of the toilet and bathroom, taps, keyboards, telephones, etc.) should be cleaned with disposable material and disinfected daily with a household disinfectant containing diluted commercial bleach prepared on the day of use. For a list of the most effective disinfectants against COVID-19, please visit the following link: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.

For electronics, follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products. Consider using wipeable covers for electronics. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

The frequency of cleaning of the production office should be increased, with emphasis on areas of common use. In addition, an adequate supply of cleaning materials should be maintained in order to carry out sanitation tasks.

Hydroalcoholic gel dispensers should be properly marked and replenished with sufficient frequency to ensure supply. In addition, disposable tissues should be made available along with marked containers for the purpose of disposing of them.

Adequate ventilation of workplaces should also be ensured.

Avoid manually opening and closing doors on the premises: whenever possible, doors or accesses should be left open to avoid the need to open them.

Allowing outside personnel into the production office should be avoided as much as possible. Limit number of people in all areas to essential personnel only.

The arrangement of the workplaces should ensure that safety distances of 6 feet are maintained. If it is not possible to maintain this distance, the use of masks should be mandatory.

Every effort should be made to hold all meetings via phone or the internet. If not possible, the safety distance of 6 feet must be maintained. To this end, at least one empty chair should be placed between each member of the meeting as a minimum safety distance measure. If this is not possible, masks should be used.

The use of elevators should be limited only to people who cannot safely take stairs.

When handling packages or items that come from outside the workplace, hands should be washed or cleaned with disinfectant gel before and after handling the package. It is recommended for large projects to set up shipment points dedicated for suppliers outside the set to provide an opportunity of disinfecting transported material.

## AT THE SHOOTING LOCATION

It is recommended that on the film set there be personnel specialized in Occupational Risk Prevention or, failing that, a specific person assigned specific ORP tasks. This person should verify that all the protocols and actions set out in this document are complied with, as well as compile and control all the documentation derived from the management of occupational risk prevention. Depending on the size of the shooting, this role should be adapted to the needs of the production company. Every crew and cast member should undergo temperature measurement with a contactless thermometer before the start of the shooting day and before entering the shooting location. Any new incoming subcontractors should undergo temperature measurement upon arrival. Human body temperature limits must be with accordance to the CDC specific health regulations. In the case of a temperature higher than 100.4, the worker shall be sent home or to a health center to be diagnosed with the origin of the fever.

The ORP person may also be responsible for setting up the systems for checking the temperature of all team members and keeping a record of these checks, which shall be carried out before the start of the day. These checks should be carried out daily prior to entering the set to ensure that no professional enters with potential symptoms. It would be recommended that these records collect the information provided by the team prior to their incorporation about possible contacts, ailments, etc., in order to bring them to the attention of the doctors of the company's occupational risk prevention service.

In this regard, appropriate processing of personal data must be taken into consideration.

In the case of presenting a symptomatology associated with the COVID-19 (fever, general malaise, cough, etc.), the worker should inform his/her corresponding superior and production should isolate and send the person home with a recommendation that they contact their medical provider.

### Types of Testing

**Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: diagnostic tests and serologic (antibody) blood tests.**

- **A diagnostic test tells you if you have a current infection.**
- **A serologic test (or antibody test) tells you if you had a previous infection.**

**Production companies may decide to require some type of testing protocol** to certify that at the beginning of the shoot all the workers involved are free of COVID-19 and that during the shooting phase the production company provides all the necessary means to protect the health of its workers and avoid any kind of contagion in their environment. For Georgia's latest information regarding COVID-19 testing, please visit: <https://dph.georgia.gov/health-topics/coronavirus-covid-19>.

## CASTING

When possible, castings should be done remotely.

Eliminate "open calls" and assign windows to arrive. Encourage actors to wait in their cars until their scheduled time.

In the case of printed scripts, these should be personalized, and each recipient should only handle his or her own script.

## **TALENT**

It is always recommended that a mask be worn, except for those incidents strictly necessary for shooting, and that a safety distance of 6 feet be maintained. If it is not possible to maintain this distance, a record should be kept of the interactions between the actors so that possible contacts can be identified if someone were to contract the virus.

Consider using a clear barrier between actors while establishing marks and positions to be removed at the last moment.

Consider alternate shot set-ups, camera angles, lenses, etc. to allow for greater distance between actors.

Consider using members of the same household in a scene.

## **BACKGROUND ACTORS**

If possible, reduce the number of extras required.

Provide enough space and tables and chairs for extras holding areas to practice social distancing.

Provide a pen for each Extra to execute paperwork and instruct them not to share.

## **LOCATIONS**

Scouting should be done virtually as much as possible.

Productions should consider that they may need more space requirements for the use of locations in a public space, so that crew members can be separated.

When scouting potential locations, sites should be treated as if they were infected (unless they were disinfected ahead of the scout) and the crew should use PPE while scouting the site.

Cleaning and disinfection of the shooting location should be extremely thorough, isolating any facilities or areas that have not been disinfected.

While on location, conduct conversations outside as much as possible.

Try to maximize space and air flow when designating spaces for a shoot.

## CATERING

It may be necessary to make sure food can be distributed in a take-away fashion, whereby each crew member moves away from the catering after taking their food, so the social distancing rule can be adhered to. Otherwise, enough space must be available for the crew to eat so they can be spaced apart from each other. It is advisable to give priority to portable chairs over standard benches.

A continuous meal schedule should be established so that crew can eat in shifts and more easily respect the recommended safety distance of 6 feet.

Hand washing stations should be made available.

## CRAFT SERVICES

Consider providing only individual, prepackaged portions.

Craft services table should include hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes.

Eliminate any self-service fruit or snack bowls.

## TRANSPORTATION

Attempt to limit number of people in a passenger van to 2 passengers at one time.

Drivers should wipe down inside vans (seats, handles, etc.) inside and out every time people exit the vehicle. For recommendations on disinfecting of vehicles, please refer to these CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html>.

Require people to wear masks in vehicles.

Keep windows down when possible to promote ventilation.

## WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

Fittings should take place off-set or remotely whenever possible.

Physical contact should be kept at a minimum and parties involved should use PPE.

Costumes and outfits should be bagged up individually, per performer.

When possible, actors should arrive to set in their own wardrobe.

For best practices in cleaning and disinfecting wardrobe, please see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Costumes that cannot be cleaned, such as period costumes, should be quarantined.



## **ART DEPARTMENT**

Encourage location owners to reduce personal items until after wrap.

Consider reducing the number of prep and strike days or try to combine these days with location cleaning times.

Art department crew should be allowed additional time to sanitize props, furniture, and set dressings that come into contact with cast and crew.

The handling of key props should be limited to the relevant actors.

## **ELECTRIC, GRIP DEPARTMENTS**

Take into consideration that more gear may be required to ensure people are not sharing equipment.

Departments should only handle only their own equipment.

For best practices in disinfecting grip stands, lights, etc. please see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.

## **HAIR AND MAKE-UP**

Consider having actors arrive having done their own make-up/hair-- avoid touch ups unless necessary.

Avoid providing hair and make-up for background actors if possible.

PPE should be worn for the duration of person-to-person contact.

Make-up or hair stations should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.

Talent and make-up artists should wash their hands before and after each session.

Use disposable make-up kits and brushes when possible.

Products should be sealed and disinfected with appropriate disinfecting solutions when not in use.

## **CAMERA DEPARTMENT**

Cases should be wiped down before loading into vehicle.

Only camera personnel should handle camera gear including carts, cases, tape, etc.

Each camera person should have his/her own non-shared camera kit.

Personal equipment should be wiped down upon arrival and before departure each day.

## **SOUND DEPARTMENT**

PPE should be worn for the duration of person-to-person contact.

All equipment, such as mics and transmitters should be disinfected before and after each use.

Mics should be labeled with the name of the user.

Utilize boom-only audio when possible.

## **ON-SET COMMUNICATION**

In order to facilitate communication between team members while respecting the recommended safety distance of 6 feet, devices such as walkies and mobile technology, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi should be used. These devices should be for individual use only and should be disinfected before and after each day.

Devices and replacement batteries should be individually bagged and handed to the user in its bag.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE SHOOTING SPACES:**

The recording area should be marked to ensure that only permitted personnel have access. Access to the shooting space shall have a defined entrance and exit area, and there shall be a designated person to control such access. Differentiated and adequately signposted entry and exit areas shall be established in order to prevent people from crossing over.

The number of people who will have access to the shooting space should be minimized.

Hand washing stations should be made available throughout the filming site.

Signs indicating the obligation to wash hands after each use shall be placed in the toilets. Efforts should be made to increase the cleanliness of the toilets.

# RESOURCES

Additionally, we strongly encourage all cast and crew to educate themselves on the following resources for more information and updates.

**Georgia Department of Public Health**

<https://dph.georgia.gov>

**CDC:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

**OSHA:**

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>