

ACTRA

ACTRA Montreal

COVID-19

**Best Practices Guideline (BPG):
Minimum Health & Safety Standards**

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ACTRA Montreal Best Practices Guideline (BPG): Minimum Health & Safety Standards

Protecting ACTRA members from the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace presents many unique challenges. As performers in film, TV, videogames, commercials, animation, and other aspects of recorded media, ACTRA members often work in vastly different work environments, including audition facilities, sound stages, city streets, private homes, sound booths and motion capture studios.

The nature of their work as actors, stunt performers, background performers, singers, dancers, and more, is quite broad. Performers may travel nationally or internationally for work and regularly find themselves working alongside cast and crew that have travelled to Canada from abroad.

The following document outlines ACTRA's policies and practices to provide a safe working environment for all productions.

Please note, these guidelines are in all cases, supplementary to existing health and safety measures contained within ACTRA's collective agreements, in addition to standards and practices established by the [World Health Organization](#), [Government of Canada](#), [Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux](#), [City of Montreal](#), [Institut national de santé publique du Québec](#), and [Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail](#).

As per the CNESST, the Producer must acknowledge its responsibility for the Health and Safety of all employees.

Contents

Requirements.....	3
Understanding	3
Notification	3
General: All Productions	4
PPE and Sanitization.....	4
Limiting the number of workers and interaction.....	5
Casting and auditions.....	5
Pre-production and communication.....	5
Questionnaire	5
Transport.....	6
Catering and craft services.....	6
On-set/On-camera Production	7
General On-set/On-camera	7
Wardrobe fittings.....	7
Make-up, Wardrobe and Hair	7
Rest Areas	8
Shooting	8
End of day (wrap).....	8
Reminder.....	8
Voice Recording Production.....	9
Voice Recording General.....	9
Production.....	9
Reminder.....	9
Facial Capture and Motion Performance Capture Production	10
Rest Areas	10
Facial capture production	10
Motion performance capture production	10
Reminder.....	10

Requirements

Productions under ACTRA Montreal’s jurisdiction are permitted to proceed, provided the following criteria have been met:

- The Producer agrees to follow health and safety measures contained within the ACTRA Best Practices Guideline document; AND
- The Producer has obtained “[essential service-business](#)” confirmation from the Government of Quebec and such confirmation has been provided to ACTRA; OR
- The Government of Quebec has officially confirmed that all audio/visual productions may return to work.

Understanding

Production has an obligation to ensure Performers feel safe in a work environment. Performers should feel comfortable voicing their concern about health and safety standards and Production should make best efforts to resolve any issues.

The measures in ACTRA’s BPG represent a partial (non-exhaustive) list of ACTRA safety requirements and are supplemental to the health, safety and working provisions contained within ACTRA’s collective agreements (such as, but not limited to):

- No reprisal against a performer who refuses a booking or leaves work due to health or safety concerns
- Applicability of Cancellation and Postponement fees as per section A19 and Article 12 of Appendix 20 in the Independent Production Agreement (IPA), Section 15 of the National Commercial Agreement (NCA), Section 18 of the Audio Code, and the relevant articles on Cancellation and Postponement in the applicable ACTRA Videogame Agreement(s)
- Applicability of Appendix 30 of the IPA and Appendix R of the NCA

Notification

To ensure all relevant Government authorizations and Best Practice Guidelines are in place, Production must inform ACTRA of any intended work with Performers during the COVID-19 crisis a minimum of two (2) business days before the call time for any work (i.e. auditions, rehearsals, recording, etc.).

Notification must include (but is not limited to):

- Name of project,
- Name of performer(s),
- Date,
- Time,
- Location of the set/studio,
- Number of crew required/to be present, and
- Any other pertinent information that should be considered.

General: All Productions

ACTRA's Best Practices Guideline must be circulated to all workers on a production and workers should be reminded of these guidelines daily.

1. No person(s) having tested positive for COVID-19, awaiting test results, or showing symptoms should be present in any work environment.
2. As per Government regulations, any person having traveled abroad or in another region of Quebec, or having been in contact with a person who returned from abroad or another region of Quebec in the past 14 days, should not be admitted to a work space before having completed a 14-day quarantine, during which time no symptoms have presented themselves.
3. Should any worker on the Production test positive for COVID-19, ACTRA and all Performers must be notified.
4. A person must have two (2) negative COVID-19 tests consecutively before returning to work.
5. Production must have a strategic plan, in the event of a COVID-19 related interruption of work.

PPE and Sanitization

6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be employed by workers (except where it would limit the ability to perform) and should be readily available. PPE should include, but is not limited to:
 - a. N-95 rated protective masks
 - b. Protective gloves
7. PPE use and re-use should follow the recommendations established by the government and health organizations cited earlier in this document.
8. A 2 metre social distancing rule should be applied whenever possible.
9. When in contact with a Performer or equipment to be used by a Performer (i.e. props, microphone, costume, etc.), workers must use PPE.
10. All equipment, tools, surfaces and common areas must be cleaned/sanitized before the start of the workday and between each use.
11. Enhanced sanitization equipment must be accessible in all areas of the work environment. Such equipment should include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Antiseptic gel dispensers – minimum 60% alcohol required
 - b. No-touch taps for hand washing (wherever possible)
 - c. Disposable hand towels or non-touch electric hand dryers
 - d. Disinfectant cleanser wipes
 - e. Open (no-touch) trash disposal bins for tissues and paper towels
12. Hand washing or applying hand sanitizer must be mandatory when:
 - a. Arriving and leaving the work environment.
 - b. Before and after rest periods, meal breaks and comfort breaks.
 - c. Before and after any contact with a Performer (or in fitting a Performer with equipment, make-up, props, costume, etc.).

13. An infographic should appear above each sink detailing the correct 20-second handwashing procedure, as recommended by Quebec Public Health.
14. Workers should be regularly reminded of sanitization rules and the rules must be displayed in several places in the work environment.

Limiting the number of workers and interaction

15. “Closed set/studio” standards should be employed to reduce the number of people physically working in the environment, using essential workers only.
 - a. Wherever technology allows, people should work via a remote connection (Zoom, Skype, Teams, BlueJeans, Source Connect or others).
16. Paper documents (contracts, call sheets, sign-in sheets, etc) should be issued electronically.
 - b. If paper is essential, the documents must not be transferred between workers.
17. Whenever possible, staggered call times should be employed to allow for social distancing and time for proper sanitization of a work environment.

Casting and auditions

18. Remote casting should be employed whenever possible in lieu of in-person auditions.
19. When in-person auditions are required, Production must:
 - a. Advise Performers to wait outside of the audition facilities until they are called in for their audition, and
 - b. Respect all on-set health and safety requirements listed in the “PPE and Sanitization” section of this document.
20. ACTRA must be notified of any intent to engage a minor on a Production.

Pre-production and communication

21. Meetings, readings, and rehearsals shall be conducted virtually.
22. All communications (i.e. emails, call sheets, booking confirmations, etc.) shall include a copy of the Production’s and ACTRA’s Best Practices Guidelines.
23. Quebec’s COVID-19 hotline number should be circulated: 1-877-644-4545.

Questionnaire

24. Before accessing a work environment, all workers must complete a questionnaire confirming the following statements:
 - a. The worker has not travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days;
 - b. The worker does not have flu symptoms or is known to be associated with Covid-19;
 - c. The worker, to the best of their knowledge, has not been in contact with a person infected with Covid-19 in the past 14 days;
 - d. The worker consents to comply with all health and safety measures in the workplace.
25. The worker is obligated to inform Production immediately of any changes to the above statements.

Transport

26. Transport protocols apply for travel to and from production.
27. Transport vehicles must be disinfected before and after Performers enter and exit the vehicle.
28. The number of passengers in a vehicle must be limited to accommodate social distancing measures.
 - a. The number of passengers should be limited to one per row. i.e. a car would be limited to a driver and single passenger, a van with a third row of seats would be limited to a driver and two passengers.
29. All passengers must wear PPE.

Catering and craft services

30. Social distancing rules (2 metres) should be maintained and clearly designated with floor markings.
31. Mealtimes/breaks should be staggered to limit the number of workers physically in the environment.
32. Workers should be provided with single use water bottles or have access to touchless water filling stations to refill their own water bottle.
33. Snacks, catered meals, and utensils provided to performers must be individually packaged.

On-set/On-camera Production

General On-set/On-camera

1. Shooting abroad with performers is not permitted, in accordance with health and safety directives issued by the Government of Canada.
2. A COVID-19 Health Officer should be engaged by Production to ensure compliance with all health and safety standards. This Officer should be:
 - a. An accredited health professional,
 - b. Available to performers on set, and
 - c. A new position – not an additional duty for an existing crew member.
3. The responsibilities of the COVID-19 Health Officer will be to:
 - a. Review scripts and locations during pre-production to recommend best practices for filming and approach.
 - b. Advise what safety measures and what type of health and safety equipment is required to safely achieve the shoot day and determine if additional equipment is required.
 - i. Production is responsible for procurement of said equipment.
 - c. Approve an on-set Medic trained for dealing with COVID-19.
 - d. Affirm that all workers have completed the Questionnaire stated in the “General: All Productions” section of this document and are permitted on set.
 - e. Administer or supervise any testing measures at the commencement of the workday to screen for symptoms.
 - ii. Anyone exhibiting symptoms will not be allowed in the work environment.
 - f. Give feedback, as required, to Production and the assistant directors’ team during a shoot.
 - g. Determine the necessity of quarantining people, wardrobe, supplies and equipment.
 - h. Maintain strict confidentiality in the collection of any information pertaining to a worker’s personal health.
4. Work hours for all workers should be limited (10 hours/day) to reduce chances of fatigue and provide adequate time for sanitizing the work environment.

Wardrobe fittings

5. Whenever possible, wardrobe should be selected from the Performer’s personal collection.
 - a. The Performer’s time coordinating with Production in the selection of wardrobe shall be reflected in the work report and paid accordingly.

Make-up, Wardrobe and Hair

6. Crew in Make-up, Hair and Wardrobe shall wear PPE at all times while working with Performers.
7. Only one Performer shall be in the make-up trailer at a time.
8. Make-up equipment (i.e. brushes and sponges) must be sanitized before and after each use and are not to be shared between Performers. Disposable equipment is suggested.
9. Performers required to do their own make-up or hair shall have that time reflected in the work report and paid accordingly.
10. Wardrobe and period Wardrobe arriving from abroad must be quarantined for at least 5 days.

Rest Areas

11. Social distancing rules (2 metres) should be maintained and clearly designated with floor markings.
12. When possible, Performers in holding areas should use PPE.
13. Trailers must be sanitized before being used by a Performer.

Shooting

14. When possible, technicians should instruct Performers on how to attach recording equipment themselves.
 - a. If this is not possible, the technician shall employ PPE while in contact with Performer.
15. When possible, Performers should be allowed to use PPE during setup, and for as long as possible until they are required to remove the equipment.
16. When possible, filming should attempt to accommodate social distancing rules (2 metres).
17. When possible, limit the number of takes.
18. Keep make-up and hair touch-ups to a minimum.

End of day (wrap)

19. Performers should remove their own make-up.
20. When possible, Performers who require use of the same wardrobe over multiple days should wrap their own wardrobe in a sealed bag.
21. Performers should be encouraged to sign-out using their own pens. Production should have a supply of individual pens/pencils (i.e. golf pencils) for Performers who have not brought their own.

Reminder

The above measures represent a partial (non-exhaustive) list of ACTRA safety requirements and are supplemental to the health and safety provisions contained within ACTRA's collective agreements such as, but not limited to applicability of Appendix 30 of the IPA and Appendix R of the NCA.

ACTRA reserves the right to modify this guideline as needed to ensure proper health and safety standards on ACTRA productions.

Voice Recording Production

Voice Recording General

1. Production shall appoint a person responsible for health and safety to ensure that all recommendations & regulations, (including the flow and distancing of people), are being respected, in addition to ensuring that all work environments are fully equipped with necessary PPE and sanitization equipment.

Production

2. Only one (1) Performer should be in a sound booth at a time.
3. When more than one Performer and/or the Voice Director are required in the sound booth, social distancing rules (2 metres) must be respected.
 - a. Group recordings or ambiance (walla) should be avoided until further notice.
4. Specialized equipment (i.e. mics, mic filters, podiums, headphones, etc.) must be disinfected before and after use by a Performer.
 - a. Disposable mic and headphone covers are advised.
5. When possible, Performers should be encouraged to employ their own equipment (i.e. headphones, pens/pencils, water bottles, etc.).
6. There should be no sharing of equipment.

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Facial Capture and Motion Performance Capture Production

Rest Areas

1. Social distancing rules (2 metres) should be maintained and clearly designated with floor markings.

Facial capture production

2. Performers must employ PPE, including safety goggles, throughout the process of getting rigged for facial capture.
 - a. Sanitize their hands immediately before and after being in contact with a Performer.
 - b. Employ PPE.
3. Make-up equipment (i.e. brushes and applicators) and trackers which are glued to the face must be sanitized immediately before and after each use and are not to be shared between Performers. Disposable equipment is suggested.
4. Should make-up, or trackers be necessary, performers will be given the option to apply these themselves.
 - a. Should this not be possible, before applying make-up/trackers, a technician must:
 - i. Sanitize their hands immediately before.
 - ii. Employ PPE.

Motion performance capture production

5. Performers should employ PPE, including protective masks, throughout production, except in instances where the scene does not allow for it (i.e. recording dialogue, facial expression, etc.).
 - a. Masks should be changed every 4 hours or as needed.
6. When possible, technicians should instruct Performers on how to attach sound recording equipment and tracking equipment (dots) themselves.
 - a. If this is not possible, technicians shall employ PPE while rigging the Performer.
7. For multi-day bookings of a Performer, each individual Performer should be assigned required equipment/gear and props that will not be shared/used by any other Performer for the duration of the booking.
 - a. Equipment/gear and props should be sanitized after use and stored in a clearly marked protective (garment) bag to identify which Performer they belong to and avoid potential contamination.
8. Scenes should be recorded in a way to avoid or limit physical contact between Performers as much as possible.

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