

ICON / films

FILM PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES AND SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR FILMING IN BULGARIA

During the current COVID-19 pandemic

[based on government guidelines, local legislature, consultations with independent specialists and various departments]

Current regulations for foreign citizens entering Bulgaria

Last Updated - September 24th, 2020

- **As of August 11th 2020, all persons traveling from the UK, ROI, all EU countries and the Schengen area can enter Bulgaria freely, without any restrictions (NO 14-day quarantine and NO entry PCR tests).**
- **People traveling from all third countries, outside the EU and Schengen Area, who are involved in the Film Industry, can enter Bulgaria without being placed under quarantine, provided that they present a document upon arrival that proves a negative PCR test, taken within 72 hours prior to their entry in Bulgaria. The persons who fail to provide a negative PCR test upon entry, will be tested after their arrival, and placed under quarantine for 24 up to 72 hours, until their test results come back negative.**
- **Other third countries with lifted restrictions are:** Australia, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, San Marino, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Tunisia, Albania, Montenegro, Moldova, Israel, Kuwait, Andorra, Monaco, Vatican City, Algeria, Georgia, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Rwanda, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, UAE, Ukraine, as well as all persons with residence permit in any EU and/or Schengen country.

Sources:

[Re-open EU](#)
[COVID-19 Travel Regulations Map](#)
[Documents you need for travel in Europe](#)

National Sources:

[Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)
[Health.gov.mt](#)

Bulgaria allows for film shoots, both indoor and outdoor, on studio stage or location, as long as the mandatory/recommended protective measures are applied and observed throughout all stages of pre-production and production.

Cast And Crew Testing

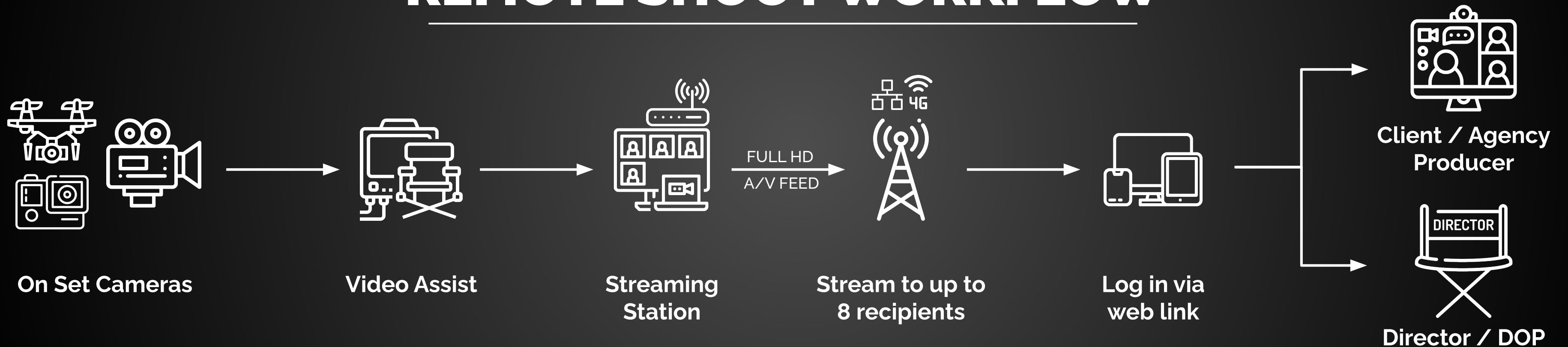
All crew members from all departments, without exception, as well as all talents must have a negative SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test, which must be done within 3 days before their first work day. All cast and crew members should be tested periodically, during the period of production, with the frequency that is dependent on the duration of the project..

CURRENT SHOOTING CAPABILITIES IN BULGARIA

Although there are no official limitations, imposed by local authorities and the law in regards of film production, there are certain requirements and recommendations that need to be observed. Below is a simplified information on the mandatory requirements and protective rules which will be applied in our work environment:

- There are no limitation as to the number of crew allowed on set. However, production must enable the required physical distancing of 2 meters [6 ft] among crew and cast members. It is recommended to keep the crew to the essential minimum, and for indoor shoots the maximum number of people who will be allowed entry is based on the size and area space of the shooting set or location.
- Shooting on studio stages, standing sets and locations is possible. No limitations on whether the locations are private or public.
- Local equipment rental houses and studios are open for business, and will provide equipment, studio stages, workshops, etc.
- Casting can be done offline and online, including remote casting callbacks (using advanced video conferencing software)
- Local crews are willing to work, as long as all necessary protective measures are applied.
- Vendors, such as big retail stores (furniture, hardware and construction materials stores) and suppliers are open.
- The costumes rental shops are open, additional wardrobe and accessories can be purchased from stores and online.
- Props/Set Dressing rental houses are open.
- We can offer a choice from our top-tier local Directors, DOPs, Production designers.
- Location scouting is possible (our in-house scouts and photographers will prepare high-end PDF presentations or online photo galleries with the best location proposals).
- Virtual Director's Scout - we can provide the director with a real-time HD stream by skilled videographers, as well as a 360 view of the location.
- Tech Scouts - the Director can have a remote A/V connection with the local DoP and HOD's.
- Additional remote capabilities include Online Video Fittings; Online Video PPM; Online production paperwork, and others.

REMOTE SHOOT WORKFLOW



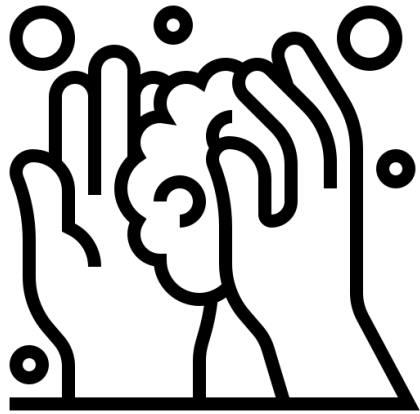
We have the technical capabilities to do live streaming of video and audio from set to up to 8 different remote recipients.

The [vMix](#) live streaming software which we use provides:

- Output video and audio signal from 1 to 4 main cameras directly from the [Qtake](#), via cable or wireless connection.
- Optional DIT and real-time colour corrections and transcoding on set.
- Separate video and audio signal from BTS, and communication cameras via cable or wireless connection. No limit for number of cameras.
- Video village set-up for communication purposes on set.
- All signals/camera feeds are being mixed down into 1 screen, shared via web links to up to 8 private video recipients.
- The recipient will get a link which has to be opened in a web browser. The recipient stays logged in for the whole period of the streaming.
- The video signal which the recipients receive is in Full HD resolution, transmitted at 4 MB/sec. The connection delay of the signal is up to 1 second.
- All remote participants can communicate with each other inside the same shared screen, either using headsets or using the computer's onboard speakers and mic.
- Video connection between recipients is optional.
- The recipient can duplicate/extend the received Full HD signal to an auxiliary monitor/TV screen via HDMI.
- A high bandwidth Internet connection is required at all ends. Either WiFi or Ethernet. Ethernet recommended! If the speed of the Internet connection drops, the quality of the video stream will drop as well, but will not cut the feed. Disconnects only at full loss of Internet connection.
- Shooting on exterior locations is supported by 4G mobile data transfer.
- During the live stream, the participants can request the streaming station to navigate, playback, or live view any of the cameras.

The health and safety of our crews, co-workers, clients, fellow citizens, and families is ours and everyone's highest priority. This document intends to provide a comprehensive and essential information on the current capabilities for film production in Bulgaria, as well as the protective measures and recommendations specific to our industry, which aim to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These guidelines are derived from the general, more broadly applicable rules approved by health authorities, selected good practices from all over the world, and common sense. As a production service provider, IFS aims to ensure that all these guidelines and safety protocols are applied and strictly observed, in order to minimise health risks. We will have a more detailed and in-depth look at all the different steps in the safety protocols, which apply to each department, further into this document.

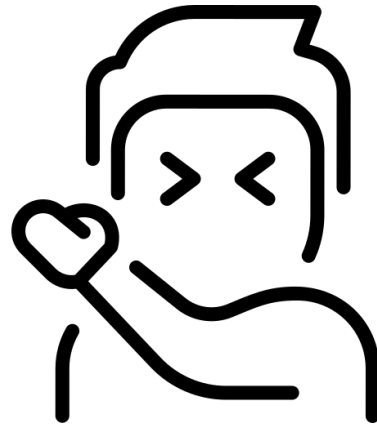
Everyone involved in the production has a personal responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19, by taking the following protective measures:



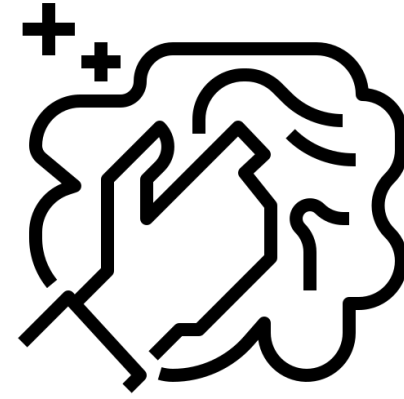
Wash your hands frequently, or sanitize your hands with an alcohol-based disinfectant



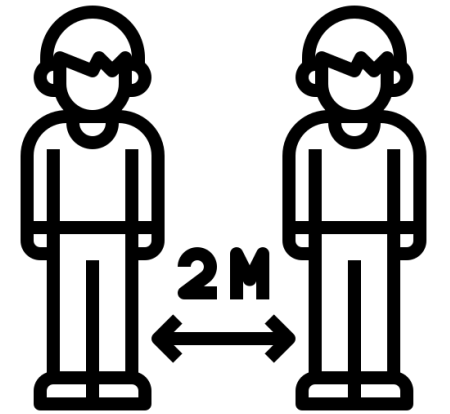
Limit physical contact - avoid handshakes, kisses on the cheek and hugging



When sneezing or coughing, cover your face with your sleeve, and not with your hand



Be meticulous with cleaning - both in your workplace and at home



Keep a minimum physical distance of 2 meters (6 ft), and ask others to do so as well

Promoting Hygiene on set

All people on set are required to adhere to health authority guidelines on hygiene and behaviour required to minimise risk of spreading the disease. Alcoholic hand sanitiser is to be made available at points of entry and common areas. Information on how to maintain proper hand hygiene is to be supplied to all people present on set - in the form of official print materials from the health authorities, in electronic format sent via email, along with daily schedules and call sheets, and as part of a morning briefing routine.

General Protective Guidelines and Common Sense Practices

- No visitors on set: Only essential personnel is allowed on set, production offices, stages or construction workshops
- Limit specific areas of worksite to essential personnel
- Require frequent and thorough hand washing by all personnel, without exception
- If soap and water are not available, use / provide alcohol-based hand cleanser containing at least 60% alcohol
- Require anyone who is sick to stay home
- Self-monitor for signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and report to your department head if you are sick or experiencing symptoms
- One department at a time may "step in, step out" of a set up, before the next department
- Observe respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with your elbow, not your hand
- Use disposable tissues and discard after each use
- Maintain social distancing of no less than 2 meters (6 ft) whenever possible
- Utilize appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including but not limited to gloves, goggles, face shields, masks that cover the nose and mouth
- All crewmembers should be obligated to wear a face mask or shield on set, when indoors
- Cast, extras and stunts / doubles are required to wear face masks when they are not on camera
- Require PPE to be properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed to avoid contamination of self, others, and the work environment
- Use your elbow or knuckle as opposed to fingers when possible
- Limit the number of people who handle certain items
- Do not use other people's phones or personal work tools
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment
- Assign one individual to be responsible for constant wipedowns of surfaces (never mix chemicals)
- Make 6 foot distance markings on the floor in environments where people need to line up
- Take time to communicate and plan every part of a project in order to reduce unexpected situations and increase efficiency
- Consider who may effectively be able to work from home. Consider prep, shoot, wrap
- Pens should be provided and individuals should be told to keep them
- Contactless payment should be utilized (as opposed to petty cash) when possible
- Put down an item that someone then needs to pick up, rather than 'handing off' when possible
- Every crew member and the cast should pass a temperature measurement, using a contactless thermometer, before start of the work day
- Disposable PPE items should be treated as hazardous waste, which must be handled with the appropriate care

* Production is responsible for frequent cleaning of contact surfaces - this includes: door handles, surfaces, bathroom fixtures, and any equipment handled by more than one person.

** Any workstation used by more than one person needs to be cleaned between each user.

*** Daily disinfection should be applied to the set (on stage, outdoor standing sets or location), picture vehicles, all workspace premises (both indoor and outdoor), equipment, props and costumes.

Protective Guidelines by Departments

PRODUCTION OFFICE

- Maintain good ventilation. Keep windows and doors open when possible, but open at least periodically to cycle the air
- Limit people entering the office to essential personnel
- Deliveries should be transacted outside the entrance whenever possible
- Pathways should be one-way when possible (clockwise) in order to avoid people having to pass each other going opposite directions in a narrow hallway
- Plan how to serve food, coffee, etc. responsibly
- Use disposable, ecologically-friendly flatware, plates, and cups
- Assign one person to turn lights on and off, manage thermostats
- Make tissues and disinfectant wipes ubiquitous
- Reduce decorative items that people may touch
- Utilize individual printers and scanners whenever possible
- Move your own car rather than have someone else move it
- Get a secure shredding bin (users put items in, but cannot take out)
- Use your cell phone as opposed to a landline
- Use sensor-activated toilets, faucets, soap dispensers, hand dryers, and hand sanitizer dispensers when possible
- Disinfect remote controls

PAPERWORK

- Timecards may transition to electronic execution, but in the short term, have as much pre-filled as possible
- Petty cash, petty cash envelopes, mail, contracts, POs, agreements, pick-up and return paperwork will require careful handling

CASTING

- Consider remote casting sessions and callbacks with live broadcast capabilities
- Remote casting sessions will mean not being able to see a group interact with each other
- Schedule auditions and callbacks further apart to accommodate social distancing
- Digitally distribute scripts as opposed to handing out sheets of paper
- Have actors execute confidentiality agreements when necessary
- Actors must arrive to casting at the assigned time, not earlier (models and dancers are used to "open calls" but they must arrive at the assigned time)
- Encourage actors to wait in their cars, not in the waiting area of the casting facility
- Have an actor check in from outside using their cell phone
- Consider utilizing app technology that checks an actor in, and sends the actor a text when it's their time (like some restaurants)
- One dedicated Casting Assistant should sign all performers in and out
- During in-person group auditions, actors can wear clear face shields and gloves, or have a partition placed in between them
- Handling of props may have to be simulated using an actor's cell phone or other personal item
- Identify wardrobe specs in the breakdowns to increase the likelihood the actor brings something that can be worn on the shoot

HANDLING OF EQUIPMENT

- Use gloves and change regularly
- Members of each department should disinfect gear during breaks in activity
- Minimize the number of people having to touch the same items. This may require additional gear
- Strive for consistency regarding which pieces of equipment are handled by whom

Protective Guidelines by Departments

SHOOTING SCHEDULE / STAFFING

- Anticipate things taking longer to accomplish than we're used to
- Carefully consider number of shoot days required
- Consider staggered call times, department by department
- Build in time for one department to "step in, step out" at a time
- Consider how much the path of the sun dictates when and how much time we have to shoot a specific area or room at a location
- Consider whether a prep or pre-light day will be required
- Some locations may only allow limited truck parking resulting in the need to cross-load and drop off gear
- 'Making the day' will require efficiency and enough personnel. This will be challenging with caps on the number of people at a gathering
- Strive to keep the same individuals on an entire job (as opposed to individuals swapping in and out), thereby minimizing the number of individuals overall

DIRECTOR SCOUTING

- Consider virtual director scouting via a streaming app
- Self-drive
- Consider utilizing walkie-talkies
- Share each other's location via smart phones
- Remove shoes before entering a location when practical
- Give consideration to size and space when deciding among location options
- Carefully consider the number of locations that get director scouted in-person

PPM

- Schedule the pre-production meeting as early as possible
- Finalize as many creative decisions as possible no later than the PPM so there will be fewer last minute changes on shoot days

TECH SCOUT

- Schedule the tech scout as early as possible
- Digitally distribute tech scout packets
- Self-drive when possible
- If in a peplemover, everyone should be in masks, gloves, etc. Consider renting multiple vehicles to allow distance between seats
- While at location, have as much conversation outside as possible
- Try to maximize space and air flow when designating spaces for a shoot (video village, lunch, equipment staging, placement of monitors, etc.). Consider whether you will have to relocate any of these areas at some point during the day, in order to accommodate different camera positions

LOCATION DEPARTMENT

- Some locations may require pre and post cleaning
- Permit applications should go in as early as possible
- Consider permitting backup locations in the event that a location becomes unavailable
- Fewer people will be eager to provide signature for filming activity on their street
- Location contracts should be executed as early as possible
- Anticipate providing alternative lodging to house occupants for the duration of the shoot (may be best for them to not enter at wrap in between the days that crew is in the home)
- Provide plenty of space for lunch
- Bring sensor-activated soap dispensers, tissue towels, etc. to locations when available
- Provide washing station when there is no access to running water
- Consider the logistical challenges of a location before sharing with a Director or Agency / Client
- Have one individual put up and take down all location signs
- Locations should in general be 'closed sets'. No non-essential visitors.

Protective Guidelines by Departments

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

- Limit number of people in a passenger van at one time
- Consider a higher-capacity bus for shuttling, to allow for social distance inside
- Allow time for people who prefer to walk from crew parking to set rather than be shuttled
- Add signage to van exterior identifying maximum capacity and reminding people to wear masks
- Keep windows down to promote ventilation
- Additional shuttle trips will be necessary
- Try to commit to one driver per vehicle

ART DEPARTMENT

- Minimize touching items native to a location
- Consider asking owner of location to reduce personal items before we take occupancy
- Fewer pickups will be possible per day, per truck
- Make decisions on the tech scout, get approvals from Agency / Client as early as possible
- Consider potential value of prep and strike days. This may be combined with location cleaning requirements
- Use your own personal tools and avoid sharing them
- Disinfect art and props before people arrive on set, and during the day. Disinfect props after being used by cast or touched by crew members, to minimize the risk of cross-contamination

ELECTRIC, GRIP DEPARTMENTS

- More gear may be required
- Grip gear should only be handled by the grip department (apple boxes and stands often support other departments)
- Art departments should communicate support needs in advance

HAIR AND MAKEUP

- PPE must be worn for duration of person-to-person contact
- Space makeup stations apart from each other, or provide a partition between workstations
- Use only one brush, applicator, etc. per actor. No double-dipping
- Mix foundation, powders, lipstick, etc. on a disposable palette for each individual
- Clean hairbrushes and combs and reusable makeup brushes with appropriate disinfecting solutions
- Kits will need to include multiples for most makeup
- Actor may be able to wear a mask while having their eyes or hair done
- Face shield may be worn by Make-up Artist or Hair Stylist
- Only remove the actor's mask when essential
- Once made up, actor may consider face shield (as opposed to mask) in order to not disturb completed makeup
- Makeup Artist or Hair Stylist may place and remove face shield for the actor (if the actor prefers)

CAMERA DEPARTMENT

- AC doing pick-up must handle cases with gloves
- Only camera personnel should handle camera gear including carts, cases, tape, etc
- All camera equipment, lighting, grip and any technical elements of the shoot will be completely disinfected before reaching the set, it is the obligation of each supplier to send the sanitized equipment

Protective Guidelines by Departments

SOUND DEPARTMENT

- Disinfect Comteks before and after each use
- Label Comteks with the name of the user
- Disinfect Lav mics and transmitters before and after each use
- Replace Lav mounting components that can not be thoroughly cleaned
- PPE must be worn for duration of person-to-person contact
- Consider utilizing boom-only audio (as opposed to rigging Lav mics)
- Some multitalent scripts under the boom-only scenario may require a second Boom Operator

CATERING

- Consider staggering lunch to decrease number of people getting food and seating simultaneously
- Food will be served to people in boxes (as opposed to self-serve)
- Individually packed single-use cutlery should be handed out one by one
- Provide plenty of tables and seating to spread out safely
- Hand washing or sanitation station should be present
- Unpackaged foods and snacks (including snack bowls and fruits that aren't individually packed) are not allowed
- Self-serve points, including coffee and water dispensers, are not allowed
- No craft service will be allowed on set

MEDIC

- Medic should patrol the set and proactively consult with personnel
- Medic can help identify surfaces that need to be wiped down
- Medic or health staff will overlook all of the crew members' health status during the working day, as well as if everyone observes the anti epidemic measures strictly while at work.

WALKIE TALKIES

- Walkies should be signed out the day before for quick distribution on the shoot day
- Walkies should be individually bagged and handed to the user in its bag
- Do not share walkie talkies
- Replacement batteries must be disinfected in between uses, bagged, and handed to crew as needed

VIDEO VILLAGE

- Consider using plastic chairs over director chairs or sofas (easier to wipe down)

WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

- In-depth planning of wardrobe should be done ahead of shopping and pulling from rental houses
- Only the wardrobe department should touch clothing, etc. until it's decided what the actor will actually try on
- Fitting photos should be taken by one person, not multiple people touching the same phone, tablet, etc.
- Use gloves when looking through garments in rental houses and retail stores
- Anticipate delays at rental houses and retail stores
- Review current retail return and exchange policies
- Book talent as early as possible, and get sizes as early as possible
- Costumes and outfits should be bagged up individually, by performer
- Seek permission from Clients to allow actors to keep purchased wardrobe
- Consider having actors arrive in their own wardrobe
- Disinfect jewelry and glasses with disinfectant that will not cause damage

SCRIPT SUPERVISOR

- Provide a separate monitor

Protective Guidelines for Talents

ACTORS

- Consider a temporary clear barrier between actors while establishing marks and positions, and remove at the last moment
- Consider alternate shot set-ups, camera angles, lenses, etc.
- Actors may benefit from extra tender loving care. Remember, they have to give an on-screen performance in the midst of all this
- Actors arriving from countries included in the 14-day quarantine rule must follow the quarantine rules for 72 hours, after being tested upon entry, so that the test results be reliable

EXTRAS

- Carefully consider number of Extras required
- Be sure to have enough space and tables and chairs for Extras holding area to be spread out
- Provide one pen for each Extra to execute paperwork and make sure they know to keep it and not share

MINORS

- Think about how to organize schooling if required
- Children will require extra attention to ensure they follow safety protocols
- Be sure to have PPE that fits the minors
- No make-up unless absolutely necessary

* Holding and Common areas

All common areas and holding for talent should be set up outside, if possible. Seating should be arranged in such a fashion as to promote distancing, and prescribed seating should minimise social interaction between departments, so that at-work groupings are maintained on breaks.

** Tiered arrivals and entry to set.

To the extent possible - call times should be staggered so that each department is given access at timed intervals, to prevent crowding on arrival to set. A checkpoint will be installed on set, where at the beginning of each working day the Health & Safety Team will check the general health condition of each crew member. Such means of control and prevention will be applied from the prep till wrap of the day. Most people are expected to travel by car, as to avoid the risk of contagion from congestion in public transport.

THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE THE ONLY POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS SITUATION, OR EVEN A COMPLETE LIST. THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE MEDICAL ADVICE. ALTHOUGH WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ALL CREW AND CAST MEMBERS TO CONSIDER APPLYING THESE IN THEIR WORK ENVIRONMENT, NOT ALL RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS DOCUMENT CONSTITUTE A MANDATORY LEGAL OBLIGATION. DEPENDING ON THE SPECIFICITY OF EACH GIVEN PROJECT WE SERVICE, DURING THE CURRENT SITUATION, IT IS AT THE DISCRETION OF PRODUCTION TO CONSIDER AND DECIDE WHICH OF THE LISTED NON-MANDATORY RULES AND RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE APPLIED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER DEEMED NECESSARY AND/OR POSSIBLE, AND TO WHAT EXTENT.

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THANK YOU!

* We are all closely monitoring developments, and guidance will be updated based on current recommendations from the W.H.O., the Bulgarian Ministry of Health, government, and our own learnings.

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