



SOUND DEPARTMENT

LEVEL 3 COVID-19 GUIDELINES

September 2021

Before you work:

- All crew **MUST** fill in a COVID-19 Health Declaration.
- If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, **do not come to work**. Please get tested.

Introduction to Department undertakings:

- Pre-Production tasks – remote (home)
- Pre-Production tasks – on site / in production office
- Management/coordination of Sound team
- Liaison with Post-Production and on-set departments in regards to technical requirements
- On-Set operation and troubleshooting as required

Department Bubbles

- Off Set Sound Department bubble (remote preparation).
- Off Set Sound Department bubble (production office)
- On Set Sound Department bubble (Unit/Tech base AND on Set)
- On Set Department HODs/Department Liaison bubble

PPE Requirements:

- At Delta Alert Level 3, face coverings are strongly recommended. And it would be expected that most productions will require them as part of their H&S plan. They are mandated by the MoH for public facing businesses and work.

Required Physical Distancing Requirements:

- The general rule of 2 metres applies at all times.
- If in a Controlled Environment, maintain at least 1 metre physical distancing between crew.
- No close contact work (less than 1m) is permitted at Level 3.
- When interacting with any public or unknown persons, crew must maintain the minimum of 2 metres physical distancing at all times.

Contact Tracing:

- A Government Tracer App QR-code poster must be displayed at all work sites.
- All crew must sign-in when arriving and out when departing a work site.
- All entry and exit points should be controlled and monitored.
- All workers should keep a log of non-worksites locations (i.e. stores, etc.) and interactions (meeting suppliers, location owners, etc.) they have during working hours.
- All workers are recommended to keep note of their interactions outside of work hours (whilst on a job).
- All crew or approved site visitors must sign a COVID-19 Declaration before starting work or visiting a work site.

Department Specific Guidance

Sound crew should be aware of and trained to work under the specific alert level in operation prior to commencing work, including the correct use of PPE.

- Sound crew to work remotely when practicable.
- Sound / inter-departmental meetings to be remote as far as practicable.
- Physical production meetings to be carried out with physical distancing of at least 1 meter. If possible, particularly if in a confined space, a 10 person limit is recommended. Use of a face covering is strongly recommended.
- Sound crew to be split into smaller work groups/bubbles where possible (i.e. main unit vs. 2nd unit)
- Liaise with Production and Health & Safety in regards to contact tracing, PPE and hand/workspace/equipment sanitiser requirements for your department
- Consider specific production requirements in regards to equipment and crewing in order to ensure physical distancing and gear sanitation.
- The biggest impact to the sound department in achieving these safe work practices is the increased time needed to complete tasks.
- Sound crew are not permitted to fit radio mics to Cast. Cast will be required to fit their own radio mics under the supervision of the sound department.
- On set and off set bubbles to be maintained wherever practicable.

Personal Hygiene Requirements and Measures

- Any worker who feels unwell must not come to work, if unwell at work they must go home.
- If a worker displays any of the symptoms of COVID-19, please call Healthline immediately (0800 358 5453) or your doctor. Production and the Health & Safety Departments must also be notified. And all close contact workers to be identified.
- If a person or persons are confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19, site closure(s) should be considered. This decision should be made on the advice of a public health officials based on information on the extent of the exposure.
- At Delta Alert Level 3, face coverings are strongly recommended. And it would be expected that most productions will require them as part of their H&S plan. They are mandated by the MoH for public facing businesses and work.
- Please wash/sanitise your hands upon arrival at a work site.
- A strict personal hygiene & hand washing/sanitising regime must be observed in line with the ScreenSafe guidelines.
- Personal work stations to be cleaned/sanitised each day.
- In accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines, PPE (gloves and masks) should be available.

Work Space Hygiene

On and off set

- Hand sanitising stations should be readily available at production office/location/studio.
- PPE (gloves, masks, face shields) to be available.
- Equipment cleaning products should be readily available at production office/location/studio.
- Make sure sound crew are trained in appropriate equipment cleaning/sanitising, particularly for delicate electrical equipment.
- Personal kit/equipment/laptops to be used only by one person.
- Sound equipment to be sanitised at the end of each day. For larger productions, consider a designated sound crew member who is dedicated to maintaining high hygiene practices for all equipment.
- Regular aeration of any office space, open windows when possible. Avoid recycling air.
- Air conditioning should be run on fresh air setting, not on recirculate.
- Sanitise surfaces & mop floors at the end of each day where required.
- No visitors to site. Only workers involved in the project to enter any locations or work sites.

Kitchen & Catering in Pre-Production

- Stagger lunch where possible and apply physical distancing measures.

- No open snacks, fruit, shared food. Consider lunch box style lunches to be prepared. Where appropriate, consider a subsidy for workers who are required to bring own lunch.
- No food around equipment or work areas
- All communal cutlery & crockery must be sterilised in dishwasher.
- Communal kitchen items to be sanitised before & after use.
- Compostable cutlery & crockery to be used if sterilisation is not possible.

Drinks & Craft Services While on Set

- No food on set
- Drinks on set only with permission by the location manager
- No-double handling of food and drinks, i.e. grabbing a coffee for your sound department colleague, etc. All crew to get their own in the designated unit pickup areas.

Interaction with Other Departments, Suppliers, Cast & Extras

Gear Prep

- All suppliers should have their own policy and plan for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic including contact tracing and the cleaning/sanitising of all equipment. Please notify production if you have concerns.
- Rental houses should have the gear in a prep bay cleaned and ready for pickup or testing, as well as adequate procedures for handling equipment handovers.
- Rental houses should have equipment and hand sanitiser readily available.
- Rental houses should have strict contact tracing procedures in place, i.e. a sign in/out system in place, etc.
- All equipment hand-overs should be contactless.
- Consider working with the Costume department to pre-rig microphones in optimum positions in costumes, to avoid microphone being affixed to actor or requiring further adjustment when artist is in costume (not allowed for at Level 3). This may require costume decisions to be taken earlier and may need testing during pre-production. Consider shooting costume camera tests with sound.
- Sound department to consult with VFX supervisor to investigate if microphones can be mounted external to costumes and digitally removed.

Meetings

- Sound or inter-departmental meetings to be remote or on digital platforms as far as practicable. Or hold meetings in open areas wherever possible.
- PPE should be available for essential inter-departmental meetings for those who wish to use it.
- Physical distancing to be maintained on essential inter-departmental meetings and work (i.e. wardrobe fittings, pre-production meetings, tech recces, etc.). Use of a face covering is strongly recommended.
- Reduce physical interaction with other departments as far as reasonably practicable.
- Interactions with other crew, cast and public must be as per physical distancing protocols.

Travel

- No communal travel. One person per vehicle only, unless in a household bubble together.
- Shared vehicles should not be used outside work. Vehicles should be cleaned prior to and after used.

Set Protocol

- Sets should be treated as closed sets, with essential crew on set only.
- A 1 meter distance to cast and other crew (DOP, camera team, etc.) must be adhered to.
- To avoid on-set congestions, liaise with 1st AD for appropriate times to fit/adjust radio mics, etc.
- The Sound Mixer does not need to be on set, but could be provided with suitable isolated area. On location this may be a separate room.
- For any sequences in moving vehicles sound mixer should be in separate vehicle.
- Discuss supplying a separate small speaker set up for use by the Director or 1st AD to communicate with the cast or off-set crew using separate microphones.
- Whenever practicable, only the camera department will plug cables and equipment into the camera. Please liaise with them to ensure contactless work.
- Allow other departments time and space to complete their work.
- For enclosed shooting sets, please ensure regular aeration, open windows when possible. It is recommend that crew are allowed time during the day to get fresh air.

Equipment & Kit

- All kit must be cleaned/sanitised between locations and at the end of each day.
- All radio mics must be cleaned between cast and at the end of each day.
- It is advisable that radio mics are designated to specific cast members whenever possible.
- Headphones should be designated individual crew members and sanitised at the end of each day.
- Avoid double handling of consumables like batteries. Consumables should be sanitised before handling. Consider assigning multiple transmitters to cast to avoid battery changes.
- Hands to be washed/sanitised regularly.
- Consider a tag system for identifying cleaned equipment to save time.
- Everything should live cleaned in a case. Assume cases/handles are always exposed and require hand washing after handling.
- Cast will be required to fit their own radio mics under the supervision of the sound department.

Sound Cards & Rushes Procedures

- Sound cards should be handed over in transit cases that are sanitised before handover and Cards should be sanitised before return.
- Appropriate Rushes Drives handling procedure to be developed by each production/ post-production to ensure safety of anyone handling cards and of the rushes themselves.
- Production should consider sending a single Rushes Drive with all data rather than sending multiple camera cards and a sound card to post.

Cast

- COVID-19 information to be distributed to cast prior to their arrival on set.
- All cast must fill in a COVID-19 Health Declaration prior to work.
- Consider number of cast and their health (elderly, etc.) and the ability for physical distancing both on and off-set before commencing production.
- Face masks/coverings and PPE shall be made available to all cast.
- Cast may be asked to use a face covering whenever practicable. Some productions may require this as part of their H&S plan.
- All cast to wash/sanitise hands on arrival at location/studio.
- A COVID-19 induction and health check on arrival by a competent person, i.e., registered nurse, paramedic or the safety officer.
- To avoid close contact (less than 1m) cast should undertake any task they can perform themselves, including the fitting of radio mics.

Close Proximity Bubbles

- There is no allowance for Close Proximity work or scripted action (less than 1m) at Level 3.

Scheduling

- Please consult with AD's to ensure that the shoot schedule reflects the appropriate time required to facilitate required physical distancing and sanitising guidelines.
- Ensure the shoot schedule reflects fatigue levels and the wellness of crew.
- Consider staggered calls and rolling lunches to maintain appropriate physical distancing.