

Broadcasters' advice to Producers on Covid-19

The current advice regarding Covid-19 that has published by the terrestrial broadcasters is outlined below:

Channel 4

Channel 4 have said that they are reviewing programmes on a case-by-case basis. They have categorised productions as high, medium and low risk. They review the status of each programme three times each week. Any queries or concerns can be raised with Production Finance. They will approach force majeure issues in good faith and try to work with the producer to develop a plan for the resumption of production.

Draft note to Suppliers – 16/03/20

- *Productions in train should follow Public Health England or Government advice at all times, as well as consulting continually with their health and safety advisors. The safety and security of all those involved in producing for us must be considered paramount*
- *Producers should consider the continued necessity of overseas travel in light of any Government advice and if this impacts agreed editorial specifications for a programme engage with the relevant commissioner*
- *We are actively engaged with all suppliers with production periods where we see likely adverse impact from Covid-19. We know that many are already having to stop production at least for the time being.*
- *Each production will be reviewed on a case by case basis with an open line of communication between Channel 4 and the production company for the best action to take. This may mean that some commissions will need to be postponed, or resume in different ways (e.g. curtailed), and potentially even cancelled.*
- *Decisions will be taken in the context of the likely length of disruption and the ongoing needs of our schedule*
- *If there are any concerns that the production insurance will not cover the planned activities or any potential claims, please notify your Production Finance Manager*
- *Similarly, if there are any concerns that the agreed delivery date will not be met due to Covid-19, please notify your Commissioning Editor as a matter of urgency*
- *Any commissions that do not immediately need to go into production and are not filming imminently, should only be committing to essential spend at this stage.*
- *We will continue to work closely with all our affected suppliers on individual shows so that we are able to make optimal decisions. If you anticipate unplanned or previously unapproved costs, these should be clearly notified to Channel 4 and we will consider how these are funded and treated within our deals. Suppliers should be aware that due to the as yet unknown scale of the impact on productions across Channel 4 and the currently unknown impact on advertising revenues, we may not necessarily be able to provide full financial support for these incremental costs and therefore you should take decisions that limit financial exposure.*

We understand that this is a very worrying time for everyone. Our first priority is to ensure the safety of all involved and that is key to all decisions that are currently being taken. We strongly believe the whole broadcasting industry has a vital role to play in times of national crisis, from informing and educating to providing a sense of emotional connection and community when people may be feeling worried and isolated. Our success in fulfilling that role relies on us all working together to navigate new territory and we appreciate your patience and support at this time.

Channel 5

Channel 5 will be approaching production issues caused by Covid-19 on a case by case basis so that producers are supported. If producers have particular concerns, they could speak to their usual contact under Nan Whittingham's team at the Channel.

BBC



Dear all,

We have had a number of queries about coronavirus, and its impact on BBC commissioned programmes. We are closely following developing news and advice from the Foreign Office, WHO and Public Health England, and will continue to update operational guidance as appropriate.

Producers should follow Government advice in relation to the safety of all involved in the production. Particular care should be taken in relation to overseas travel, participation events and programmes involving audiences. The latest Government advice can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>.

*If you have any concerns about coronavirus in relation to a current or new BBC commission, its impact on production, delivery or contractual terms including insurance, **please speak to your Business Affairs contact in the first instance**. Each programme will have different considerations, which we can discuss on a case by case basis as necessary.*

We will be monitoring the evolving medical and travel advice in relation to our commissioning briefings and will deliver these online if needed over the coming weeks.

Should producers prefer to hold commissioner meetings by video conference at any point, we have the facilities to accommodate that.

If you have any other questions, please contact your usual commissioning or business contact.

David Pembrey

Chief Operating Officer, BBC Content

ITV

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance

The information in this email is correct as of 4pm on Saturday 14th March 2020 and is subject to change as the situation changes.

We are conscious that Producers may have a number of queries concerning the novel coronavirus COVID-19 and its potential impact on productions.

ITV is following the advice issued by the World Health Organization (WHO), the UK Government and Public Health Agencies and expects our production partners to follow the same advice.

At this time the advice is business as usual, with prevention and planning being key, but this is a moving situation and we recommend keeping up to date with Government guidance and updates as far as possible.

For the latest guidance on the overall situation please refer to the government website - www.gov.uk/coronavirus

We have included below some specific guidance that the government has provided and then added some suggestions as to possible contingency planning and/or other considerations Producers might want to consider.

General Advice

Guidance specific to employers and businesses

The government has also issued [guidance specific to employers and businesses](#) which will assist employers and businesses in providing advice to staff on the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, including:-

- How to help prevent spread of all respiratory infections including COVID-19*
- What to do if someone suspected of having or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in a workplace setting*
- Advice for the certification of absence from work resulting from COVID-19*

See the employers and businesses guidance in full [here](#).

Operating in and with the general public

In relation to operating in and with the general public the Government has issued [specific guidance](#) which will help with:

- Preventing spread of infection*
- Actions on return from China and other specified countries and areas*
- Symptoms and what to do in that situation*

- Feeling unwell while away from home
- Cleaning shared spaces

See the operating in and with the general public guidance in full [here](#).

Business Continuity planning

Business continuity planning is a proactive plan to mitigate risks associated with a disruption of operations which may be caused by the likes of COVID-19.

The plan should address how to keep your business running even if a significant number of employees, contractors and suppliers cannot come to your place of business – either due to local restrictions on travel or because they are ill. This plan should then be communicated to your employees and contractors to ensure they are aware of what they need to do – or not do – under the plan.

Companies are advised to consider putting a business continuity plan in place for the possible scenarios which may occur as a result of the spread of COVID-19.

Example scenarios include:-

- *key production, crew and talent being absent*
- *production, studio and post-production facilities not being available or closing mid-production*
- *equipment and materials being in short supply, especially materials sourced from already affected areas*
- *personnel or facilities no longer being available when resuming production after a short hiatus.*

We recommend that you

- *check whether key cast and crew have been or are going to an area that has been infected,*
- *have contact details for crew and services that may be needed to backfill, and*
- *check government advice prior to booking travel, locations or crew.*

Within the plans, we would recommend that you should assess at what point production may no longer be viable.

General Contingency planning and other possible considerations

*The below is a non-exhaustive list of things Producers might want to consider which is hopefully helpful. We would also stress that it is very important that both ITV and Producers keep communicating with each other and **most importantly** if there is any coronavirus (COVID-19) related issue that may affect your ability to deliver a programme either on time or in accordance with the Editorial Specification, or otherwise other than as expected (for example if a cast member can no longer participate or there might be additional costs) then you must contact your ITV Business Affairs contact and/or the Commissioning Editor as soon as you become aware of the issue.*

Programmes with Studio Audiences

As a general precaution, audience handling agencies should add the latest NHS guidance to their tickets and deter those who are more vulnerable to infection from attending studios. We also recommend including advice notices within the studio entrances - please contact our Health and Safety team if you require further help and guidance at Health.Safety@itv.com

Given that the Government now appears to be considering placing restrictions on gathering of the public it is possible that studio or theatre audiences may be restricted in the coming days. Therefore, as part of your business continuity planning please consider whether the programme can be made without an audience. This is something you should discuss with your Commissioning Editor.

Locations

Consideration should be given to whether all locations are absolutely necessary and/or are any substitutable. This is something you should be discussing with your Commissioning Editor.

Insurance

We recommend that you fully understand what your insurance might cover you for (for example delay, disruption through to abandonment).

Also, be careful to note the conditions around notification of your insurance company and of course if any issue arises notify your ITV Business Affairs contact and/or the Commissioning Editor as soon as possible.

Commissioner and Editorial Meetings

As an additional precaution against the spread of COVID-19 effective from Monday, we are encouraging everyone to replace face to face meetings (whether at ITV sites and offices or external meetings) with video conferencing or phone calls wherever possible, unless a face to face meeting is crucial. For pitch meetings and other editorial meetings we have facilities, as no doubt many Producers do, to have such meetings by video conference (such as Google hangout, Skype etc) or otherwise by phone, so please liaise with your Commissioning Editor to make these alternative arrangements.

Other information

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

SKY



COVID-19 Guidance

I am writing to share some thoughts on the uncertainties around the Coronavirus (Covid-19) implications for our production work.

We all want to keep our productions working, but our first priority must be for the safety of our people. Keeping our people safe also allows us to minimize the risk of disruptions to individual productions

Here in the UK, it is highly likely that infection rates will continue to grow strongly. We will need to jointly review production schedules for each project to consider alternative plans as infection rates rise.

I am aware a number of sensible steps have already been taken. Right now, it is important we review our current arrangements, follow government guidelines, and implement some additional common-sense procedures. Here are our recommendations.

Advice to personnel:

Staff, cast and crew should not be allowed on-site if:

- *They have been in a 'higher-risk' country in the last 14 days*
- *They have been in contact with someone confirmed as having Covid-19, in the last 14 days*
- *They have a cold, cough or temperature*

At Sky, we have implemented 'self-declaration' forms for all visitors for them to confirm that they do not fall into these categories – we would suggest you do the same, for all studio, cast and crew member every day. This may appear draconian, but it will significantly reduce the risk of infection on a production and will also reduce risk that other production staff need to go into quarantine after exposure to an infected individual.

On set or on location:

Provide hand washing facilities, with soap and hot water. Provide hand sanitising gel across the production. Provide tissues across the production.

Make it mandatory for all staff, crew and cast to wash their hands regularly through the day with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds. They should do this before eating, when first arriving at the production, after being in a meeting or shoot, and after touching 'shared' surfaces which could have traces of Covid-19 – like lift buttons, shared keyboards, cameras, meeting tables etc. If they can't wash their hands, they should use anti-bacterial gel. No one should touch their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Instruct staff, crew and cast to carry tissues, and to use them if they need to cough or sneeze.

Temperature checks:

We recommend that you introduce daily temperature checks and exclude access to the production for anyone with a temperature of 37.6C or above. Subject to availability, we will provide you with “gun” style thermometers.

Personal contact:

Close personal contact should be avoided wherever possible – so no handshakes, no hugging, no kissing. Try to avoid meetings or informal gatherings of more than 50 people. Where possible, you may want to defer shoots involving crowd scenes or large audiences.

Diagnosed case:

Where a member of staff, cast or crew has been confirmed or suspected with Covid-19:

- *Ask them to leave the production (go home) immediately and contact NHS 111*
- *Only allow them to return once NHS 111 has given them the all-clear*

If they are confirmed, close your production for 24 hours for a “deep clean” (all surfaces wiped with anti-bacterial cleaning fluid). Contact Public Health England, who will assist with a protocol to identify any other cast, crew and studio with whom the individual had contact (roughly defined as being within 2m for 15 minutes or more). These individuals should contact NHS 111 and stay at home until they have the all-clear.

Sky has a senior level team focused on our preventative planning, right across the company. If anyone has doubts about next steps, please contact the appropriate exec at Sky and we will escalate for further guidance. We will of course provide further updates.

We all want to keep our productions on track. But I am sure we all share the need to consider safety first.