

BULGARIAN PRODUCTION GOALS IN THE COVID19 ENVIRONMENT

Bulgarian Production companies and crews will strive to provide the safest contagion-free production environment as possible. Production operations will be backed by a dynamic testing policy, using a certified local testing lab that will allow expedited turnaround of results using their RT-PCR pool group test module, tailored for the needs of film and television production. This will facilitate everyone on set being tested on a weekly basis, executed by highly regimented crews and production personnel with over 30 years of western production experience.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Bulgaria was one of the earliest countries in the EU to go into a lock down even with a very low contagion rate. Production crews have been under government lock down since early March. This, in combination with new rules, mandates and weekly PCR testing of everyone on set, will allow productions in Bulgaria to operate safely during these challenging times ahead.

Please note this site's information reflects the rules and mandates proposed by Bulgarian Production Companies and Studios. This site will be updated with changes as they occur, reflecting new rules on production, mandates, testing protocols and travel relating to production under Covid-19 conditions.

GENERAL RULES AND MANDATES

Bulgarian Production Rules and Mandates to minimize the risk of contagion:

Cast and Crew Testing

All Actors, Stuntmen, Extras, Director, Director of Photography, AD's Producer(s) and all other on set crew persons that may be on set either on a daily basis or randomly must have a negative SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test performed under a RT-PCR pool group test module (or individual test) with the first testing no more than 3 days prior to the start of the first day of production. The RT-PCR pool group test protocol means crew persons both above and below-the-line will be tested in groups of up to 10 persons on a weekly basis. All tests will be facilitated by representatives from the laboratory and the onset nurse or doctor.

PCR Tests

Diagnostic or PCR testing (Polymerase Chain Reaction) is considered to be the most accurate and only approved test available, recommended by EU Risk Protection Against Contagion of SARS COV-2 During Filming Guidelines and in the United States by the F.D.A. These tests are generally performed by a certified lab. We suggest that you test within in no more than 3 days before the start of production and continue to test on a weekly basis thereafter. We believe this gives a production the best picture of the crew and casts status augmented by all other social distancing, hygiene and personal responsibility rules being followed during the production. It will also allow the production to trace and isolate a positive result within a much smaller group if ever a positive result did occur. To be clear there is no guarantee that the RT PCR Group testing protocols will mean certainty that no one will become positive after the initial tests, but we believe it will give productions a high degree of confidence they have a contagion free set ongoingly through the course of their production schedule. This same protocol is being used successfully in Bulgarian, German and Spanish Hospitals and companies.

Antibody- IgG/IgM Rapid Tests

Antibody or Rapid Tests have a fundamental issue with their use. A negative test result only means at that moment the person has no Covid Antibodies. It doesn't confirm whether or not that person is/ or is not infected at that time with Covid 19. Rapid Tests can only confirm with a positive result that you are infected. Results can be further suspect being there are over 120 different companies producing these tests and the degree of accuracy and quality of any particular one has not been substantiated or approved by any EU regulatory agency or the FDA. With the cost of these tests ranging from 20lv to as high as 80lv per test unit there is no savings in relation to a RT PCR group testing protocol, only result time. While some commercial and Music video Producers believe there may be value in Rapid Testing for single day shoots the Bulgarian production companies supporting the Bulgarian Film Guide on Covid 19 believe their use should be avoided.

Maintaining Social Distance

It is required that people maintain a social distance of 2 meters while working except if it is absolutely necessary for closer interaction for a minimal period of time. For interior shoots the maximum amount of crew permitted entry at any one time is based on the size of accessible space on the shooting location or set. As a general rule, each person requires a minimum of 4 square meters for unfurnished space and 6 square meters for furnished space for proper social distancing. In addition, all actors, stunt performers, featured extras, key crew and all other crew persons must wear masks on set at all times. The exception is actors, stunt performers and extras when they are on camera.

Minimizing On Set Presence.

The number of crew on set should be kept to a minimum. Director, Camera crew, Key Grip, Gaffer, Sound, Make Up, Wardrobe, 1st AD and Cast PA as well as only working cast in the particular scene. Producers and any other production executives should observe remotely if possible. When re-lights and set changes take place, all cast

and stunts should leave the set as additional grips, electricians and art department are brought on set to facilitate changes.

Tiered Arrivals and Talent Management.

Call times should be staggered so that each department is given access at timed intervals to prevent crowding in wardrobe and make-up rooms. Actors should be kept in their room alone as much as possible before wardrobe and make-up and when not required on the set. It is further mandated that all actors and key above-the-line production personnel, such as the producer, director and DP eat their meals in their rooms and not with other crew or cast members.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Hygiene.

All people on set are required to adhere to health authority guidelines on hygiene and behavior. Hand sanitizers are to be made available at all points of entry to the set and common areas such as craft service. Production will make available all required PPE such as masks, gloves and hand gel. Production is responsible for frequent cleaning of contact surfaces, this includes: set walls, door handles, surfaces, bathroom fixtures, and any equipment and props. Production will establish a procedure for keeping and the disposal of all used cleaning material and PPE. Information on how to maintain proper hygiene is to be supplied to all crew members in written form with the Call Sheet on a daily basis. This information will include any updates from health authorities.

Crowd Scene Mandates

It is best if large crowd scenes where social distancing cannot be upheld, are avoided if possible. If not, shooting time with large extra scenes should be minimized with second and third cameras with an expedited shooting schedule. It is suggested that a digital solution be used for compositing layers of persons to avoid a single large crowd scene. We further suggest the use of background avatars and crowd duplication to minimize the number of extras on set if possible.

Transportation

Production will organize the transportation of the crew to utilize personal vehicles with a minimum number of passengers. All production vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected after each trip. Wearing a mask and gloves in the production vehicles is obligatory. Production should provide for the disinfection of the transport department vehicles with special attention to vehicles that carry the crew and actors.

Illness

Anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted entry to set under any circumstances. Said person will not be allowed to return to set until they test negative with a PCR test performed at a Bulgarian certified testing clinic. Production will inform all crew in case a person is discovered to have Covid-19 and commit to a tracing investigation to inform any persons, inside and outside of the production that may have come into contact with said individual.

CREW AND PRODUCTION RULES

RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRODUCTION IN BULGARIA DEALING WITH COVID 19

A) *INTERNATIONAL- ACTORS, PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS and KEY CREW: * *(The following procedures “1-5” relating to international travel into Bulgaria are proposals which have not yet been approved by the Bulgarian Ministries. At the present time international travel into Bulgaria is restricted- with anyone entering the country subject to a 14-day quarantine. Changes on that status will be updated as they occur)*

- 1) Internationals must first pass a visual assessment at the airport upon arrival having no temperature or Covid-19 symptoms. This test is usually administered by customs personnel inside the Passport Control area.
- 2) Upon being released from passport control and exiting airport restricted zone, ‘internationals’ will be met by production company personnel. A nurse or doctor will interview them at the airport (brought by Production company). They will be required to co-sign the international’s declaration that states that said individual is not aware of any illness or infection and has had no known contact with persons infected by Covid-19. It is suggested that all internationals take a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test before traveling to Bulgaria. Within 24 hours of their arrival in Bulgaria they must take a PCR test to verify they are negative. Said test will be facilitated by the Bulgarian Production company. During the period before said international gets a negative result from the test, they will be quarantined.
- 3) Within 8-12 hours after taking the test the results should be available. Upon a negative result, said international will be allowed to participate in the production.
- 4) It should also be noted that for the first 7 days said international person is in Bulgaria, the production company will be required to maintain tracing data. It should be further noted that Production company shall make best efforts to minimize contact during this time.
- 5) It will be the responsibility of international actor, producer, director or key crew person to minimize contacts and mitigate risk of contagion after working hours and days off by limiting contact to family minimizing outside social contacts during the production period.
- 6) Upon arrival on the set before going to make-up and wardrobe, production nurse or doctor must check their temperature with a contactless thermometer and clear all internationals to go to work.
- 7) Any international not on camera will be required to wear a face mask and gloves provided by the production company or an approved one of their own.

- 8) Accommodations for internationals shall be in hotels which are exercising stringent Covid-19 procedures or individual apartments that must be completely disinfected before international occupies it.
- 9) All internationals will be tested on a weekly basis under the RT-PCR pool group test module while they are working on the film or television production. This system means that groups working together such as actors or stuntpersons are tested together in groups up to 10 persons on a weekly basis.

B) BULGARIAN ACTORS and STUNT PERSONS: Bulgarian actors and stunts will be required to submit to a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test and pass a daily check by the production doctor or nurse with a contactless thermometer.

- 1) Upon being cast or hired, Actor or Stunt performer must submit to a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test with negative results from an accredited testing facility before work start.
- 2) They must sign a declaration that they have not been in contact with any persons with Covid-19.
- 3) Upon arrival on the set, before going to make-up and wardrobe, production nurse or doctor must check their temperature with a contactless thermometer and clear them to work.
- 4) Actors or Stunt performers must wear a face mask and gloves during periods they are not in front of camera.
- 5) It will be the responsibility of Bulgarian Actors and Stunts to minimize contacts and mitigate risk of contagion after working hours and days off by limiting contact to family minimizing outside social contacts during the production period.
- 6) All Bulgarian Actors and Stunts will be tested on a weekly basis under the RT-PCR pool group test module while they are working on the film or television production.

C) BULGARIAN CREW:

- 1) All deal memos and contracts with Bulgarian crew shall reflect the production companies' necessity to request testing for Covid-19 and the understanding that said crew member will be required to adhere to all Covid-19 rules and mandates outlined in this document as well as EU Guidelines and any updates that may be mandated.
- 2) All Crew Members must make a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test before they start work and then on a weekly basis under the RT-PCR pool group test module while they are working on the film or television production.
- 3) Upon arrival on set, production nurse or doctor must check crew persons temperature with a contactless thermometer and verify that there are no Covid-19 symptoms.

- 4) Production Nurse or doctor must maintain a list of all crew people designated by their EGN number that they and the crew member must initial every day after having taken their temperature.
- 5) It will be the responsibility of the crew person to minimize contacts and mitigate risk of contagion after work hours and days off by limiting contact to family, minimizing outside social contacts during the production period.
- 6) All crew members will be required to wear a face mask and gloves provided by the production company or an approved one of their own.
- 7) Make-up artists must have a separate dedicated set of make-up for each actor. They are required to wear masks and protective gloves. It is recommended to have a different make-up artist dedicated to extras. It is required that they make them up in a separate space than the one occupied by actors.
- 8) Make-up artist, hairstylists, SPFX make-up artists, wardrobe and Sound recordists will be the only crew persons to have direct physical contact with Actors, Stuntpersons and Extras. All other crew persons, above and below the line must practice social distancing from all persons working in front of the camera at all times.

D) EXTRAS:

- 1) Production will need to book extras in advance for the weekly shooting period. These extras must be available for the entire shooting week or episode if a series. To allow for testing of all extras to be used during this shoot week it will be facilitated under the RT-PCR pool group test module of up to 10 extras in a group.
- 2) While on set, all extras will be required to wear masks and gloves between takes when they are not on camera.
- 3) Extra holding area must be as far away as reasonable from crew and actors.
- 4) Extra holding area needs to be large enough to allow for social distancing between extras.
- 5) All extras temperatures must be checked before going on set by Production Nurse or Doctor.
- 6) If there are more than 30 Extras on a particular day, Production must bring in an additional nurse for the day to check extras temperatures with a contactless thermometer ongoingly during the production day.
- 7) It will be the responsibility of any Extra to minimize contacts and mitigate risk of contagion after work hours and days off by limiting contact to family, minimizing outside social contacts during production period they are scheduled to work.
- 8) Production will make efforts to minimize the number of the Extras hired and use digital solutions whenever possible to augment crowd scenes minimizing the number of extras on set.

- 9) Extras should be shot and dressed in such a way to allow them to play in various scenes during their weekly schedule thus minimizing the contact with additional extras on set and additional testing.
- 10) If a minimal number of extras are needed, it is suggested to use crew members as extras to minimize additional persons on set.

E) CATERING and CRAFT SERVICE: The Bulgarian Government has specific Covid-19 regulations for restaurants and coffee shops which must be adhered to by all Catering and Craft companies servicing the production. Complimenting these regulations, production companies have a number of specific rules and mandates related to the production model of operations.

- 1) It is necessary to make sure that food can be distributed in a take-away fashion, thus when each crew member moves away from the catering area after taking their food, social distancing rules can be adhered to. It is important to ensure that crew members have enough space when eating to follow rules of social distancing (including refreshments during the day.) In addition, buffet serving will not be allowed.
- 2) Production will stagger crew members lunch schedule to minimize the number of persons eating in one area with social distancing. It is advisable to use portable chairs over benches if possible.
- 3) Specific crew groups, such as actors, grip, electrical, camera, sound, make-up and wardrobe should eat lunch in a particular areas staying within their work group (practicing social distancing) they have already spent their production time with to minimize additional contact with other groups in production that they have not had close contact with. If possible, all actors, director and producers should eat alone in their individual room or trailer with their lunch brought to them.
- 4) Whenever possible production should work a 'Continuous Work' schedule (10-hour day with walking lunch) or as generally referred to as "French Hours." This will help minimize large gatherings with a dedicated lunch time. (In general, Bulgaria usually works a 12-hour day with 1 hour for lunch).
- 5) All Catering and craft service personnel must make a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test before they start work and then on a on a weekly basis under the RT-PCR pool group test module while they are working on the film or television production.
- 6) All catering personnel preparing food must have masks and gloves on at all times. Eating utensils must be separated and wrapped in plastic and not supplied in large open bins.
- 7) Craft service snacks must be individualized with individual servings wrapped in plastic. Large bins of chips, crackers, pretzels and other snacks previously served in serving trays will not be allowed and must now be served in individual packets, either factory made or packaged by catering. In productions with crews larger than

50 people, a dedicated PA will be assigned to the craft and lunch area to sterilize and clean the area ongoingly.

- 8) Morning craft breakfast must be served and wrapped in plastic or individual containers. Buffet serving will not be allowed with all utensils sealed and wrapped individually.
- 9) It will be the responsibility of any Catering or Craft service person to minimize contacts and mitigate risk of contagion after working hours and days off by limiting contact to family minimizing outside social contacts during production period.

F) LOCATIONS:

- 1) During pre-production scouting, potential locations must be treated as if they are potentially infected (unless they were disinfected ahead of the scout) and the crew must use Personnel Protection Equipment (PPE) when scouting site.
- 2) During filming it is important to ensure a consistent lock-up to prevent any unauthorized persons from entering shooting location.
- 3) Disinfection of objects and fixtures on said location is critical. When filming in a public space and/or a location with a high concentration of people, it's recommended to consider disinfection by spraying if possible.

GENERAL COVID 19 PRODUCTION STANDARDS

- 1) All Feature, Series, Music Video and commercial productions with a crew of more than 25 persons must have an on-set nurse or doctor from call to wrap.
- 2) Said doctor or nurse shall be responsible to take temperatures of all onset personnel every day and report to the production company any personnel that they believe are ill.
- 3) Production must dedicate at least one on set PA to sterilization duties over and above the normal amount of PA's carried on a show of its size and budget. Said PA will have alcohol spray, wipes and hand gel to clean and supply to actors and stunts between takes. They also will ongoingly clean areas where actors and stunts have interacted as frequently as productions allows.
- 4) All sets will be closed to non-production personnel who have not been tested. Producers must give explicit approval for any non-production personnel and verify said person has had a SARS-CoV2 (PCR) test with in the previous week before being allowed on set where they will be required to wear a mask and gloves at all time and observe remotely if possible.
- 5) Production must determine which PPE (Personnel Protection Equipment) and disinfectants for personal disinfection will be used and establish a system for issuing, exchange and control of these items. Production will make available to all production personnel PPE; masks, at least 4 available per crew member over a 12-

- hour shoot day. Protective gloves will be made available to all crew and cast members again at least 4 pairs over a 12-hour shoot day.
- 6) Production drivers must be supplied with disinfectant, gloves and face masks and shall be required to disinfect their vehicle after every individual transport of crew or cast persons.
 - 7) Make-up and wardrobe departments should disinfect their working area and chairs ongoingly during the production day.
 - 8) It is important that the costumes/wardrobe undergo daily cleaning to facilitate disinfection.
 - 9) Waste management: Disposable face masks, gloves, etc. must be treated as hazardous waste, put into solid plastic bags and to be handled with protective gloves and then disposed of. When fabric face masks are used, the crew members must have sealable plastic bags and boil them for sterilization purposes.

THE COMPANIES

These Bulgarian Production companies and Studios have developed these new production rules, protocols and mandates in an effort to facilitate a contagion free shooting environment. With the fluidity of the present situation, they will be updated on a regular basis. These rules, protocols and mandates have been sourced from Bulgarian and European medical professionals as well as rules and mandates from the DGA (Directors Guild of America,) SAG (Screen Actors Guild) and EU Guidelines on Basic Safety Rules for Risk Protection Against Contagion of SARS-COV-2 During Filming. In addition, a production testing protocol has been established for Covid-19 supported by Genica Labs LTD, a Bulgarian Government Certified DNA and RNA Diagnostic lab specializing in infectious disease testing.

ABOUT

The goal of the companies supporting the **Bulgarian Film Guidelines** initiative is to establish a resource where the rules on how Bulgarian productions work in the Covid 19 production environment is available to everyone and updated as new information, rules and testing protocols become available. The **Bulgarian Film Guidelines** site was created from the input of over 20 of the largest Production Companies and Studios working in Bulgaria along with adapting rules and procedures from the **EU Guidelines on Basic Safety Rules for Risk Protection Against Contagion of SARS-COV-2 During Filming** as well as other industry sources. The **Bulgarian Film Guidelines** organization has also focused on creating a strong testing protocol working with Genica Labs LTD to develop a strategy geared to the needs of film, series and commercial production. It is our belief that while PPE, Hygiene, Social Distancing and production rules play a very important role, it is a strong testing protocols that will ultimately provide contagion security to productions.