

COVID-19 Production Protocols and Risk Assessment

INTRODUCTION

The Hotcam Management team are constantly monitoring the government, our Health & Safety Specialists and NHS advice websites. We are endeavouring to address and implement their recommended guidelines and working practices. We take the health and safety of our employees and clients extremely seriously and we will do everything in our power to minimise any further spread of COVID-19.

Many of the following protocols were already being practiced prior to the government lockdown. They are regularly being updated and adapted in line with changing UK government advice. Hotcam are continuing to monitor the situation in order to react and adapt accordingly.

BACKGROUND

The Virus

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 novel coronavirus. The disease causes a flu-like illness sometimes leading to serious respiratory failure particularly in the elderly or those with underlying health conditions. The main symptoms are a new persistent cough and a high temperature.

The virus is spread primarily in droplets coughed or sneezed from infected individuals which can be inhaled by others in close proximity (less than 2 metres). These droplets can also fall onto surfaces where they can be picked up on the hands, infecting the individual when they touch their face. Individuals can be infectious before they experience any symptoms.

UK Government Advice

The latest UK government advice/guidance which was released on 11th May 2020 (and so far only applies in England) is: 'Stay Alert – Control the Virus – Save Lives.' In England, anyone who cannot work from home is now encouraged to return to work (if commercially viable and safe to do so), avoiding the use of public transport to get there wherever possible.

To help employers ensure workplaces are as safe as possible, the government have published 8 guides which cover a range of different types of work such as offices, factories, warehouses & construction. As yet there are no government published specific guides for the TV/Film Industry, but various parts of the 8 published guides will be applicable to some areas of our industry. The guides can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

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PROTOCOLS

Our COVID-19 protocols are aimed at supporting productions and helping the industry get back to work, whilst taking into account the main points outlined in the government guidance already mentioned. It is envisaged that some restrictions such as the 2 metre distancing rule will remain in place until vaccines and treatments are successfully developed.

Hotcam's protocols are intended to support productions whilst they examine their current ways of working. This will help production companies produce content in the safest possible way until restrictions are fully lifted and life returns to the "new normal".

The guidance we have received to date covers the most common production processes involved in pre-production, production and post-production.

Our protocols follow a hierarchy of controls as shown below:

Eliminate - Does the activity really need to be done? Are there other ways of achieving the same thing – e.g. remote working or rearrange the task to ensure a safe distance of at least 2m is maintained between people.

Reduce - Where the task is essential and we might be presented to with a scenario whereby our employees have difficulty maintaining a 2 metre distance, we will stagger our employee roster to accommodate this. Employees that can work remotely will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Isolate – Continue to review and amend our essential workers shift patterns to create separate teams thereby minimising exposure.

Control – Our Line Managers have been and will continue to implement an enhanced authorisation process and provide additional supervision for health & safety protocols.

PPE - Use PPE (masks and gloves) as a last resort and immediately dispose of used equipment and wash hands.

The key elements to these protocols are:

Distancing

We will endeavour to ensure that physical separation of at least 2 metres will be maintained in our warehouse and all other work activities and areas. Other ways to help us achieve this include some employees working remotely, reducing the number of people at work to an absolute minimum, staggered shift patterns and redesigning workspaces.

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Health Monitoring

Strict controls are in place to monitor symptoms of the virus in the workplace. These are being managed closely by our Line Managers. This includes a thermometer for daily temperature checks to be carried out on all employees. We will also endeavour to ensure that Hotcam's employees;

- are not suffering from any coronavirus symptoms and have not had any symptoms within the previous 7 days.
- they have not (as far as they are aware) been in contact with anyone with coronavirus symptoms within the previous 14 days.
- are not 'shielded' or have any underlying health condition which might make them particularly vulnerable to coronavirus.
- will undertake to declare immediately any onset of symptoms or contact with anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus.

Anyone developing symptoms whilst at work will be sent home and told to seek medical advice from the NHS.

EQUIPMENT PROTOCOLS

All equipment leaving or returning to Hotcam goes through a disinfection procedure and Hotcam will ensure that any equipment being sent out to a production will be fully disinfected beforehand. This includes both the equipment and any cases or bags used for transportation.

For the avoidance of any potential cross-contamination, equipment will only be handled by designated team members responsible for that equipment.

For deliveries, all staff loading/unloading and transporting equipment have been instructed to wear gloves at all times when handling the equipment. On arrival, equipment is loaded into the designated area as instructed by production. More specific details of deliveries can be found further down this document.

Personal equipment (headsets, mics, radios etc.) will also be cleaned before issue. Wherever possible headsets, mics and radios should be used exclusively by the same person for the duration of a production and labelled to identify the user. Hotcam would be happy to assist production with the facilitation of this if required.

All tools are wiped down with antiseptic wipes and disinfectant solutions regularly and/or whenever they are used by different individuals.

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DEPARTMENTAL SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

Projects, Accounting & Administration Teams

Wherever possible, remote working from home will continue. Where this is not possible, office workstations will be re-reviewed to ensure they provide physical separations of at least 2 metres between workers. If people are in close proximity, they will most likely work side by side or back to back rather than facing each other.

All work areas are being regularly (at least twice daily) cleaned and disinfected. We will endeavour to provide good ventilation and as far as possible, the length of time spent in any workspace will be limited. Workers will also be allowed to take managed breaks for fresh air.

Warehouse

All staff in the warehouse have been instructed to practice social distancing and remain 2 metres apart.

Disinfectant spray, wipes, hand sanitiser and disposable gloves are kept on each workbench and employees are encouraged & expected to use them.

Where the task is essential and we might be presented to with a scenario whereby our employees have difficulty maintaining a 2 metre distance, we will stagger our employee roster to accommodate this

Break and mealtimes are being staggered to reduce congestion and maintain physical distancing of 2 metres at all times.

Employees are being encouraged to bring pre-prepared meals and reusable drink bottles from home.

All eating utensils, plates, etc will be put into the company dishwasher and washed at a high temperature.

Deliveries & Collections

Visitors, Couriers, Drivers, etc are no longer invited into Hotcam's premises.

Any packages & deliveries must be directed to the external warehouse shutter door.

Before taking receipt of goods, employees must wash their hands and wear disposable gloves.

Any packages are wiped down with sanitiser thoroughly before being accepted into the warehouse. Disinfectant, wipes, hand sanitiser and gloves are permanently kept at the warehouse entrance for this purpose.

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After taking receipt of packages, employees must remove & dispose of gloves and immediately wash their hands again.

Recces

We will work will adhere to Production guidelines regarding Health & Safety for recces.

Meetings

Meetings will be carried out remotely using video conferencing platforms, zoom, skype, facetime or similar.

Travel to and between Locations

Employee travel to and from locations is being done by private transport. Other means of transport such as cycling is also being encouraged and Hotcam has sufficient parking facilities for employee's cars and bicycles.

Hotcam Crew Fleet of Vehicles

Hotcam's fleet of crew vehicles also have strict hygiene, sanitising and disinfecting protocols that have been implemented in practice and are regularly being checked. Every company vehicle is equipped with a supply of sanitising wipes, gloves and hand sanitiser.

COMPANY HYGIENE & CLEANING PROTOCOLS

Personal Hygiene

We have set up sanitising stations around the building, which include disinfectant spray, wipes, hand sanitiser and protective gloves. These are available and ready to use in the warehouse, kitchen and offices.

Employees have been instructed to wash or sanitise their hands regularly. This includes arriving or leaving the building and after handling equipment/objects that may carry the virus.

Handwashing facilities are readily available at Hotcam with soap, antiseptic gel dispensers and paper hand towels placed in all areas.

Information on how to maintain proper hand hygiene and on-site instructions have been displayed in prominent areas around the company and reminders given in daily briefings.

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Cleaning Regimes

Enhanced cleaning procedures are in place across all areas in the company and closed bins have been provided throughout the company. These are checked frequently and bins are emptied on a regular basis.

All areas will be kept well ventilated and as far as possible the length of time spent in any workspace will be limited and employees allowed to take managed breaks for fresh air.

Our Warehouse is regularly disinfected and sanitised with particular attention to:

- Workbenches, including:
 - Keyboards
 - Mice
 - Workbench surface
- Warehouse floors
- Key-fob access points
- Shelving & racking

Communal Areas including the kitchen are being regularly disinfected and sanitised with particular attention to:

- Lavatories
- Shower
- Door handles including bathroom & fire exits
- Bannisters
- Pump Trucks
- Padlocks
- Kitchen cupboards & cupboard handles
- Kitchen worksurfaces
- TV remotes

Office spaces are also being regularly disinfected and sanitised with particular attention to:

- Keyboards
- Mice
- Office chair armrests
- Printer trays

Whenever a department finishes its tasks, any shared areas are wiped and cleaned before the next team commences work.

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PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It includes items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses.

Face Masks

The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if they are infected but have not developed symptoms. If it is deemed necessary for employees to wear face masks, employees will be instructed as follows:

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with soap and water or alcohol based hand wash.
- Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it – if you do you must clean your hands immediately.
- Replace the mask as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single use masks.
- To remove the mask, remove it from behind – do not touch the front of mask – discard immediately by double bagging it and placing in a closed bin.
- Clean hands immediately.

Disposable gloves

These may be useful for situations where hand washing or sanitising is not readily available or possible - i.e. deliveries. However, gloves are only a 'second skin' and therefore wearers will be instructed to continue to apply hygiene precautions - i.e. not touching the face. Any gloves used will be hygienically disposed of and new pairs used.

WHO have a useful guide on the use of disposable gloves which Hotcam are following:

https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Glove_Use_Information_Leaflet.pdf

All single use PPE including masks and gloves are being disposed of at the end of each task or shift so they cannot be re-used.

After removing any PPE, the employee will wash their hands thoroughly with hand soap or sanitiser.

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Organisation and Monitoring

The organisation and implementation of all the required special arrangements outlined above will remain the responsibility of Line Managers.

Our Line Managers have been and will continue to implement an enhanced authorisation process and provide additional supervision for health & safety protocols.

Training and Briefing

Key managers are responsible for developing and implementing the COVID-19 safety arrangements AND should undergo training specific to the role

They will reinforce these safety arrangements with daily briefings for each shift, together with any specific procedures particular to that day's activities.

Risk Assessment

Together with First Option, Hotcam's generic H&S in the Workplace Risk Assessment is being revised to cover the COVID-19 specifics and measures for Hotcam.

CONCLUSION

The guidance detailed in Hotcam's COVID-19 Protocols has been obtained via our H&S Advisors - First Option Health & Safety. They are working in conjunction with The British Film Council (Production Subgroup) and BECTU who are working on new working practices for the British Film & Television Industry.

We have also had input from Guy Lunn our Principal H&S Consultant at First Option

Please think of Hotcam as part of your production team. We are ready, willing and able to collaborate with our clients and assist with ensuring the best possible safety standards and technical support is available to our clients, employees and technicians at all times.

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