

Film and Television Production Health and Safety Results

June 2020 - January 2021

Date: 01-14-2021

Regional Film Offices,

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the province has made the difficult decision to increase public health restrictions across Ontario with [Enhanced Shutdown Measures](#) that took effect January 14, 2021. Ontario's film industry has implemented rigorous and effective health and safety protocols to ensure safe working environments including extensive testing regimes. Film production activity is permitted to continue under the enhanced measures, provided current Ontario regulations are followed.

The Province-wide Shutdown News Release can be found [here](#)

The updated Workplace Safety Measures document can be found [here](#)

*Please see page 28 for details about re: the film and television industry.

Regulations can be found here:

- [Stay at Home Order](#)
- [Emergency Declaration](#)
- [The re-opening of Ontario Act O. Reg. 82/20: RULES FOR AREAS IN STAGE 1 \(ontario.ca\)](#) *Film & TV specific requirements can be found in s62 & s63

In response to a number of questions raised about the shutdown measures announced on Tuesday, January 12. Ontario Creates has assembled this fact sheet regarding the measures taken by industry to maintain safe sets and their results.

Health and Safety Protocols

The [Section 21 Health and Safety Guidelines](#) were published on Thursday June 25th 2020 and updated most recently on November 24th. Film and television productions are required to ensure workplaces are safe; that cast, crew and communities are protected; and that physical distancing is maintained as much as possible.

The guidelines were created by the Section 21 Film and Television Health and Safety Advisory Committee, an advisory body to the Ministry of Labour, Training & Skills Development (MLTSD), pursuant to Section 21 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). The committee

advises on Safety Guidelines for the Film and Television Industry in Ontario which are meant to assist employers/producers, supervisors and cast and crew in the industry in determining ways to best comply with their obligations as set out under the OHSA.

Committee representatives include experienced advisors, both domestic and foreign, from all aspects of the motion picture industry. The committee is comprised of unions, guilds, producers associations and municipal and provincial government representatives representing film, television and commercial production. These entities have worked hand-in-hand with MLTSD throughout the drafting process.

The guidelines provide productions of any size with a foundation for safe return to work protocols. The guidelines contain general and department specific recommendations and resources. In addition to these industry-wide protocols, each individual production maintains a health and safety plan specific to the circumstances of that production. In many cases, productions have implemented more stringent health and safety measures than recommended by the Section 21 Guidelines, proceeding with PCR and antigen testing on a frequent cadence and creating workplace zones that isolate workers by role.

COVID-19 Testing

The film and television sector is making extensive use of COVID-19 testing for film workers and the sector was selected by the Ministry of Health to receive Panbio rapid antigen tests to support screening on production sites. The film and television sector was selected because of its robust health and safety practices and the infrastructure it has created to administer the tests. PRC and antigen testing cadence ranges from every other day to weekly, depending on the role of individual worker. Many productions also require a negative pre-employment test result 48 hours prior to employment.

Workplace Prevention Measures

COVID-19 health and safety measures such as social distancing, masking, testing, adherence to close contact recommendations and cohorting have been widely implemented. Productions have created well defined tiered workplace zones to limit contact between employees. Location management teams have also worked closely with regional and municipal film offices across the province to ensure well defined distinctions between public space and the workplace when working on location to ensure public safety.

Rigorous health and safety protocols specifically developed for film and television production in collaboration with unions, producers, epidemiologists, and health, safety experts, municipal and provincial film offices and the Ministry of Labour have been the foundation of a safe return to production across Ontario.

Health and Safety – Results to Date

- Sixty-two live action productions have actively worked in Ontario since production activities were permitted to resume in June.
- Ontario Creates is not aware of any COVID-19 outbreaks on productions since film and television activity has resumed.
- The positivity rate from COVID-19 testing reported by the sector has been 0.07% based on 105 positive results from 148,417 tests conducted between August and January. Every positive test has been identified through regular testing without any other Close Contacts resulting in a positive infection.

Other Jurisdictions

British Columbia and Quebec, continue to allow film and television production to continue. Most recently, Quebec has exempted its film and television sector from both the lockdown and the curfew that Premier Legault announced on January 6th.

Globally, film and television production continues in key jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Ireland, Greece, Victoria State in Australia, and the U.S. states of California, Oregon, Illinois, Florida, Hawaii, Georgia.

Economic Impact

In 2019, the film and television sector generated \$2.16B towards Ontario's GDP, creating 44,500 direct and spin-off full time jobs for Ontarians. A total of 62 live action productions have taken place throughout the province since production activities were permitted to resume in June 2020.

In addition to activity in the Greater Toronto Area, production activity rapidly restarted following the hiatus across the province, including the following key projects:

- Northern Ontario - Resident Evil, All My Puny Sorrows, Flee The Light
- Central Ontario – Nightmare Alley (Dir. Guillermo Del Toro), Man From Toronto, Kim's Convenience, The Boys, Titans, Frankie Drake, Murdoch Mysteries
- Eastern Ontario – Locke and Key, Love Found at Whitbrooke Harbor
- Southernwestern Ontario –The Handmaid's Tale, Hardy Boys, See, Departure, Murdoch Mysteries, Frankie Drake, Sneakarella