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