

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

Guidelines:

- **General:**

- These guidelines should be followed in both work and show conditions.
- Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 13, 20-24). [7]
- A face mask or covering is required (ESA-RG 6). [1,5]
- Hands must be washed or sanitized before entering the area and regularly / every hour (OSHA 14; ESA-RG 5). [1,4,5]
- Production should be halted periodically (every 4 - 6 hours) to facilitate a break for hand hygiene and high touch surface wipe down (IATSE 11). [7]
- A staff member, team, or committee should be appointed to keep up with the continual changes of guidelines and information during this pandemic and be responsible for informing departments, leadership, or staff of relevant changes (ESA-RG 5; IATSE 2). [5,7]
- No animals/pets should be allowed backstage, unless it is an ADA/CDA compliant service animal (IATSE 13). [7]
- All workers should be trained in the use and maintenance of the PPE needed to safely complete their work, protecting themselves at home, and their rights and responsibilities as individuals (IATSE 15). [7]
- Floor markings should be installed to show safe distancing wherever possible (IATSE 20). [1,7]

- **Backstage Access:**

- Where possible access to the backstage area should include at least two methods, one for ingress and one for egress. Each method will be assigned as either entrance or exit and used as such by all production staff and artists. [8]
 - Where possible all doors should be left open to avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (OSHA 14). [1,4]
 - Where this is not possible and only one access method is available, social distancing protocols should be put in place (ESA-RG 5; IATSE 20). [1,5,7]
 - If elevators are used to access the stage a person limit should be set to maintain social distancing of 6' (about two arms' length) or more (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
- Where possible all access doors should be left open to promote clean air exchange avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (IATSE 10). [7]
 - Where this is not possible to leave doors open hand sanitizer stations should be set up at each access point (ESA-RG 11). [5]
 - Handles, door touch points, handrails, and elevator buttons should be sanitized multiple times during performances and work calls (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [1,5,7]

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

- No personnel that are not directly working on the production should access backstage to limit the number of people working together (IATSE 13). [1,7]
 - If someone needs to access backstage, a face mask or covering is required. Hands must be washed or sanitized before entering the area and every hour (ESA-RG 5-6). [1,5]
 - A single individual should be designated as the COVID-19 Compliance Officer (CCO) and compile a list of artists and staff working on the production to control who may have access to the areas and to aid in contact tracing as needed (IATSE 2-4). [7]
 - Staff and artists should avoid hanging around backstage work areas, e.g. the fly rail, unless they are required to be there (OSHA 13). [4]
- Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 13). [1,7]

Backstage areas:

• Crossovers:

- Where possible backstage areas should include at least two methods to cross from one side of the stage to the other. [8]
 - These should be separate. Each will be assigned a direction to be utilized in and will be used as such by all production staff and artists. [8]
 - Where possible all doors should be left open to avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (OSHA 14). [1,4]
 - Where this is not possible and only one access method is available, social distancing protocols should be put in place (ESA-RG 11). [1,5]
 - Floor markings should be installed to show safe distancing (IATSE 20). [1,7]

• Properties Tables:

- Hand sanitizer stations should be set up near each prop table due to it being a high touch area (AMPTP 10; IATSE 12). [1,6,7]
- Crew and artists should be directed to use sanitizer before picking up props for use or handoff (AMPTP 10; IATSE 11). [6,7]
- Props equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant that meets EPA guidelines and manufacturer's guidance before and after use (ESA-RG 12; AMPTP 10). [5,6]

• Quick Change Booths/Areas:

- Where possible it is recommended that quick changes be limited or removed from a production to avoid artists having to spend time in close proximity to staff and having staff handle costumes more than necessary (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

- If it is not possible to remove quick changes from a production, it is recommended that each artist have their own separate booth that only they use for each performance or that each quick change area allows for social distancing (ESA-RG 5; IATSE 22). [1,5,7]
- Quick changes should involve as few staff as possible (IATSE 22-23).⁷ If an artist can complete the change on their own, no staff should help (ESA-RG 5). [5]
 - Staff should stagger the placing of costume pieces in each booth prior to actor call time and not enter the space unless it is necessary in order to maintain social distancing. [1]
 - Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 22-23). [7]
- Areas that are to be used for other purposes than quick changes should not be used without being disinfected before and after (IATSE 12). [7]
- **Water Stations:**
 - Drinks should be individually packaged or, if drinks are to be dispensed from a water station, soda fountain, coffee machine or similar equipment, receptacles should not come into contact with dispensers (ESA-RG 17; AMPTP 12). [5,6]
 - Staff and artists should use bottles or cups with lids.
 - Hand sanitizer stations should be set up by the water stations for staff and artists to use before touching pitchers and coolers, e.g. high touch areas (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [1,5,7]
 - All eating and drinking surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected before and after use, and every 4-6 hours during extended periods of use (IATSE 11, 13). [7]
- **Fly Rail:**
 - Where possible as few crew members as possible should be assigned to run rail cues. [1]
 - The crew members will wipe down high touch areas, e.g. rope locks pre-show, post-show, and before and after work calls (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [5,7]
 - Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 22-23). [1,7]
- **Trap Room:**
 - Where possible access to the trap room should include at least two methods. Each method will be assigned as either entrance or exit and used as such by all production staff and artists. [8]
 - Where this is not possible and only one access method is available, social distancing protocols should be put in place (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
 - Where possible all doors should be left open to avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (OSHA 14). [4]

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

- Where this is not possible it is recommended that hand sanitizer stations be set up at each access point (ESA-RG 11). [1,5]
- Handles, door touch points, handrails, and elevator buttons should be sanitized multiple times during performances and work calls (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [1,5,7]
- Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 22-23). [1,7]
- **Catwalks, Grids, and Overhead Work Areas:**
 - Where possible access to the catwalks should include at least two methods. Each method will be assigned as either entrance or exit and used as such by all production staff and artists. [8]
 - Where this is not possible and only one access method is available, social distancing protocols should be put in place (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
 - Where possible all doors should be left open to avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (OSHA 14). [4]
 - Where this is not possible it is recommended that hand sanitizer stations be set up at each access point (ESA-RG 11). [1,5]
 - Handles, door touch points, handrails, and elevator buttons should be sanitized multiple times during performances and work calls (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [1,5,7]
 - Social distancing should be observed while working in these areas (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
 - Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 22-23). [1,7]
 - Reduce overhead work where possible or stagger timing (rig all points in advance) (IATSE 21). [7]
- **Small Storage / Prep rooms:**
 - Where possible all doors should be left open to avoid production staff and artists from having to touch handles and doors (OSHA 14). [4]
 - Where this is not possible it is recommended that hand sanitizer stations be set up at each access point (ESA-RG 11). [1,5]
 - Handles, door touch points, handrails, and elevator buttons should be sanitized multiple times during performances and work calls (ESA-RG 9; IATSE 12). [1,5,7]
 - Person limits should be set for each space to ensure social distancing (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
 - Only staff and artists that need access should be permitted (IATSE 22-23). [1,7]
- **Sinks:**
 - Any sinks backstage that can be made available for staff and artists to use should be. [1]
 - There should be soap at each sink for general use (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
 - Sink handles and faucets should be sanitized multiple times during the day (ESA-RG 9). [1,5]

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

- **Staff:**

- Staff and artists should wear a face covering at all times in backstage areas, as possible (ESA-RG 6; IATSE 10). [1,5,7]
- Staff and artists should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at least once an hour over the course of a work day (ESA-RG 5). [1,5]
- When necessary, work teams should be created that include a small number of people who routinely work together but keep their distance from everyone else (ESA-RG 5; IATSE 22-23, 27). [5,7]
- All workers should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth (ESA-RG 6; IATSE 13). [5,7]
- Workers should not leave the job site for the purposes of food and drink, where possible (IATSE 13). [7]
- No animals/pets should be allowed backstage, unless it is an ADA/CDA compliant service animal (IATSE 13). [7]
- All workers should be trained in the use and maintenance of the PPE needed to safely complete their work, protecting themselves at home, and their rights and responsibilities as individuals (OSHA 144; AMPTP 16; IATSE 10, 15). [1,4,6,7]

Technical Production Commission's COVID-19 Reopening Guides

Backstage Guidelines

Resources:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020 May 6). "Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)" <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020 May 13). "Symptoms of Coronavirus" <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020 June 28) "Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings" <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
4. Occupational Safety and Health Administration "Coronavirus: Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19" <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
5. Event Safety Alliance "Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide" (2020 May 11) <https://www.eventsafetyalliance.org/esa-reopening-guide>
6. Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers: Industry-Wide Labor Management Safety Committee Task Force. "Proposed Health and Safety Guidelines for Motion Picture, Television, and Streaming Productions During the COVID-19 Pandemic." (2020 June 1) <https://www.csatf.org/industry-wide-labor-management-safety-committee-task-force-whitepaper/>
7. International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. "IATSE Stagecraft Safety Committee Recovery Plan." (2020 July 22) https://www.iatse.net/sites/default/files/stagecraft_reopening_guidelines_final.pdf
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Covid-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings" (2020 July 9) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/office-buildings.html>

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