



THE SAFE WAY FORWARD

COVID-19 Safety Protocols: Individual Voiceover Recording

What You Need to Know

The health and safety of SAG-AFTRA members, as well as all other production personnel, is our highest priority. The evidence is clear: the safest way to work is to work from home. It's for this reason that states and local authorities have issued "safe at home" and "stay at home" orders to help protect people from COVID-19 infections. Therefore, we assert that voiceover performers must have the right to elect to work from personal or home studios, and that employers and producers shall take all reasonable steps to support performers in doing so, including the lending of equipment when needed, and provision of technical support for home recording.

These protocols are provided to substantially increase the safety of recording studios, but it is essential to acknowledge that the only completely safe place to record is at home.

These procedures are the result of consultation with medical, public health and industry professionals. As

our understanding of COVID-19 evolves, this protocol will be updated to reflect new information or best practices.

These protocols address five primary approaches for minimizing the potential for exposure to COVID-19:

- 1. Recording from Personal or Home Studios**
- 2. COVID-19 Testing**
- 3. Sanitation**
- 4. Physical Distancing**
- 5. Personal Protection**

Prior to the beginning of any non-home recording session, the studio COVID-19 compliance supervisor will be introduced, and their contact information provided to all performers.

1. Recording from Personal or Home Studios

- a. Performers must be permitted to record from personal or home studios, including with loaner equipment, if needed, unless the specific

technical requirements of the production make it impossible to do so.

- b. This includes multiple performer sessions recorded remotely but simultaneously, including but not limited to the use of technology solutions to provide studio control over remote sessions.
- c. For loaner equipment for home use, disinfect prior to using. Prevent equipment from changing hands as much as possible.
- d. Employers will provide technical support as needed to facilitate performers working from home.

2. Testing

- a. In accordance with SAG-AFTRA Protocols for Short Duration Productions, performers and non-crew individuals at the facility are to be tested for COVID infection with a viral (PCR) test no more than 48 hours prior to reporting to the studio, with results to be returned prior to start of work. Crew are to be tested in accordance with Zone B testing protocols, provided they do not interact directly with talent when talent is not wearing PPE. Antibody and antigen (serology) tests are not acceptable.
- b. As directed by production, employees will report to a designated testing lab, mobile testing unit or designated area for baseline test prior to the recording session.
- c. If baseline test is negative, advise production and report for recording session as scheduled.
- d. Employees are to follow studio protocol regarding responding to a health questionnaire and temperature checks.
- e. If the temperature check is within acceptable limits (not to exceed 100.4°) and there are no symptoms, the performer dons owned or issued PPE and proceeds to the recording session.
- f. If the temperature screen is greater than

acceptable limits, or symptoms are reported, the performer will be directed to return home until medically cleared to return to work or the individual is not symptomatic.

- g. Stay home if you feel sick and if an onset of symptoms develops while at work, report it immediately to production management.

3. Sanitation

- a. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Use paper towels when washing hands, not hand dryers. Dispose of all paper towels in pedal or motion sensor operated sanitary bins.
- b. Hand sanitizer can used with a minimum 60% alcohol content.
- c. Disposable, disinfecting wipes containing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved disinfectant, will be used so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use. These areas include:

All voiceover and audio booths.

- Pop filters
- Light switches
- Volume controls
- Headphones and their wires

All common area surfaces that could come in contact with individuals.

- All restroom facilities.
- Writing instruments used for signing documents.
- Equipment, including script stands and monitor.
- Scripts (laminated)
- Use disposable microphone covers that can be thrown away after each session.

- d.** All cleaning and sanitization is to be performed by individuals trained in COVID-19 sanitization.
- e.** Performers are allowed to use their own individual equipment, including but not limited to headphones, pop filters, tablets, etc., and should provide prior notice to the studio of their intention to do so.
- f.** Performers can request equipment sanitization be conducted in their presence to ensure the work space is sanitized.
- g.** Food items will be individually wrapped. All applicable local health department food handling regulations must be followed.
- h.** A UV-C wand may be used to disinfect electronic or other surfaces that are not conducive to using disinfectant wipes. These surfaces include, but not limited to:
 - Microphones
 - Keyboards
 - Headphones
 - Mouse
 - Script (paper)
- i.** A professional cleaning service with COVID-19 sanitation training will be engaged to clean all facilities daily.
- j.** Sanitation stations, hand sanitizer, and tissues will be visible and readily available in all areas of the recording studio.
- k.** Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If tissue is not available, cough/sneeze into elbow and immediately wash hands or use hand sanitizer.
- l.** Pop filter, wind screen, and foam pop filter over microphone – sanitize and replace after sessions. It is preferable to leave drying and allow any virus to die in accordance with CDC recommended period for the surface life of that particular material.
- m.** Portable air filtration units are to be strategically placed as close as possible to the point of aerosol generation. Such air filtration systems used should be HEPA systems if feasible, or must at a minimum have a MERV rating of 13 (i.e., filtration of particles as small as 0.3 microns, and minimum of 90% filtration of particles larger than 1 micron). The size and number of air filtration units depends on the studio size based on the air filtration system manufacturer’s recommendations. Studios that do not provide 100% filtration of air between users must remain vacant for a minimum of four hours* between each user.
- n.** All scripts will be on screen and not printed. If on screen is not possible, individual personal disposable copies will be provided and not shared or reused.
- o.** Ensure air flow from HVAC is not directed in a manner that could direct aerosols at personnel.
- p.** HVAC air intake dampers should be opened to maximize outside air coming into the building. UV-C HVAC sanitization systems are recommended for additional protection from circulation of the virus. Ionization systems are not recommended.
- q.** Facilities must maintain records of sanitization and air filtration procedures carried out, and make those records available to performers or SAG-AFTRA upon request.

* *The amount of time required may change in the future based on further scientific study or review.*

4. Physical Distancing

- a.** All holding areas will be adequate to accommodate six-foot spacing of seating front to back and side to side with adequate ventilation and conditioned air as appropriate to the weather.
- b.** Text/call upon arrival and wait in your car/outside until the studio allows entry.

- c. Increase physical space between performers and studio staff to a minimum of six feet. No studio staff are permitted to be closer to performers unless the nature of the activity requires them to do so and the staff person is wearing appropriate PPE.
- d. Performers should refrain from being at the studio until the scheduled session time. Contact with studio staff and fellow performers must be minimized throughout the day.
- e. No physical contact including shaking hands or hugging – even fist/elbow bumps are not allowed.
- f. Masks must be worn at all times unless talent is in the VO booth by themselves and performing on the microphone.
- g. All recording sessions will be conducted with each performer in an individual isolation booth.
- h. For group in-person recording sessions, please refer to SAG-AFTRA Protocols for Group Recording including Group ADR/Group Looping, published separately.
- i. Clients, director, or other staff besides the engineer will remotely connect into the session.
- j. Studio will stagger start times of sessions so that talent are not arriving at the same time.

5. Personal Protection

- a. PPE consisting of a mask and a face shield, to be worn by anyone giving instruction to the performers in close proximity (less than six feet).
- b. PPE must be worn and removed correctly.
- c. Meals should be eaten away from the recording studio.

These protocols may need to be adapted to meet the needs of a given recording session or studio facility. Required OSHA, COVID-19 base training

must be established based on these specific protocols. Additional amendments to these protocols may be needed as COVID-19 conditions change. All production personnel will need to collaborate and contribute to facilitate in recording safely, cautiously, and confidently.

Questions or concerns regarding the implementation of these protocols should be directed to the **SAG-AFTRA Voiceover Department at (323) 549-6815.**

Additional questions:
(855) SAG-AFTRA

To report to SAG-AFTRA issues regarding safety, call:

EMERGENCY HOTLINE
(844) SAFER SET / (844) 723-3773
24 hours, seven days a week

NON-EMERGENCY SAFETY LINE
(323) 765-2911, M-F, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. PT
(voicemail is available)