



As high-contact industries begin to reopen, the safety of all workers must be the top priority. In the commercial photography industry, where a large number of workers are freelance professionals, there is a unique risk to a vast number of individuals who must be in close contact with each other for long hours on set. The Freelancers Union insists that a set of essential safety and hygiene practices must be adhered to in all workplaces to protect the basic rights of each and every worker.

The data used for the creation of this protocol for the commercial photography industry was collected from an independent group of photography industry freelance workers, as well as the Facebook group “Think Tank.” Think Tank was created in March 2020 for freelance workers within the commercial photography sector to help them navigate work, finance, and life during COVID-19.

The group has 1,200+ members, consisting of freelance photographers, producers, stylists, models, actors and other on-camera talent, hair stylists (fashion, still life, food), makeup artists, nail technicians, digital techs, photographer assistants, production coordinators, set designers, location scouts and managers, production assistants, videographers, editors, and sound technicians, all of whom work in the commercial photography industries.

The administrators of Think Tank polled the group’s members about safety, asking for their insight on concerns and issues surrounding the industry in general and with regard to COVID-19. The administrators gathered ideas and suggestions for health and safety protocols that members felt were needed in order to feel secure returning to work for protection of themselves as well as their co-workers.

This resulting list of safety measures should be implemented as the industry standard for the sector to maintain the safety and health of its workers. Implementing these recommendations will allow freelance workers heading back to work on productions to feel as safe as possible during this unprecedented time.

The suggested protocols are defined by levels of exposure, and protocol suggestions vary depending on proximity to other workers. All on-camera talent are considered to be the most vulnerable during photoshoots, as they are not protected by any PPE while working and often work in enclosed spaces in pre-production during shooting and in post-production situations. Hair and makeup artists (vanities) and fashion stylists are the next high-risk group and are considered frontline workers.





While it is imperative for these workers to maintain proper PPE use during pre-production, shooting, and post-production work, due to the nature of their work, there is simply no possibility of following social distancing guidelines 100% of the time. That said, these recommended measures will help to mitigate risk and promote safety for all workers during those times.

For the health and safety of all workers, studios and production companies in the commercial photography sector should follow regular cleaning protocols as recommended by OSHA and the Board of Health.

Signed,

Think Tank

Freelancers Union



## **On-Set Safety Protocol for Photography Productions**

This protocol is for all crew on location, in photo studios, and in clients' in-house studios.

### **General Safety Guidelines:**

- Staggered call times for studios with multiple bays to accomplish two things:
  1. Allowing talent to travel during non-rush hour times.
  2. Reducing crew and talent in the space at any given time.  
Suggested every other set arrival time: 7 a.m. Second alternate set arrival time: 11 a.m.
- Temperature screening of all team members/crew/employees upon arrival to job site. No individuals will report to work if they are not feeling well, experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, or have a fever above 100.4°F.
- One dedicated team member to consistently and thoroughly disinfect surfaces, light switches, and all high-touch areas and surfaces during entire day. Hourly cleaning of high-risk surfaces to include but not limited to: workstations, doorknobs and handles, light switches, countertops, restrooms, lighting, cameras, tech equipment, keyboards, touchscreens of any kind, extension cords, chairs.
- All non-talent individuals must have masks on for the duration of the job, with more PPE required for hair, makeup, wardrobe or tailor departments.
- All crew and talent **MUST** notify production if they have traveled between states or out of the country within 14 days of the shoot. Under no circumstances may someone appear on set if this criteria is not met.
- Clorox wipes, 70% alcohol, gloves, plastic face shields, and masks to be provided by studio for each team member and staff within each studio or production. Disinfectants must meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19). This is stated on the product label.
- Fresh airflow in studios must be created whenever possible by leaving windows open. Those who get cold easily should dress

accordingly.

- Client will provide crew with individual boxed meals that are prepared using safety guidelines from the CDC. No open catering or loose cutlery.
- If travel is necessary for crew members, client must provide them with a car service for short distances. When flying is necessary, client must consult with crew members about their preferences for flying and safety measures. Crew members should be consulted about their safety preferences regarding accommodations.
- No phone, desk, tabletop, equipment, or tool sharing among crew members at any time.
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or arm WITH YOUR MASK ON.
- NO contact, handshakes, hugs, kisses, fist bumps or toe bumps. NO TOUCH contact among crew.
- Always keep your distance and kindly ask others to do so.

## **Crew Departments:**

### **Wardrobe**

- Models will re-hang their samples on hangers so the stylist can touch just the hanger rather than items that have been on the model's body.
- Models will be asked to provide for each booking a small kit of prop items to prevent sharing from the stylist kit or fashion closet, including: nipple covers, strapless bra, beige elastic-strap tank, white layering tank not ribbed, black dress pant, dark denim, white denim. This will eliminate the use of a fashion closet in ecomm studios.
- Stylist will wipe down all inner soles of shoes before and after use with 70% alcohol.
- Stylist and vanities department may not walk on set together. Only one artist may touch up at a time.
- Client/studio will launder prop clothes and provide duplicates to mitigate cross-contamination.

- SARS-CoV-2 can live on cloth for up to two days. Wardrobe should be quarantined upon unpacking or before shot again.

## Hair

- Hairstylist station is safely distanced from all other stations.
- Hairstylist will have Barbicide disinfectant spray or liquid for use on all combs, clips and small tools that will not be ruined by soaking in it.
- Larger equipment may be placed in a portable UVC light box (either artist- or client-supplied) for disinfection.
- Large equipment like irons and blow dryers can be sprayed directly with disinfectants without harm, such as LYSOL, CLOROX, GERMICIDE or 70% alcohol.
- All equipment used on an individual model must be sanitized immediately after completing said model. Station will be sanitized immediately, followed by hairstylist's own hands to be washed with soap and water after styling is completed.
- **In preparation for additional talent:** Sanitization of the station will be required before their arrival. This will include the tabletop touch surfaces and chairs for each station.
- Hairstylist will have mask, and face shield on at all times while working on model(s).
- The seat or chair model is in will be positioned away from the hair station so there is ample room to move and avoid getting too close to sanitized station.
- **The hair station will be treated as a sanitized zone.** No one will be allowed to go near, touch anything on, or place anything on the station. Use of electrical outlets by anyone other than hair department is prohibited. No other team member is permitted use, touch or move any styling tools, nor approach the hair station.
- **Kit rental fee:** This will cover extra items needed post-COVID-19 to maintain safety standard for both artists and models during the preparation process. The fee will cover such items as hand-held face shields for model use during hair product application as well as hair styling; a flip-down face shield for artist protection while working; pulse

oximeter and no-touch thermometer; extra individual palettes; single-use palette knives; antibacterial spray and Barbicide for hair tools; UV disinfecting boxes; single-use station covers; single-use mascara wands, eyeshadow applicators, and lip brushes; single-use eye drops; and equipment needed for multi-model sets, such as individual trays, boxes, and/or bins required to hold all product for a single model's use on set. Each model will require a dedicated setup for the duration of the shoot session and must be labeled accordingly.

## Makeup

- **Limit Talent/Vanities crew in workspace:** Time frame for model arrivals for preparation to be staggered to limit exposure within the beauty room. If separate hair and makeup teams are used, if possible, have each set up in different spaces to limit exposure.
- If working in the close confine of a motorhome, only one talent at a time in the trailer with essential-only beauty crew. Crew members who do not need to be in the motorhome should not be in the space before, during, or after beauty crew is preparing talent. At no time should non-beauty crew members be in the motorhome to decrease close proximity exposure.
- **During makeup applications:** Client will ensure that no one is allowed within 6 feet of the makeup artist station. Makeup direction will be discussed via email or video chat prior to the shoot to limit exposure time for both makeup artist and model. No other team member is permitted to use, touch, or move any makeup and tools. No crew members will be allowed near the makeup station during the entirety of the shoot day.
- **Limited on-set crew:** A step-on, step-off approach with talent on set to ensure only one vanities crew member is on set with talent at any given time for touchups, changes, and on-set supervision to limit proximity and exposure. PPE such as a flip-down face shield, mask, and/or protective gloves to be worn at all times when working on talent on set.
- Makeup artist will wear studio/client-provided face mask and plastic face shield during makeup application and throughout the day to ensure safety. If client is unable to supply, makeup artist will bill back all PPE expenses.

- **Kit rental fee:** This will cover extra items needed post-COVID-19 to maintain safety standard for both artists and models during the preparation process. The fee will cover such items as hand-held face shields for model use during eye makeup application as well as hair styling; a flip-down face shield for artist protection while working; pulse oximeter and no-touch thermometer; extra individual palettes; single-use palette knives; antibacterial spray and Barbicide for hair tools; UV disinfecting boxes; single-use station covers; single-use mascara wands, eyeshadow applicators, and lip brushes; single-use eye drops; and equipment needed for multi-model sets, such as individual trays, boxes, and/or bins required to hold all product for a single model's use on set. Each model will require a dedicated setup for the duration of the shoot session and must be labeled accordingly.

## Photo & Techs

- Client/studio will provide PPE, including mask and gloves, for digital tech, art director, and photographer.
- No sharing of computer mouse.
- Separate keyboard and screen for art directors/clients. If possible, create a remote station for client/CD/AD to maintain safe distancing.
- Separate monitors for hair and makeup department to avoid congestion and maintain social distancing.
- For the exchange of hard drives, the exterior of the drives will be wiped with a disinfecting wipe and they will be packaged while wearing gloves and mask. The cardboard boxes the drives are originally packaged in are easily cleaned and recyclable and can be used for this purpose.

## Tailors

- Tailor's table, sewing machine, and tools will be wiped down several times throughout the day with rubbing alcohol.
- Tailors will have their own station, spaced safely away from everyone just as with wardrobe, hair, and makeup stations.

- **The tailoring station will be treated as a sanitized zone.** No other team members will be allowed to go near, touch anything on, or place anything on the station. Use of electrical outlets by anyone other than tailoring department is prohibited. No other team member is permitted to use, touch, or move any tools in the tailoring station.
- If fitting on a live model, tailors will be required to wear full PPE provided by client/studio: mask, face shield, gloves, disposable robe, and shoe sleeves.
- Tailors will not be permitted to take any work home.
- Ideally, fittings and alterations will begin on wardrobe prep day. A morning try-on day will follow for any necessary adjustments. When tailor has completed their work, they will leave for the day to reduce prolonged exposure.

### **Set/props department**

- The location must be made available to the set team the day before the shoot to minimize interaction between the full crew and set/prop team.
- Non-prop department crew members will not be permitted to touch, move, or assemble any props for any reason.
- Tools, i.e., pins, batting, and tissue, will be provided by the stylist to reduce touch and cross-contamination. No other team member is permitted to use, touch, or move any prop styling tools at any time.
- Extra time will be allotted to properly clean work area and all equipment.
- Prop crew will wear client/studio-provided PPE (gloves, mask) at all times during setup, shooting, and post- production.

### **Still-life stylists**

- Stylists will provide their own tools and kit.
- Lucite surfaces to be cleaned with 70% alcohol at the start and end of each workday and are only to be touched by the still-life stylist.

- Foam core surfaces to be swapped out at the end of each day and marked with a Post-it to be quarantined for three days before they can be touched by another stylist.
- Product should be touched by as few hands as possible. Product will be quarantined for at least 24 hours prior to being handled by stylist.
- The stylist will wipe down c-stands at the start and end of each day with 70% rubbing alcohol and paper towel. If anyone other than the stylist touches the c-stand during the day, it will be cleaned again immediately.
- Stylist will provide all pins and stuffing to reduce contact with others. Kit fee to be discussed as needed regarding these tools.