**Festival Organisers Protocols for COVID 19**

* **Risk Assessment**

Your Group should undertake a risk assessment for all activities, where you record the steps that will be put in place to prevent exposure to the virus. You should ensure that you have received and read the assessment in advance. You should use this in conjunction with the venues own Risk Assessment which you should request a copy of.

* **Protocol Document**

You should provide a protocol document for all teams prior to their performance date. This will set out the general rules and guidance on what you require all participants to do to reduce the risk of infection.

* **Monitoring**

An important part of the measures that a festival should introduce is monitoring, to help ensure that people are well and not showing symptoms of the infection, and to therefore prevent the virus spreading. Festivals can do this in several ways, which may include the following:

* **Contact Details**

All participants should complete a contact form to include their name, address, email, telephone and date of attendance as part of the governments Track and trace guidelines. (We suggest this is done at the stage door where there should be a sanitising station and where the following can also take place)

* **Self-declaration forms**

You may ask Groups/participants to complete a self-declaration form to confirm that they have not shown any symptoms of Covid-19 within the last 7–14 days. As per Government guidelines.

* **Temperature Checks**

Temp checks can be undertaken with the use of a contactless or disposable thermometer. (available on Amazon from £9 - £20)

* **Social Distancing**

Distancing and measures to minimise the amount of close contact are some of the most effective ways of reducing the likelihood of spreading the virus. Festivals should put rules and controls in place to support this approach, which participants will be expected to follow. Rules may vary for each festival, based on the specifics of the location you are in, and they should consider the following:

* **Backstage**

Designated person should meet 1 representative of the team at the loading bay or appropriate area. They will then be informed where their set should be unloaded and what performers should do with props and costumes.

The team will take full responsibility for unloading their own set and should not touch any other teams belongings. This will be monitored by the stage manager. A sanitising station will be available in the wings.

A designated person per team will be allocated to liaise between a team and front of house/backstage crew. This will prevent too many people moving around the building.

Keeping Dressing Rooms and Backstage Areas clean and tidy. As the virus is transmitted through droplets when people exhale, these droplets can then land on surfaces and, depending on the type of surface, remain there for some time. To help prevent this, Festivals should ensure that surfaces in working areas are regularly and effectively cleaned, potentially using disinfectant or sanitisers. It may well be that cleaning staff are employed to sanitise areas on the festivals behalf. It remains the teams responsibility to keep their areas clean and tidy whilst they are occupying them.

* **Limiting personal items**

Festivals should ask teams to limit the number of personal items that they bring into the venue from home. Where this is unavoidable, they should make sure that they are appropriately washed and sanitised, and stored away when not in use.

* **Using personal equipment**

Teams will be required to bring in their own personal equipment, such as tools, Make Up, Costumes to limit the need for people to share these across a production. Where this is the case, again ensure that these are sanitised before use and. Should they need to use a piece of equipment after someone else has handled it, they should sanitise it beforehand. The Festival/Venue should provide sanitiser at multiple locations across the venue.

* **Refreshments**

You should ask or encourage teams to bring in their own reusable drinks bottle, for their own personal use only. They should keep this bottle sanitised regularly to reduce any risk of viral spread.

Avoid offering backstage drinks etc and do not use a shared Greenroom. Front of house refreshments will obviously be served based on the venues own protocols.

* **After Performance:**

All team members will be allocated a specific seat which will be booked in accordance with the Government's guidelines at the time. Team members should not go and greet members of the audience etc but go directly to their seats (dependent on guidelines)

At the end of the evening teams will be asked to once again send a designated person to meet the stage manager who will inform then when they can come backstage to strike their set back on to their van. Cast will also be able to empty their dressing rooms at this stage to avoid congestion in backstage areas. Teams should not go backstage after they have entered the auditorium unless called to do so. In case of emergency a marshal will be on hand to escort a participant backstage if needed.

Face to face meetings with the adjudicator will be at the adjudicators discretion and with no more than two members of the team. Each team will be called individually to meet with the adjudicator.

* **Awards Night.**

Awards will be announced by the adjudicator and a platform party of no more than three. On receiving an award one representative will come to the stage where their trophy will be placed on a small table for collection. They should not shake hands.

One representative should sign for their trophy immediately afterwards at a table at the side of the stage.

* **Local cleaning**

Whilst the venue may have a dedicated person or team to undertake cleaning, it will still be the festivals responsibility to ensure they are sanitising personal areas, dressing room etc on a regular basis, paying particular attention to frequent points of contact such as door handles and any shared equipment, including backstage/wing areas.

* **Hygiene**

When entering or leaving the area always look to wash your hands and sanitise on a regular basis. This is particularly important if you have been in other areas or in close contact with others. Use signage to remind Teams and organising company members to wash hands regularly.

* **Sanitising equipment and personal items**

Teams should ensure their own equipment is appropriately sanitised before and after use.  Avoid sharing tools, Make up, scripts etc and equipment where they can. If they have no alternative, they should ensure that these have also been sanitised appropriately both before and after use. This extends to personal items such as phones, chargers or iPads.

* **One way systems and pinch points**

To prevent close contact at pinch points, such as entry and exit routes, festivals/venues may ask participants to follow queueing control systems to help maintain distancing. These systems will also help to monitor the number of people in areas to ensure that safe capacities are not exceeded.

* **Emergency procedures**

You should also bear in mind that if other incidents or emergencies occur on your production, you should always prioritise overall safety. This might mean temporarily overlooking Covid-19-related measures, where relevant. For example, in the case of a fire, break-in or accident, people do not have to stay at a prescribed distance from each other if this is unsafe.

**Additional Things to think about:**

Do you have enough dressing rooms per team if not you might consider 2 plays per night rather than 3 to avoid sharing dressing rooms. If this is unavoidable dressing rooms will need to be cleaned down between occupancy. The two teams should not be in the room at the same time.

Consider having longer intervals to give more time for the audience and for teams to take toilet breaks and to enable separate set up and striking of sets.