Advice, guidelines and support addressing the COVID-19 crisis

On 12 March 2020, the Estonian government declared an emergency situation in Estonia until 17 May 2020.

We have collected information from the government and the Health Board and put together these guidelines to be followed during the Covid-19 outbreak in order to, despite the current circumstances, maintain a working film industry whilst preventing the spread of the virus.

Please bear in mind, these guidelines are not intended to provide a solution for all types of productions - rather its aim is to assist in the preparation of the infection protection plan for each production.

It’s above all important to maintain common sense and a sensible and caring attitude in all circumstances.

**Current status of the curve can be followed** [here](#).
**Official information about COVID-19 in Estonia can be seen** [here](#).

Production companies have to comply with the Government’s guidelines. It is imperative to enforce and provide necessary hygiene requirements and social distancing measures to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. The producer is responsible for preventing the risk of infection and they can also delegate these tasks to an infection control officer.

Each crew member has a responsibility to keep up to date with the safety measures put into effect by the producer and the current rules set by the Health Board.

- Starting from **June 19**, the government has decided to replace the 2+2 rule with a **requirement to disperse people**. This means that a safe distance between people must continue to be maintained, but the state no longer requires compliance with the 2+2 rule.
- Reinforced hygiene measures
- Please use masks and hand sanitisers and provide them for your team
- If you suspect you might be infected, definitely stay at home until recovery (minimum 14 days)

**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

Temporary restrictions apply when entering Estonia and crossing the internal and external Schengen borders.

The borders of Estonia will be reopened from **June 1** to passengers arriving from European countries. Estonia will admit people with no symptoms arriving from the **European Union, the members of the Schengen area and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.**
Citizens and residents of Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland will be able to enter Estonia without having to undergo a 14-day quarantine period upon arrival.

Upon arrival in Estonia, a person must be in quarantine for 14 days if they have arrived from a country where the number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 inhabitants has been more than 15 in the last 14 days. Travelers from Sweden, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Romania, Luxembourg and Portugal must still undergo a period of quarantine.

Information on countries and quarantine requirements is updated every Friday on the kriis.ee/en and vm.ee/en websites.

Entry into the European Union is currently closed to third-country nationals, including the United States, until June 15 (this date can be extended). At that time, you can only enter the EU, including Estonia, with a special permit if you have a justified and unavoidable need. The validity of the trip is assessed and special permits are issued by the Police and Border Guard Board in Estonia. If you are one or two people who inevitably need to travel now, it is worth applying for a special permit. An exemption can be applied for on the basis of the information on the PBGB’s website.

When staying and working in Estonia, it is necessary to follow all the health requirements and restrictions in force at that time.

For more information, please see here.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR FILM PRODUCTION

- Production companies shall assess the precautionary measures to be taken on set against coronavirus spread before shooting, thus, taking a collective responsibility to eliminate risks of infection on set.
- In pre-production, evaluate the risks and plan ahead to keep the crew safe. Communication is key; let everybody in the team know the precautions they must follow. Adapt accordingly to the changing situation.
- The number of crew members on set should be kept to a minimum. Keep in mind the location and its size whilst planning the shoot.
- Appoint an infection control officer. Presumably, this could be added as one of the duties of the location manager, who would be the contact person regarding all inquiries about coronavirus and the precautionary measures taken against it on set. They need to provide and make sure disinfectants, protective masks, hand washing facilities and illustrated instructions are always readily available on set.
- In case of suspicion or symptoms associated with the COVID-19 disease, it is forbidden to come on set. An unwell person must stay home. (They can return to work after a 14-day quarantine period, on the condition that they have fully recovered - no fever or respiratory symptoms. The infected crew member must contact their GP.)
• You must inform the production company immediately if you are COVID-19 positive.
• After the positive diagnosis has been confirmed, the workplace and tools used by the infected crew member shall be disinfected in their entirety. Determine the people who came into close contact with the infectious person when they were already symptomatic. Those in close contact need to self-isolate at home for two weeks and observe if they develop any symptoms. Other crew members can continue their work but keep an eye on their health as well.
• Even if a crew member was not diagnosed with COVID-19, all the other crew members must monitor their health for 14 days.
• Opt to have pre-production and meetings online via Zoom, Skype etc. If for some reason this is not possible then maintain social distancing and hygiene measures, keeping with the 2+2 rule.
• Keep in mind the members of the risk group, the elderly, and people with chronic diseases, whilst planning as they are more prone to exhibit the severe forms of the disease and thus, need extra precautions.
• Masks and hand sanitisers: Although masks are not mandatory at this time, production must provide masks for all people on set. Their use is strongly recommended for interior spaces, where it is difficult to consistently maintain social distancing.
• Maintain hygiene on set. This includes frequent cleaning of contact surfaces.
• Make-up and costume department areas should be separated. When being in close contact with the actors, protective masks are required, and it is also recommended to wear disposable gloves. If possible, only one crew member at a time should work with an actor on a specific task. Make sure the workplace does not get crowded with people.
• Outdoor locations are preferred to minimise the risk of spreading the disease. All interior locations must have good ventilation.
• Try to prepare as much as possible ahead of the shoot (e.g. set decorations, lighting) to avoid excess movement of a lot of people at once.
• Avoid printouts (scripts, call-sheets, other documents). Maintain and distribute all production documentation digitally.
• Consider remote shoot possibilities.
• Catering must follow reinforced hygiene measures. Whenever possible, food on set should be provided in individual containers. Maintain a 2-meter distance from one another during mealtimes.
• Follow the Health Board’s prognosis and the national regulations.

Virke - Film Producers’ Association, the Norwegian Film Workers Association, Norwegian Film Directors, the Writers Guild and the Norwegian Actors Guild have compiled comprehensive guidelines where they have specified the code of conduct for each stage of production and give particular instructions based on the respective requirements of each department. We strongly recommend reading their guide when planning your shoot. The guide is available to read here.

European countries and film institutions are providing technical and organizational measures in order to help productions restart in safety during the global emergency. The guide is available here.
Stay safe and have solidarity in order to avoid contracting the virus and infecting others around you!

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact us: commissioner@filmi.ee

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The document is available on EFI’s website.