
SVG[®] COVID-19

SPORTS PRODUCTION

OPERATIONS GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the SVG COVID-19 Sports Production Operations Guide. In early April, SVG held a series of meetings with industry leaders to discuss the return of sports production during the coronavirus pandemic. This guide is a result of those conversations. It is designed to provide guidance for those who may have questions about how to approach some of the challenges that our industry is facing, given the requirements for safety protocols, social distancing, and more. Please note that this guide is simply a starting point for your own organization's internal discussions, as we are well aware that the wide range of sport productions cannot be served by one document. In addition, please stay tuned for additional sections to be added in the coming weeks.

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PART 1: PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This section offers recommendations on minimizing staff, working in small groups, managing runners, and more.

1.1 What is the first step to be taken with respect to staff planning for a production?

The goal is to minimize the number of people who need to be onsite.

- Contact the league/team/federation/organizer to discover any limits to the number of personnel allowed onsite. This also applies to off-venue studio locations, etc.
- Evaluate the size of the production (cameras, replay, support personnel).
- Evaluate whether it is possible for people to work on the show from remote locations.
- Keep in mind that there may also be additional people onsite to ensure that safety protocols are practiced. The added headcount will impact the size of the production team.
- Develop a plan in case key personnel get ill. That can range from having out-of-town personnel staged at a local hotel to having a list of available local professionals who can step in if needed. Another option is to know which production personnel onsite can take on different job duties in the event of an emergency.

1.2 Can you explain the concept of having a production team work within a bubble or a working group?

In the past, working groups were often created to make transport easier, create a sense of unity, and make it easier for people to collaborate on a task. But, during the coronavirus pandemic, small groups working inside a "bubble" help confine any outbreak to as few people as possible.

- Each bubble is assigned its own dedicated work areas, rest areas, catering areas, toilets, transportation, and more.
- If a crew member falls ill or exhibits symptoms, small groups make it much easier for medical personnel to trace contacts, test individuals involved, and contain the outbreak and thus potentially save not only the production but also lives.

1.3 How many people should be in a bubble?

Simply put, as few as possible. There are key considerations: overall size of crew and compound, number of trucks and production areas, ability to accommodate support facilities for multiple bubbles, size of the venue, broadcast center, studio, etc.

The number of people in the bubble depends on the mathematical equation of square feet of production space divided by 6 sq. ft. per staffer (according to CDC social-distancing regulations).

1.4 Should the bubbles be defined by grouping people working in the same confined space or by job duty?

The bubble should be defined by where they are working, NOT by job duty. For example, if the A1 and A2 are in different trucks, they are in different bubbles even though both are working audio.

It is also recommended that, if possible, crew members handling a similar function — such as replay or graphics — have some geographical diversity within the compound (or, better yet, via remote access), which limits the risk of an outbreak's taking down an entire department.

There will also be broader limitations on movement. For example, some may be limited to the venue/field of play, others to the compound, others to the studio.

1.5 How can you tell if someone is in a bubble?

It is important that it is easy to determine what a person's bubble visually and from a distance so that extra social distancing can be maintained for people in different bubbles. Recommendations include:

- Color-coded wristbands as well as color-coded credentials, both of which must be worn at all times. The wristband must also be worn outside the compound in social situations, meetings at hotels, etc.
- Different-colored shirts/jackets/hats/vests. Though more expensive, this makes it much easier for someone to easily be identified.

1.6 How can you tell what areas of the compound and venue are considered one bubble vs. another?

Each bubble's facilities (work area, catering, toilets, break room) must be easily identified by color coding and signage.

Other recommendations include:

- Colored banners and flags
- Zones marked on the ground with chalk, paint, etc.

1.7 Can a person in one bubble talk face-to-face with a person in another bubble?

The first option should be via intercom, radio, phone, text, and email. It is recommended that social distancing be 6 ft. and facial masks be worn. Staffers working within the same group are advised to stick to CDC guidelines of 6 ft. minimum distance. And, again, facial masks must be worn at all times.

1.8 Can a person in one bubble enter the physical workspace of another bubble?

No.

1.9 How can people in different bubbles communicate in the event of a work emergency?

In the case of an emergency, consult the onsite production manager for best steps and procedures.

1.10 Does each bubble need a separate place for eating meals, separate toilets, and separate wash areas?

Yes. Catering areas can be shared, but mealtimes should be staggered.

1.11 Does the bubble need to extend outside the compound and venue? For example, can bubbles come together at the hotel or share transportation to and from the venue?

It is important that the bubble mentality follow crew members wherever they

go. It is also recommended that, when off premises, crew members maintain quarantine guidelines and avoid public spaces, bars, restaurants, and other public places.

1.12 Do you recommend hiring personnel to do nothing but monitor compliance with guidelines and rules? Is one person enough, or are more needed? And is that number based on size of compound or number of people?

Yes, it is recommended that additional staff be hired not only to monitor behavior but also to be an ultimate authority with respect to discipline and conflict resolution. These people should be free of other duties (such as engineering or production responsibilities) because the position is important and requires full-time availability and focus.

1.13 Should a nurse or doctor be in the compound along with a quarantine area in the case of emergency?

Many broadcasters will provide additional medical personnel given the severity of the current crisis. If that is not possible, the venue's medical staff is an option. But contact the venue personnel to ensure that the production team will be able to access in-venue medical facilities, because there may be strict limitations on movement.

1.14 What happens if someone gets sick? Do they immediately leave, or are they quarantined? What about others exposed to that person?

Broadcasters, production teams, leagues, and venues are developing their own comprehensive guidelines for what to do if someone falls ill. Many rules will follow CDC guidelines, but others will be a variation.

MANAGING RUNNERS

1.15 Runners are an important part of a production, and their role is often to be able to go anywhere and do anything. How will their duties change given social-distancing guidelines?

Runners will be more important than ever, and the way they work will change drastically. Recommendations include:

- Have runners dedicated to each bubble
- Give them more-specific job duties so that their movement is more restricted. For example, a runner who goes to local stores and shops should not enter the compound.
- Consider a higher level of PPE for those who may leave the compound or have more interaction and exposure to the outside world.

HOLDING CAMERA/PRODUCTION MEETINGS

1.16 Can in-person production meetings be held?

It is recommended that all production meetings be held via comms.

WEATHER DELAYS

1.17 What is the protocol for protecting staff during a weather delay?

Each production will have a different set of rules pertaining to weather delays.

If space is an issue, one recommendation is to ask production personnel to wait out the weather delay in their respective cars.