

PART 5: THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

This section is designed to provide general guidance to third-party production entities that may arrive onsite and need additional guidance for fitting into the overall safety plan, steps they need to take to ensure they are able to operate at full capacity, and more.

5.1 What type of companies involved in a sports production are considered a third-party?

More than ever, all third-party providers should consider themselves part of the core team. This means a number of things:

- Adhering to the safety protocols laid out for the production
- Understanding compound entry/exit guidelines
- Understanding that testing of a variety of types will be done
- Possibly signing various waivers with respect to self-monitoring, pre-event activities, and more. They may be required not only by the production but also by the venue, league, team, and more.

In addition, subcontractors, if there are any, will also be expected to adhere to the same policies and guidelines.

5.2 What steps should a third-party take prior to an event to ensure that they adhere to any travel and/or transport guidelines?

The previous ways of traveling prior to an event are no longer the status quo. Providers contracted for a job should ensure that the client shares all of the relevant quarantine requirements, testing requirements, and screening requirements.

The client will most likely be able to share comprehensive guidelines so that the third-party team can be fully prepared to work on the production and be an important part of the show. But it is critical that this information be provided as soon as possible, because the protocols sometimes need to begin days before the actual event.

Also, comprehensive details on travel from home to the event should be provided.

5.3 What should a third-party vendor expect in the way of testing and/or changes to pre-COVID-19 protocols, such as entering and exiting the compound and venue?

Because each client will have different protocols and methods, third-party vendors should have a clear understanding of how the operations will take place and, at the least, should be prepared to undergo a temperature check and possibly an antibody test. In certain situations, third-party teams may need to be not only tested but also quarantined while awaiting test results and should expect to sign a release for sharing test results with management onsite.

In general:

- Ensure that travel arrangements allow for testing and waiting for results. Contact the client and make sure timing requirements are understood.
- Subcontractors need to be made aware of timing and testing requirements.

5.4 By the time a third-party company arrives onsite, its personnel, facilities, and equipment often have been in transit. What kind of travel details should a third-party company provide so that the client has an understanding of possible exposure and risks?

As many details as possible should be provided to the client, and travel events that could lead to accidental exposure should be tracked. Tandem drivers should keep track of things like rest stops, meals, etc. If team members have taken a commercial flight, the client might require additional days of quarantine, and, if it does, travel plans should be adjusted accordingly.

Also, extra buffer days should be planned in case of delays due to travel, testing, etc.

Third-party vendors may be given a staggered arrival time to maximize safety and ensure that arriving entities can be handled properly.

If equipment is shipped with safety seals, it must arrive with the seals intact. If they aren't, the equipment should be properly cleaned and sanitized.

5.5 Does a third-party provider need to provide extra crew/staff onsite in case someone falls ill?

Every entity involved with the production is providing additional staff and crew in the event of crew-member illness. Third-party vendors should contact the client to see what requirements are with respect to backup crew and personnel. Those individuals are likely to be quarantined in a hotel in the event they are required.

5.6 If the third-party provider's guidelines don't match those of the client or the compound-management team has a third guideline, which must be followed?

To ensure that everyone is operating under the same guidelines, the client's protocols and best practices supersede all other guidelines. Third-party guidelines that exceed the client's (are more conservative, require greater distancing or more cleaning) should be adhered to, but client guidelines should be considered the minimum acceptable practices. Again, those protocols should be understood as early as possible so that third-party employees are not denied entry and/or are required to leave.

5.7 How can a third-party bring in a repair technician or have refueling take place if guidelines may, at first glance, prevent someone from entering the compound without comprehensive screening and testing?

In an emergency situation, steps can be taken to allow support personnel to come in without being a risk to the production. First, they should expect to be subject to all testing and PPE protocols and should expect to be delayed in entering compound. Alert the production-management team to the possibility of new personnel's entering the compound or venue and find out the steps to take for them to be in compliance.

5.8 If a third-party has multiple staffers, do they need to arrive in separate vehicles, or can they travel together?

It is recommended that staffers arrive in their own rental vehicle or car, but production management can provide accepted transportation options.

5.9 When a third-party delivers equipment to a compound, what steps should be taken to ensure that the equipment is clean?

All equipment is required to have an inspection sticker indicating the date it was cleaned by the supplier. If possible, suppliers should provide extra cleaning kits with each shipment specific to the equipment type.