

# **Covid -19 Safety in rehearsals and shows**

**This document is created as of March 9th 2021; and updated July 5th 2021, and Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 2021. It is likely to be amended on a regular basis. It will remain in place until both the pandemic ends and we feel that all significant risk is past.**

**We are likely to voluntarily keep more safety procedures in place for longer than is the legal minimum, and we ask all actors, crew, volunteers, and visitors, to help keep everyone safe.**

**Additional guidance is expected to be found at**

**[https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm#cleaning\\_hygiene](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm#cleaning_hygiene)**

## **Return to venues**

We returned to face-to-face rehearsals in August 2021; However it should be borne in mind that the vaccinations only reduce the risk of serious covid illness, they do not eliminate it, and that some people may not have been vaccinated for health or personal reasons.

## **Arrival**

We are aware that not everyone has the possibility to install track and trace on their digital device. Therefore, to keep details in one place, we will have a sign-in book. All persons crossing the threshold/ entering the rehearsal/performance space will be asked to sign in, and out with their name, time, and if a visitor, provide a method of contact in case we need to contact them about exposure to covid.

We expect each cast and crew member, volunteer and visitor to use a lateral flow test before attending rehearsal or performances. While we do not expect people to disclose the results directly, and we operate on an honour system, we take the fact that they have attended the rehearsal and signed in, as a declaration of a negative test.

In the event that a cast or crew member has run out of lateral flow tests at home, we retain a box at the rehearsal hall and travelling with us to shows. Anyone needing to use one of the tests is asked to attend 30 mins earlier than the call time, in order to allow for use of the test and for the test result to show up.

As a second line of defence, we also have a handheld temperature checker, to scan all persons entering the rehearsal or performance area. This is non-invasive and non-contact.

## **Visitors**

We will not permit unexpected visitors to “pop in” or “nip through the rehearsal room as a shortcut” especially during this pandemic.

If a person who is not one of our cast or crew, needs to enter the rehearsal or backstage space (IE a member of staff at a performance venue), we do ask that they either wear a mask unless medically exempt, or have done a lateral flow test.

If a person who has visited us, subsequently finds that they have tested positive for Covid-19, then they are required to inform us, so that we can in turn inform everyone who was present at the time, so that they can test, and if required, isolate themselves for the required time.

Actors, stage crew, visitors, and volunteers, who are ill, are asked to not attend in person. There will be no penalty for non-attendance if the person concerned is ill, or isolating, as long as they have let us know. This will be deemed a completely acceptable (and encouraged) unavoidable reason for missing rehearsals at short notice.

## **Venue hygiene**

The director/ producer will be checking all kitchen and toilet facilities at rehearsal and show venues, prior to cast arrival, for cleanliness, and if in doubt, the facilities will be cleaned ahead of everyone else's arrival by a designated crew member or company director, wearing appropriate PPE.

This is because our rehearsal and performance spaces are shared workspaces, also used by other people and organisations.

All cast and crew are encouraged to bring their own mug from home for tea/coffee (again due to shared facilities), and to be responsible for washing & drying their own mug / plate using supplied detergent.

## **Advice from Equity (as relevant to us) shared to Equity Directors Committee Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 2021, obtained by Laura Jury, committee member.**

Daily lateral flow testing prior to entering the performance venue/ rehearsal venue

Increasing ventilation in backstage areas

The re-blocking of shows to avoid kissing and/or face to face singing

Limiting the numbers of people in each dressing room, with nobody sharing a dressing room with the person whose role they cover

Masks to be provided by the producer,

Masks to be worn in all areas at all times when not rehearsing/ on stage (especially covers venue staff entering a performance/ rehearsal area, will also apply to visitors.)

Confirmation that company members with symptoms of covid should not enter the workplace and will not be pressured into working when they are unwell

### **Santizer**

We reserve the right to request that hand sanitizer is used by all cast and crew on arrival to the rehearsal or performance space. We will supply santizer from the company funds though people are welcome to bring their own.

### **If ill**

If a cast or crew member is ill with anything which may be infectious, they are asked not to come into rehearsals where they will come into contact with other people.

### **Rehearsals & performances**

Shows will not involve kissing or similar contact. Affection between characters can just as well be shown by other expression like the holding of hands. Hand sanitiser (supplied) should be used before and after such scenes.

### **Visitors**

We will not be permitting drop-in visitors. Visitors who will be permitted must be visiting in sole pursuance of their job, eg chaperones, regional or national trade union representatives, carers, police, medical staff, show/venue bookers, journalists, etc, and they must be expected ahead of time. All visitors will be advised of, and required to comply with our usual safety rules.

“Do not disturb” signage to that effect will be placed on rehearsal venue doors where we sometimes get unexpected people “pop in” to see what we are doing/ who we are (we rehearse in a community centre so sometimes people walk in looking to see if we are a social club or a coffee morning), or to avoid using the separate entrance for church worship upstairs. Under our covid-safety rules, such persons will not be permitted to enter unless they are experiencing an emergency.

### **Ventilation**

Where possible, doors or windows will be kept open to ensure good ventilation, or failing that, air conditioning used.

### **Shared workspaces**

As we work in spaces also used by other groups of people, we will take especial care to clean and disinfect the space after our use. This will require designated people from our

group to disinfect all surfaces touched or handled by other groups as well. We expect this of other groups using the space before us, and will follow the same procedure afterwards.

### **Handwashing**

All spaces in which we work will have multiple handwashing facilities, as well as the provision of hand sanitizer.

### **Costumes**

Individual costumes will be stored as usual in “character bags” in our community centre cupboard but will be sealed in separate bags for the cast, to keep items separate. Sharing of bags will not be permitted.

### **Stage food or drink**

On-stage food or drink will be separate for each character, already plated as a prop by a crew member with clean hands and wearing a mask, and covered in clingfilm until the last minute. Any on-stage utensils will be kept specifically marked per actor, so that no accidental sharing occurs, and washed before & after use.

### **Cleaning materials.**

A box containing sanitizer, cleaning materials and relevant disposable PPE will be in the theatre teams rehearsal props cupboard, and taken with the team on tour to performances.

This will include

- Disposable masks (to be thrown away after use)
- Dettol spray
- hand sanitizer in dispenser
- disposable rubber gloves (to be thrown away after use)
- washing up liquid
- washing up sponges (to be thrown away after use)
- liquid soap in dispenser
- disinfectant wipes (to be thrown away after use)
- bin liners
- bleach
- lateral flow tests
- handheld temperature scanner