



COVID-19  
PROTOCOL  
**audiovisuele  
sector**

# NETHERLANDS COVID-19 PROTOCOL FOR THE AUDIOVISUAL SECTOR

## Preamble

The different professions that are involved in audiovisual productions want to continue their work in a safe and responsible way. This is because of the direct and indirect economic interests and because of the vital cultural and social function of audiovisual productions: these act both as a connective tissue for society and as a source of information, amusement, emotion and reflection.

This protocol contains hygiene guidelines, precautionary and protective measures and rules of behaviour. Their purpose is to ensure that workplaces and work situations are as safe as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. The protocol provides clarity to everyone who is involved in audiovisual productions, including professionals, businesses, public service and commercial broadcasters, clients, financiers, and insurers/guarantee funds.

The protocol focuses on the development, preproduction, production and postproduction of audiovisual productions in the broad sense of the term, both scripted and non-scripted, including news and informative programmes, entertainment, commercials, fiction, documentaries, animation, and interactive productions. It applies to various work situations, including filming in the studio and/or when on location indoors or outdoors. It also covers the way activities can continue to be performed safely at home.

The starting point for this protocol is the existing recommendations and measures published by the RIVM. This version is based on the state of affairs per 5 June 2021 and will in all cases be updated as soon as possible when new insights, recommendations or measures come into force. The protocol is published on the websites of NAPA and NCP, as is the indicative risk assessment table and a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

Since every audiovisual production is different, in practice there may be a reason for parties to make a carefully considered departure from this protocol if the situation demands it. It is up to the parties involved to consider carefully whether - taking all precautionary measures into account - an audiovisual production can go ahead or be continued with. We recommend consulting the websites of Rijksoverheid and RIVM at all times for the up-to-date general measures and rules if there is an actual or suspected coronavirus infection. When shooting on location, it is also recommended to consult the current regulations in the relevant safety region and municipality.

Because of its role as a news provider of vital importance, the NOS broadcasting organisation has its own protocol (for employees, contractors, suppliers, and guests). When it comes to recording music, performing artists and (music and other) companies must comply with the protocols for performance art and orchestras.



## Strategy

The protocol is based on the occupational hygiene strategy. In the first place measures are implemented to ensure compliance with hygiene rules as well as a 1.5 metre distance between people, and complying with the strict RIVM guidelines to stay at home as much as possible and to go outside only when strictly necessary in order to minimise the risk of infection.

If this is not possible, additional organisational and hygienic precautions should be taken to prevent contamination. The starting point remains to keep situations where work is carried out within 1.5 metres to a minimum, to adapt scripts to this situation as much as possible and to cluster shootings as much as possible in one day. Where necessary, protective clothing (such as a face mask or gloves) should be worn.

### Preventive testing

To further reduce the risks of the virus spreading, the task force recommends - in *addition* to the precautionary measures laid down in the protocol - **preventive testing** where necessary. This means testing for the presence of the coronavirus *without* the person showing symptoms of COVID-19.

Preventive testing is mandatory for persons involved in **high-risk situations**, i.e. intimate scenes with intensive physical contact, such as kissing or fight scenes (measure 48 of the protocol). Because of the higher degree of reliability, preventive testing should be carried out in these cases by means of a PCR test.

For all **other situations (low + medium risk)** preventive testing is optional; (antigen) rapid tests can be used.

The reliability of a rapid or self-test depends to a large extent on whether it has been administered correctly. In order to safeguard the accuracy of the testing process and to increase the reliability of the result, we recommend that preventive testing by means of a rapid test or self-test takes place under the **supervision** of a doctor or nurse. In that case, this professional is responsible for the correct administration, use and analysis of the test. For reasons of privacy, tests must be administered in a separate room and the test result may only be read by the person being tested.

The result of a preventive test is **valid for a maximum of 48 hours**. As long as a person does not develop symptoms and has not been in close contact with an infected person, daily testing is not necessary.

Preventive testing is not a reason to abandon the precautions described in the COVID-19 protocol. The basic precautions are the most important, including: do not come to work when you have corona-related symptoms and/or if you are a close contact of someone who has been diagnosed with corona.

Practical information can be found on the website [Werkgeverstesten.nl](https://www.werkgeverstesten.nl) (in Dutch).

## Current

Within the context of the 'national opening plan', the various corona measures will gradually be abandoned or adjusted. As in the previous period, work on professional audiovisual productions may, in principle, continue on the condition that all parties involved strictly adhere to the COVID-19 protocol for the audiovisual sector. These activities count as **regular business activities**, both when they take place in studio spaces equipped for this purpose and at other locations. (Executive) producers

must be extra critical as to **who does or does not need to be present** at the set or work location.

In addition to this, it is recommended:

- To draw up a **project plan** setting out how the protocol will be implemented for the specific production.
- **Appointing** one or more persons - in addition to the Health & Safety Officer - to supervise compliance with the protocol.
- The use of fences or other means such as signs to clearly **demarcate** a recording location and mark it as a workplace to keep passers-by at a distance (analogous to a construction site).
- When **recording on location**, the municipality and / or Safety Region and (if applicable) local residents should always be informed in advance to avoid ambiguity.

### Audience

- From 5 June 2021, it will again be permitted to admit **audience** / members of the public to recordings for AV productions, both in indoor and outdoor locations. Reservations, registration and a health check are required in advance. In indoor spaces, face masks must be worn when moving around; these may be removed when sitting down at the (fixed) seat.
- A maximum of 1 person per 10 m<sup>2</sup> may be present at a distance of 1.5 metres, with a maximum of 50 people per room. For large spaces with a capacity of 1000 persons or more the maximum number of visitors is 250. The numbers mentioned include children up to and including 12 years of age and exclude staff.

### Travel

Consult the website of the [Government of the Netherlands](#) for current travel regulations and guidelines.

- When **travelling abroad**, always check the current travel advice on [Netherlandsworldwide.nl](#) (EN) / [Nederlandwereldwijd.nl](#) (NL). The situation can change rapidly, for example because the number of infections increases or because of a new variant of the virus.
- As of 15 May 2021, you can again travel to safe countries (marked green or yellow in the travel advice). Travelling to countries marked orange or red is strongly discouraged: there are too many infections with corona.
- When **travelling (back) to the Netherlands**, travellers must be able to show a negative COVID-19 test result. This applies to most countries and to everyone aged 13 years or older. The test result is mandatory when travelling by plane, ship, international train, international bus and private transport such as by car or motorbike.
- As of 1 June 2021, travellers from countries on the list of very high-risk countries must undergo compulsory **quarantine** - in principle for ten days; those who test negative after five days may leave the quarantine.
- For the cultural and creative sector, an [exception to the quarantine obligation](#) applies to persons travelling to or from the Netherlands in connection with activities of a Dutch cultural or creative institution or organisation that receives a long-term subsidy from the central government or the State Culture Funds for the period 2017-2020 or 2021-2024. Subsidies for audiovisual productions are also considered to be long-term. You must always be in possession of a [quarantine declaration](#) and a **letter of invitation** from the producer, broadcaster or institution in question. If applicable, you can also make use of the exception for business travellers.

On the following pages, the RIVM guidelines are translated into general measures that must be taken in the different risk situations that are **LOW**, **MEDIUM** and **HIGH RISK**. This is shown in the annex's indicative risk assessment table for the different stages of an audiovisual production per *department/discipline* and for the associated *employment positions*. This table can be used as a tool for implementing the protocol in the form of a daily routine that can be geared to the characteristics of a specific audiovisual production.

Where the text has been modified compared to version 3.6, it is marked with an orange line.

## PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES – LOW RISK

### General

The following measures that are based on the guidelines issued by the Dutch government and the RIVM must always be complied with by employees, visitors and other external parties and persons who are present at various work locations such as at the office, in the studio and when filming on location indoors or outdoors and for different productions:

1. Wash your hands at least 6 times a day
  - \* for 20 seconds with water and soap, then dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel that you immediately dispose of or else use a disinfectant hand gel that contains at least 70% alcohol.
  - \* Always do the above: before going outdoors, when coming home or at your workplace, after blowing your nose, after travelling on public transport, and of course before eating and after you have been to the toilet.
2. Don't touch your face at all or else do so as little as possible.
3. Cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
4. Blow your nose in a paper handkerchief that you then dispose of and wash your hands.
5. Keep 1.5 metres (2 armlengths) away from anyone not living in your house. Children up to the age of 12 do not have to keep a distance of 1.5 meters.
6. Don't shake any hands.

7. If you have any cold symptoms, such as nasal catarrh, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, slight cough, sudden loss of smell and/or taste or raised temperature up to 38 degrees Celsius? Stay at home and make a test appointment; you can only go outside for this purpose. For housemates without symptoms, the rules that everyone in the Netherlands is subject to apply (see point 1-6). As soon as one of the other housemates also develops symptoms, this person should also be tested. Follow the quarantine regulations of the National Government and RIVM.
8. If you have cold symptoms and a fever (38 degrees Celsius or higher) and/or shortness of breath and you feel sicker? Stay at home and make a test appointment; you can only go outside for this purpose. Housemates are not allowed to go outside until the results of the test are known, even if they have no symptoms themselves. As soon as one of the other housemates also develops symptoms, this person should also be tested. Follow the quarantine regulations of the National Government and RIVM.
9. Do not share phones or other devices/items with each other.
10. Clean phones/devices/items regularly; make sure that work sites are well-ventilated and air them regularly.
11. Decide on the maximum number of people permitted at the work site so that the 1.5 metre distance can be maintained at all times, including when entering the location. Leave room to move and walk around, and double up the distance per person in m<sup>2</sup> for those rooms/areas that are furnished (with furnishings and/or equipment). Make sure there are enough separate dressing rooms.
12. Keep to the maximum number of persons stated by the RIVM for business activities and keep this number as small as possible at all times.
13. Stop groups forming unnecessarily by using a rotating system for breaks and/or by using multiple rooms/areas.
14. Make sure the work site is cleaned every day and, where necessary, in-between. Pay particular attention to the frequently used hand contact points. Use the [general hygiene guidelines](#) of the LCHV (Dutch National Center for Hygiene and Safety).
15. Make sure that all persons at the work site are familiar with the instructions and precautionary measures and display them prominently.

### Development, research, preproduction, postproduction

16. Where possible, deploy a 'work from home' policy for all work - such as script development, research and editorial work - that does not need to be performed at the office or work site.
17. Organise discussions and meetings so that they can be carried out/held as much as possible by phone, by videoconference or by using other digital means of communication.
18. Organise casting sessions, auditions or other preproduction work and postproduction work so that these activities can be carried out 'remotely' where possible.
19. For necessary site visits, consultation meetings, working on location or postproduction work, keep the number of participants to a minimum and comply with the hygiene rules and the 1.5 metre distance (including by reorganising workplaces, laying out walking routes etc.).



20. For on-site viewings, comply with the NVBF protocol (Dutch Exhibitors Association) for the maximum utilisation of total capacity in terms of number of people present. Observe the 1.5 meter spacing in viewing rooms/cinemas, also for grading.

## Production

21. Wear a face mask if persons from different households travel in the same car (and other private transport) to the place of work. Wear a face mask on public transport and avoid rush hour. In other transport such as taxis, passenger vans and coaches, reservation and health check in advance is mandatory, as is wearing a face mask.
22. Drivers of production vehicles clean their steering wheel and the surface around it after every drive. When production vehicles are used for passenger transport, reservation and health check in advance is mandatory, as is wearing a face mask.
23. Schedule and organise shooting days (and their preparation) so that workflows succeed each other as much as possible and do not overlap each other (i.e. one department completes its work before the next department arrives to start its work).
24. Work in set teams as much as possible.
25. For multi-day shootings, plan the work to work on consecutive days as far as possible.
26. Set a maximum number of employees per department/discipline who must or may be present for certain work. The basic principle here is that the number of people per discipline who are present in the workroom/area is always as few as possible and that the 1.5 metre distance is maintained.
27. Work out beforehand which employees are strictly necessary to carry out the work when filming/shooting. Use coloured armbands or other means to ensure you can identify which staff are from which department/discipline. In this way it can be made clear who has to be - and who is permitted to be - present at the work site. The changing over of groups of (or individual) employees must be performed systematically, must be announced and must use walking routes that comply with the 1.5 metre distance.
28. Also lay out walking routes at spots where there is a risk of people 'accumulating/gathering' (such as the coffee corner, canteen/catering areas, toilets) in order to create as much one-way traffic as possible and to prevent the people flows from 'crossing'. Attach 1.5-metre markings to monitor and enforce the distance.
29. Where necessary, employ people to manage the toilet facilities and catering rooms/areas.
30. If catering facilities are provided: hand out drink and food in one-person packages by placing them on a pickup table so that the 1.5 metre distance can be kept to. Catering staff shall ensure extra good hand hygiene.
31. When filming outdoors, make sure you have additional assistance for crowd control, in order to prevent gatherings. Make sure that the 1.5-metre distance is clearly marked out/off using tape etc.
32. Avoid unnecessary visits to sets and do not have too many spectators.
33. If third-party locations are used or hired, do not use these locations if the owners or permanent users of this location - or their family members - have cold symptoms and fever (38 degrees Celsius or above) and/or shortness of breath if they also use the rooms/areas daily or otherwise.



34. When it comes to the size, weight and operation of equipment/devices, opt for 1-person use/operation whenever possible.
35. Deploy additional equipment/devices to be able to keep to the 1.5 metre distance when filming (such as: monitors, poles etc.).
36. Use personal devices, equipment and resources as much as possible. Tools are preferably not shared.
37. Clean your hands before and after using equipment, tools and other utensils, including those provided by suppliers. If necessary, clean equipment and materials (e.g. after breaks and/or when surfaces may have been touched by others).
38. Appoint a Health & Safety Officer who is responsible for and controls the monitoring of and compliance with the applicable protocol. To improve efficiency, if possible combine these duties with another position, such as that of the BHV/EHBO (company emergency response & first aid) officer and/or the sustainability manager.
39. Provide all persons in advance with a form detailing the precautionary measures to be complied with and the cases where employees must stay at home. Before the work starts, the Health & Safety Officer will ask all persons to declare that they have read and understood the information. Permission to take body temperature may be requested or else this can be taken in a non-invasive manner without this data being recorded or passed on. Ask freelancers to sign a declaration that they have read this protocol and annex, that they agree to comply with them and that in high-risk situations they will provide relevant personal details to the production's insurer(s) upon request.





## PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES – MEDIUM RISK

All the measures described under **PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES – LOW RISK** plus the following **additional measures** if it is not possible to keep a distance of 1.5 metres, provided that such situations are kept to a minimum. Scripts should be adapted to this as much as possible and shootings for these scenes should be clustered on one day as much as possible.

### General

40. For permanent workplaces (such as mobile production units/broadcast vans and recording with an audience) where the 1.5 metre distance cannot be maintained: deploy additional safety features such as mobile partitions made of plexiglass or plastic.

### Work in the field of clothing / styling / costume, make-up / hair, sound (channels), stunts, acting/figuring, performing, presenting and judging.

41. Actors, presenters, performers, extras, jury members and other participants have to take care as much as possible of their own clothing/styling/outfit and make-up/hair and the attachment of any audio transmitters.
42. If clothing/styling and make-up/hair is provided by a single employee or for live-instructions of stunts: always maintain good hand hygiene and use protective clothing such as disposable gloves or face masks where necessary.
43. The same applies if an employee attaches audio transmitters to actors, presenters, jury members and other participants or guests.

44. All props used by an employee are personal (such as make-up) or else are only to be used a single time per actor, presenter, participant, jury member, extra or guest. Use a clearly-defined control system (e.g. logbook, colour/date stickers).
45. If devices, equipment and materials need to be passed on (such as the camera and lenses for fiction shootings): ensure good hand hygiene. If necessary, clean the equipment and materials in between times (e.g. for each set-up).
46. In addition to point 39, any person who cannot maintain a 1.5 metre distance in his/her work will be explicitly informed by the Health & Safety Officer - before they are allowed to assist or travel to the work site – that they must not have had any COVID-19 related symptoms in the past 24 hours. Permission to take a person's body temperature may be requested or else this can be taken in a non-invasive manner without this information being recorded or passed on.

**NB:** Only those persons who have none of the symptoms referred to above and who do not need to perform any intimate scenes, and only where it concerns a limited, controllable group with repeated contacts, can work without protective clothing at less than 1.5 metres' distance from their fellow-actors or fellow-participants – but may only do so for the duration of the rehearsals or shooting in question.

## PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES – HIGH RISK

All the measures described above under **PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES - LOW RISK and MEDIUM RISK** plus the following **additional measures**, if:

- (i) the 1.5 metre distance between persons cannot be complied with,
- (ii) and these persons cannot apply the medium-risk precautionary measures - including the wearing of protective clothing,
- (iii) and intimate scenes with intensive physical contact need to be performed, such as kissing or fighting scenes.

47. Persons who come under the high-risk category have:

- a) to comply with the strict RIVM guidelines during the shoot, and thus have to remain at home as much as possible and only go outdoors where necessary (in addition to point 46), and
- b) to consent to pass on relevant health information (such as body temperature) to the production’s insurer(s), along with other relevant information (such as any contacts with confirmed COVID-19 cases and/or any recent visits to regions/countries that have been more badly affected by COVID-19).

48. In addition, persons in the high risk category, such as actors who have to play intimate scenes with intensive physical contact, should undergo preventive diagnostic testing for COVID-19 by means of a PCR-test.

## Colophon

### NETHERLANDS COVID-19 PROTOCOL FOR THE AUDIOVISUAL SECTOR Version 4.0 – 5 June 2021

The Netherlands COVID-19 Protocol for the Audiovisual Sector and the accompanying risk assessment table have been adopted in consultation with and with input from professionals from DAFF (Dutch Academy For Film), the various industry and professional associations, public-service and commercial broadcasting organisations, businesses, funds and the Taskforce for the cultural and creative sector. The content of the protocol has also been coordinated with the Ministry of OCW (Education, Culture and Science); after adoption, the document has been submitted to the Ministries of OCW and EZK (Economic Affairs and Climate).

Both documents have been drawn up by a task force commissioned by NAPA (Netherlands Audiovisual Producers Alliance) and NCP (Association of Dutch Content Producers). The most recent version of the protocol is always available on the websites of both associations, as are the indicative risk assessment table and a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

[Netherlands Audiovisual Producers Alliance \(NAPA\)](#)  
[Association of Dutch Content Producers \(NCP\)](#)

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**ANNEX:** Table of indicative risk assessment per department/employment position

