



UBCP/ACTRA

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UBCP/ACTRA COVID-19 RETURN TO WORK: FAQs – TESTING AND SAFETY TRAINING

With the restarting of our industry, the Union has seen an increase in productions wishing to implement private COVID-19 testing of cast and crew as part of their COVID safety plans. Additionally, some productions will be requiring employees to complete their COVID-19 safety training course.

Such private testing is separate and distinct from public testing conducted by public health and would be administered by a private testing laboratory contracted by the production.

There are various levels of testing being required and therefore various agreements with the Unions representing cast and crew and productions. Details should be included in the employers COVID-19 Safety Plan and provided to you in advance of work. Do not hesitate to reach out to the Union Representative for your production should you have any questions.

We have included some frequently asked questions below to help you navigate through these potential new employment requirements.

Can a production require that I be tested for COVID-19? Yes, a production may require employees to be tested. However, any testing must meet certain legal requirements in British Columbia and any producer wishing to test must contact the Union and reach an agreement first.

Can a production require that I be tested prior to being hired or booked? No, an employment relationship must be established before an employer can require testing. Please advise the Union if you are being asked to submit a test or provide a test result prior to being engaged by that production.

Can I be fired or cancelled if I test positive? No, the employer cannot discriminate against an employee who tests positive for COVID-19. However, PHO orders need to be followed and any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days.

What happens if I test positive? You will be required to self-isolate as per the public health authority until you are cleared to return to work.

Will I qualify for sick pay? The US productions wishing to implement significant testing regimes are in exchange required to offer paid sick time, most up to ten (10) days sick pay.

Are all productions testing? No, however we are seeing an increase in the number of productions testing. US based productions are testing all of their cast and most of the crew.. Other productions may choose to limit testing to those cast members that are required to be in close proximity for extended periods of time or involved in intimate scenes such as kissing.

How often will I be tested? Testing protocols may vary from production to production. It could be none, once at the beginning of production, three times a week, or more if performers are required to perform in intimate scenes.

Will I get paid for time spent in testing? Yes, producers should pay you for time spent in testing, either a minimum call on a day prior to working on the production or it will form part of your workday.

Can the producer require me to take a COVID-19 safety training course? Yes they can, however it is considered paid time. On a non-work day, online training that can be done on your own time is considered a two (2) hour call, otherwise training that requires you to attend at a specific time should be paid at an eight (8) hour call.

Why do we have to have the nasal swab testing vs. other forms? No other forms of testing have a been approved by Health Canada yet. We are asking productions to use the least invasive, medically accredited method possible.