

COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) PRODUCTION ADVISORY

COVID-19 remains a rapidly evolving situation and information regarding this subject could change. American Humane has developed this Advisory to assist productions using animals. This Advisory contains important information on what is currently scientifically known about COVID-19 and supports the Guidance given by the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), the [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#), and the [World Organization for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#).

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes COVID-19, spreads mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, and talking. Recent studies show that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also play a role in the spread of COVID-19. The CDC currently indicates that the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to humans is low and that there is no evidence that COVID-19 can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets. In high animal density settings, animals with high viral loads of SARS-CoV-2, appear to have the ability to transmit the virus to other animals of the same species.

THE VIRUS CAN BE SPREAD FROM PEOPLE TO SOME ANIMALS THROUGH CLOSE CONTACT WITH PEOPLE INFECTED WITH COVID-19. THIS INCLUDES PRESYMPTOMATIC AND ASYMPTOMATIC CARRIERS. ALL ANIMALS SHOULD BE PROTECTED THE SAME AS HUMANS.

AMERICAN HUMANE RECOMMENDATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements are in an addition to American Humane's [Guidelines for the Safe Use of Animals in Filmed Media](#). Cast and crew should be advised of the additional requirements either on the call sheet or at the daily safety meeting or both.

- ★ American Humane Certified Animal Safety Representative™ (CASR) should be considered **essential personnel** when animals are working with a production.
- ★ American Humane recommends all productions work with American Humane to develop COVID-19 safety plans whenever animals will be working. The following provides general guidance, but **it is important that productions contact American Humane as early as possible as each production is unique and there will be varying risk factors which could affect animals and crew.**

General:

- Production must provide American Humane their safety protocols at least two business days prior to filming for review. This may result in additional protocol recommendations.
- All cast and crew should be checked at the start of each day for symptoms which could be associated with COVID-19. This includes daily temperature monitoring. Anyone with symptoms, including elevated temperature, should not be allowed on set.
- The guiding principle is the fewer people who are on set interacting with the animal actors, the lower the risk of transmitting the virus.
- **Production should limit the amount of time an animal is on set.**
- **If any human in a household, breeding facility, trainer facility, etc. has COVID-19 then no animals from that facility can be used on any set until the human is cleared.**
- **Any animal showing symptoms should be immediately removed/isolated and examined by a veterinarian and American Humane should be informed immediately.**

High-Risk Animals:

- Some species of animals such as cats (domestic and exotic cats), hamsters, ferrets (Mustelids) and primates are in the **high-risk category** for contracting the virus.
- **Primates will not be allowed to work, until further notice.**
- Productions working with cat species (domestic cats, exotic cats.), ferrets (Mustelids), or hamsters must not allow them to be intermingled between sources or mixed on set.

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Limit Contact:

- The 6 feet social distancing rule will apply to **ALL** animals from different locations/households.
- There should be no touching or petting animals by anyone other than animal owners/handlers/trainers.
- When scenes call for actors (or other animals) to be closer than 6 feet to an animal, American Humane recommends using the animal handler/owner for close contact action whenever possible. **If scenes call for close actor/animal interaction, contact American Humane for consultation.**
- Other suggestions to limit contact include:
 - VFX - film animals separately
 - Limit the time animals are on set
 - Limit takes
 - Use “stuffies” as stand-ins for camera and lighting set up/rehearsals instead of the live animal.

Sanitization:

Along with industry recommended protocols for enhanced sanitization, the following is recommended:

- Animal owners/handlers/trainers should disinfect any objects that are taken and returned home (such as leashes, bowls, and toys).
- Use an EPA-registered disinfectant to clean items and rinse thoroughly with clean water afterwards.
- **DO NOT** wipe or bathe animals with chemical disinfectants, or any products not approved for animal use.
- Props, costumes, saddlery, pens, and cages, etc. should NOT be shared between animals.
- Individual species-specific waste collection and disposal facilities should be provided for animal feces, bedding, and wastewater.

Locations:

- A separate and secured animal holding area should be provided with dedicated facilities for hand washing and social distancing. This area should take into consideration the need for human and animal social distancing requirements.
- Dog parks or other areas where large numbers of animals and people go should be avoided.
- When filming on location, cast, crew, and animals should stay a safe distance away from wildlife. Contact local wildlife agencies for assistance when needed.
- When stray animals are present at the location, consult with local animal control agencies for the safe humane removal of the animal.
- **Cast and Crew may not bring their personal pets to the location.**

CASR Safety:

- The risk to CASRs based on the public health indicators at or near the production location will be evaluated by American Humane, as well as the community services available at or near the production location. There may be some destinations where we will not send our CASRs.
- Social distancing guidelines and other sanitation protocol must be in place and followed. CASRs will only be assigned productions where adequate social distancing and safety protocols are in place. **Should social distancing and other safety protocols not be adhered to on set, a CASR shall leave that set and productions will not be eligible for certification.**
- CASRs may need special provisions such as access to a monitor and/or radio, etc. which will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Productions can be assured that American Humane will be responsible partners in following all COVID-19 protocols that are in place on film sets for everyone’s safety.

We are here to assist you!

American Humane’s Resource Center provides guidance to productions regarding best animal welfare practices, achieving desired animal action and care, licensing/permitting, and transportation at no charge.

American Humane recommends productions reach out to American Humane early in preproduction. Each production is unique and there will be varying risk factors which must be considered.

Contact us at 1-818-501-0123 or email filmunit@americanhumane.org