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Personal
Managers'
Association

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CPMA

The Co-operative Personal Management Association

Covid-19 Checklist for Agents.

In the current public health crisis, Equity, the Personal Managers Association (PMA), the Co-operative Personal Management Association (CPMA) thought it would be useful for agents and any artists representing themselves to have a brief checklist of items to consider when negotiating contracts for Commercials.

Auditions

In relation to auditions, we are strongly encouraging every casting director to think long and hard about whether face-to-face auditions are really necessary, even in casting venues where government recommendations on social distancing etc can be complied with. While self-taping or Zoom auditions do not suit every artist, in the current situation these are by far the safest ways to audition performers. Be assured, however, that everyone is working towards returning to normal face-to-face auditions, when it is safe.

Agents should check that recall fees are being paid before allowing a client to attend one, whether in person or via technology.

Work in general.

An essential component of a safe return to work is the Risk Assessment (RA) that an employer is legally obliged to make when engaging people to work for them. In its simplest terms, a risk assessment is a catalogue of potential health & safety threats with a list of how the employer will either eliminate or mitigate these risks while people are working for them. These must be issued before an artist attends the workplace for the engagement and *must be supplied in good time to the agent*, so that any queries can be addressed *before work commences*.

It is important that once an RA has been made, the script and action in the material does not change significantly. If it does, then either a new RA must be made or the original one redrawn before filming recommences. For example, the action of a script initially allows social distancing to be maintained throughout the shoot but the director decides while filming that they would like to add, say, a couple hugging into the script. In this case, the existing RA would need to be modified to account for the changed action *before filming is continued*.

We recommend that the Health & Safety rules covering the shoot really should be given both as a document to the artists & crew who should then be told the rules verbally, which gives everyone a chance to ask questions if they are unsure of procedures.

Be aware, your clients have a legal duty under Health & Safety legislation to take reasonable care of themselves and others that they work with. Thus, they have a legal duty to adhere to the H&S instructions that they are given by the employer and to obey their reasonable instructions at all times while at the workplace in relation to health and safety. It would be useful for you to brief your client accordingly.

If your client is filming at home, it is necessary for them to check that their home insurance applies if work is being undertaken there. If their home insurance is affected by working at home, then the employer should provide insurance cover. This is, however, a matter of negotiation.

If you or your client is asked to sign a waiver limiting the employer's liability for Covid-related losses or injury, contact either Equity or the PMA or CPMA immediately.

Work Abroad.

The situation in respect of working abroad is changing on a regular basis and it will be necessary to consult the UK Government's website frequently to see what advice has changed. For example, the list of countries that require quarantine when entering or which countries the UK Government requires you to self-isolate upon returning from will regularly be changed according to circumstances.

If your client is required to quarantine themselves on returning from work abroad you need to negotiate with the employer for some payment to cover this time that your client cannot work for. Some companies have paid for this, some have not. Be aware that it is entirely possible that one of the countries in the present 'airbridge' arrangements could have its status changed before or during the time that your client is working there. This has just happened in relation to anyone returning from Spain; a requirement to quarantine themselves for 14 days for those entering the UK from Spain was introduced with two hours' notice. You therefore must address this possibility in the contract.

If you agree a payment for your artist being quarantined, then it must be addressed in the contract.

You will also need to negotiate what will happen if your client is in a foreign location that gets locked down while they are working there and thus unable to return to the UK as planned.

In respect of insurance when working abroad, this must be supplied by the employer. No artist should be using personal holiday insurance to work abroad as this insurance will be invalid if a claim is made while working. You need to ask to see the employer's insurance policy but be aware that they will not have insurance covering anything to do with losses caused, directly or indirectly, by

Covid-19. Such insurance will not be offered by the insurance industry and we can only hope the UK government steps in to address this.

If you need further assistance on any of these issues, contact either your agent association (PMA or CPMA) or Equity.

Essential Links.

General Government advice on corona virus - <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Government advice on travel abroad - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Equity - <https://www.equity.org.uk/support>

TV Commercials at Equity – TVCommercials@equity.org.uk

PMA - <https://thepma.com/>

CPMA - <http://www.cpma.coop/>

APA (the production companies' trade association) - <https://www.a-p-a.net/2020/04/news/updated-regularly/>