

COVID-19 Coronavirus and the Media

The greatest risk factor for becoming infected with COVID-19 coronavirus is exposure to someone who has the disease. Members of the media, because of the nature of their essential jobs that require them to work outside the home, are at an increased risk for coming into contact with potentially ill people. There are many things that members of the media can do to help keep themselves safe while conducting their critical role.

What is the best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 coronavirus?

The best way to protect yourself is to keep away from other people. As more people get sick with coronavirus, it is advisable to assume that anyone could potentially have it. That means you should be giving at least a six-foot buffer between yourself and others. You should also be washing your hands often and not touching your face without washing your hands first.

How can I properly social distance while riding around Philadelphia?

The Health Department recommends that when riding in the car with a potentially ill person, you should try to leave as much space between you and the other person. One option is to have someone sit in the back seat. Front windows should be at least half open, and if there are rear windows, they should be open all the way.

How can I properly social distance with conducting interviews?

It can be difficult to get proper audio when interviewing someone who you are trying to stay six feet away from. Some suggestions to improve audio quality include: taping a microphone to a boom or a pole; setting a lavalier microphone on a surface and having the subject pick it up for the interview, then return it to the surface afterwards. If you use a phone to conduct interviews, you can do the same thing.

How should I be sanitizing while working?

If your subject touches any part of your gear, consider sanitizing that equipment. Microphones can be wiped with Lysol or other disinfecting wipes and foam windscreens can be washed in regular dish soap. More sensitive equipment like phones should only be cleaned with alcohol wipes to avoid damaging them. Make sure not to touch a microphone to your face. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching a microphone or other equipment that someone else may have touched.

What about personal protective equipment?

The CDC has recommended that people wear face coverings when conducting essential business. N95 respirators should be reserved for healthcare workers who are at the highest risk of infection and donated. Face coverings like bandanas, t-shirts, and homemade masks offer a lower level of protection, but when coupled with proper social distancing can reduce your level of risk. When wearing a face covering, try not to touch it or adjust it. If you do touch it, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer immediately.

If you choose to wear gloves, be sure to wash your hands immediately before putting them on and after taking them off. Try not to touch your face when wearing gloves.

What should I be looking out for?

Monitor yourself for the well-known symptoms of COVID-19 coronavirus: fever or a dry cough. Some anecdotal reports have identified loss of smell or taste, or gastrointestinal problems as possible symptoms. If you're not feeling well, you should call your regular healthcare provider as soon as possible to see if they recommend you be tested for COVID-19 coronavirus.

In order to protect your coworkers, you should notify your supervisor if you are feeling ill and self-quarantine until you can be tested.