

76

CREW TOOK THIS SURVEY

Chicago Photo Crew

May 2020

27

PHOTO ASSISTANTS +
DIGITAL TECHS

26

STYLISTS +FX +
SETBUILDERS

8

STYLIST ASSISTANTS

11

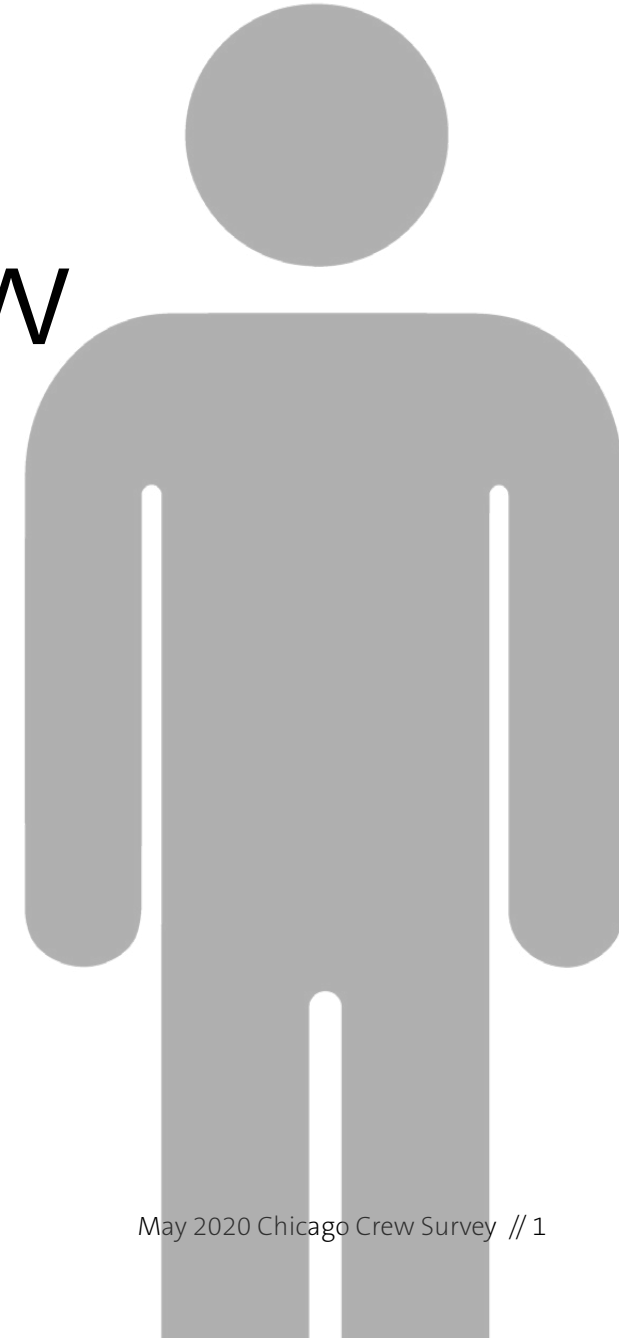
HMUA + NAIL
ARTISTS + ASSISTS

4

PAS +
COORDINATORS

This survey focuses on best practices to create better work environments. I hope the findings of this survey can open up conversations to help support our Chicago crew during Covid-19 and in the future. THANK YOU to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts.

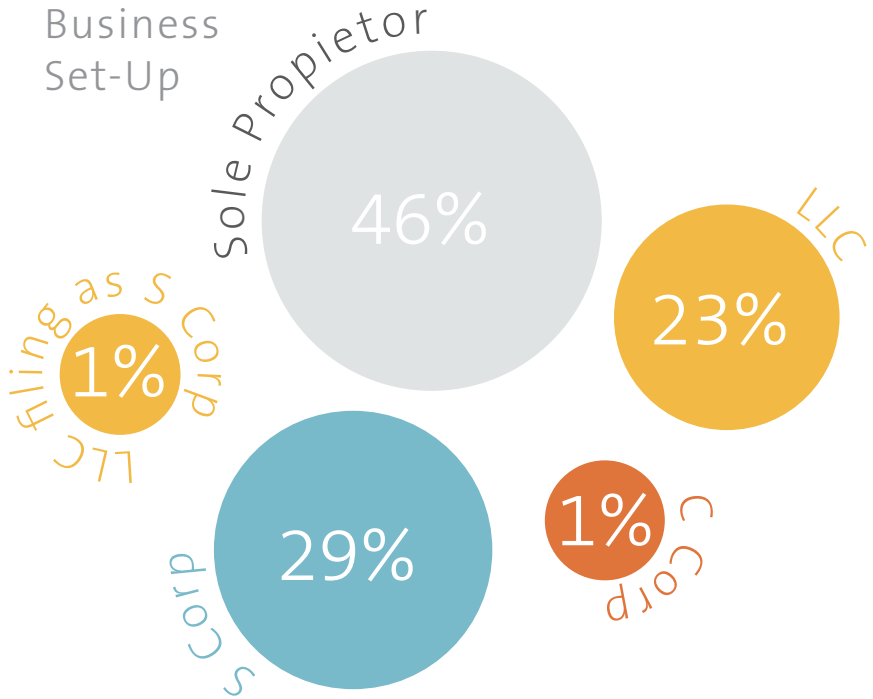
*no spelling or grammar in comments were corrected.



Finances



Business Set-Up



Did you feel you were making a living wage (before Covid-19 lock downs)?



67% Yes

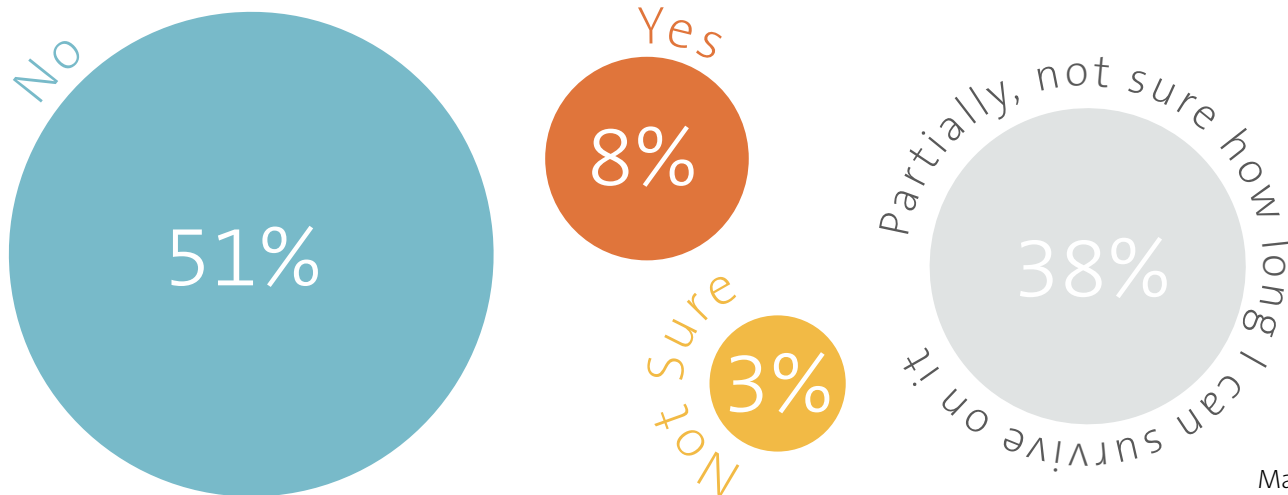


26% Only when I was working enough days in the month



7% No

Do you feel supported by the government financially during this lock down?



What industry changes would you like to see to feel protected financially?



75% Firm payment terms



70% Advances for all expenses before start of job



45% Hiring contracts



18% Unions



18% Other (specified on next page)



13% I'm not sure



4% None of the above

Did you have savings to fall back on when the shut down began?



54% Yes



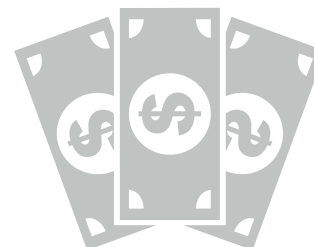
33% Some but not enough



10% No



3% Prefer not to answer



ESPECIALLY advances for expenses for stylist before job- they often are not paid quickly enough and we pay interest on those charges.

Wondering if it's possible for crew to be paid 50% that same shoot day and the remaining balance when the invoice is due? Not sure, but especially since no one's been working for two months now, it's going to be really hard for some people to have to wait at least 30 days for their first payment from their first job since stay-at-home orders began ...

Terms with it 45 days would be very helpful. Clauses that allow for late payment fees to be added when invoices are not paid on time.

Binding agreement that spells out what compensation I would get if I get sick and can't work (no idea what a reasonable percentage would be) or if shoot is cancelled due to sick crew.

Guarantee that jobs being prepped in the next few weeks (with the assumption of June 1 opening date) will be fully reimbursed/compensated even if the shelter in place is extended.

more time/days (Things will take longer to complete) I'm wardrobe -shopping/returns will take way longer.

I don't have enough experience with Unions to have an opinion on how I feel about them.

Unions I think? But don't know enough to say that with certainty.

As a wardrobe stylist I front 10-20k on every job, at least 50% of the time without an advance so a bigger advance would be great. To have to pay an advance back is easier than all the interest I pay on my cc's. I would like to be paid by 30 days and actually have that implemented. I am going on week ten waiting for payment from my last job in March. This is not right.

Just get paid in 30 days of invoice date....

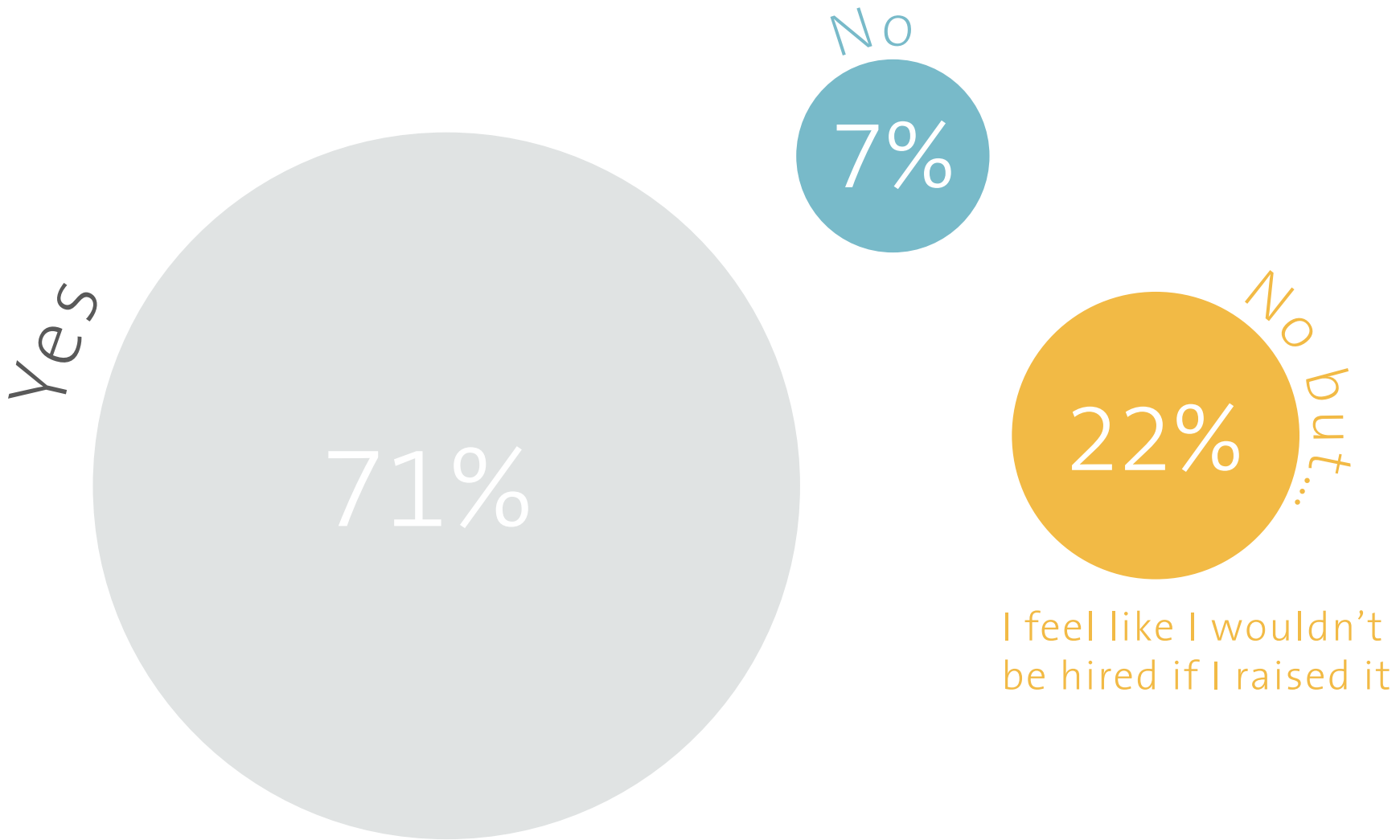
Expenses paid on the last day of job.

Some standardization of rules. Guidelines unions create without having a union.

I would applaud some type of representation but not quite sure of the union route. I've seen how other unions operate and I'm not sure of the exclusivity and demands that come with unions.

Clients and production need to take into account the costs of running a business as a gig worker.

Do you think your rate is fair?



I have many opinions on the industry, but I feel like one of the first areas to consider when trying to reduce budget is cutting crew costs. I am bothered by the lack of representation that assistants have but that is the state of things and I do not have an answer for that.

All productions are different.

I think all freelance rates should be raised for all the out of pocket expenses and high taxes - but that was before this too :)

Could always be more! haha
And when it's based on a 10 hour day!

I fear that I will be forced to lower my rate in order to get certain jobs or just meet the new budgets.

Photography assistants often work the longest hours of anyone on set, wear a multiple hats, and are paid significantly less than every other position. Assistants are also consistently asked to work for lower than their actual rates due to budget limits. It is also true that the rates for experienced assistants aren't that much higher than the rates for green assistants, but will often lose work based on this difference. This conversation comes up consistently within the industry, but has been very slow to change.

It depends- sometimes productions try to hire me as both prop and wardrobe stylist for just \$850. This does feel unfair and yes, I am afraid that by pushing back I won't be hired again in the future

Depends - I sometimes get shocked at push back for an additional \$50 bucks when there is def money spent on bogus frills and I am worth my labor.

It depends on the client. The rates vary.

More prep/wrap time would be needed if the stores are not open or limited hours or limited delivery guarantees

Cost for everything has increased however client are lowering rates and asking for discounts.

I'm concerned as crew sizes lesson rates may drop.

Rates for assistants have been the same standard for so many years. And I understand that agencies are always asking for more and more assets for the smallest budget, but it is exhausting. Some jobs with bigger budgets make up the difference for lower budget jobs, but that is all so up in the air even when we didn't have to worry about COVID-19.

Fair, but kit fee may need to be considered for more PPE we must provide moving forward.

Based on expectations for freelancers who are not on payroll, to be s-corps, rates that haven't been raised in years should be raised across the board. People who are freelance corporations should be able to be compensated to have a better living wage.

Rates need to be raised.

Before pandemic yes. Going forward no because I will be at a high risk coming in contact with others and I will have a lot more I will need to purchase and bring. (h/mua)

Crew rates on low budget editorials are fine, but they are not prop when were paid the same of large commercial projects where certain crew make many times our day rates.

Payroll

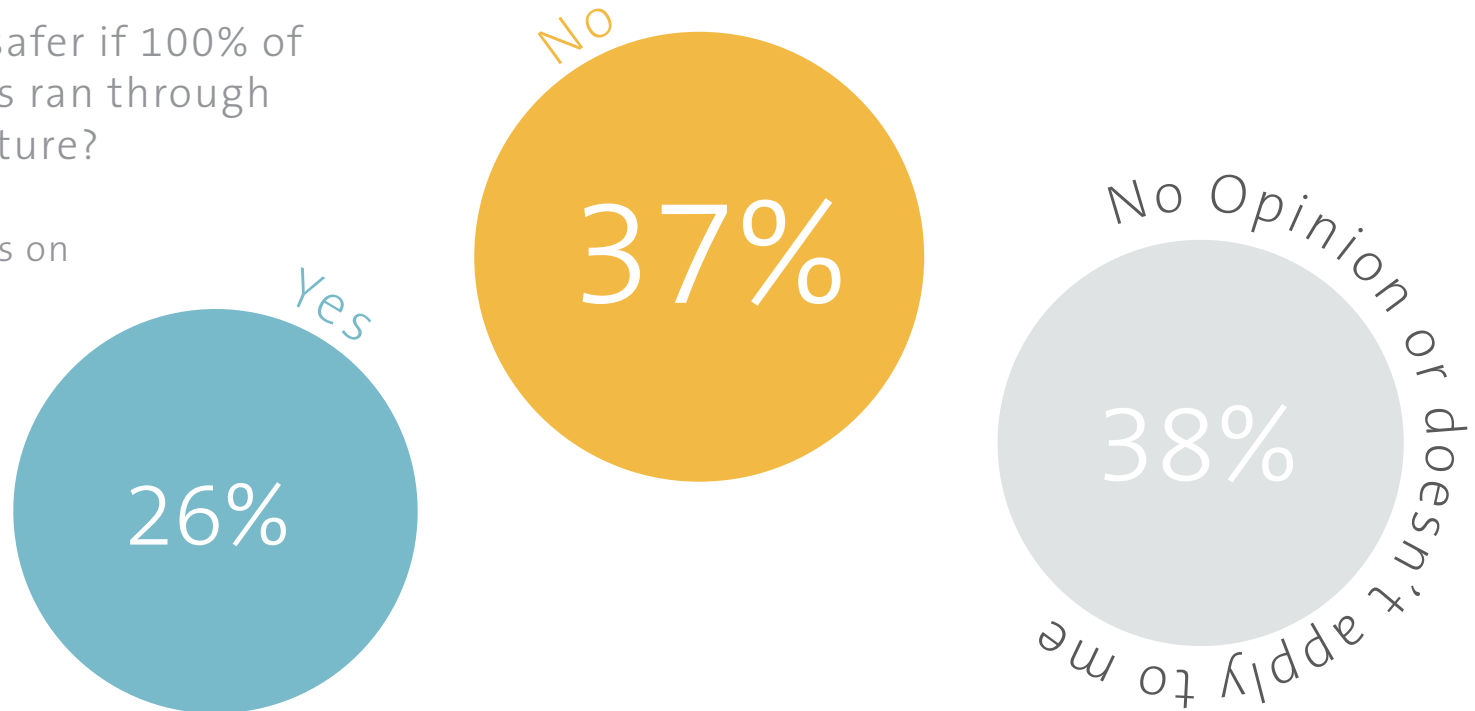


% of income in 2019 from w-2 income
(based on 76 crew total)



Would you feel safer if 100% of your productions ran through payroll in the future?

* Payroll comments on following page.



Concerns regarding write offs.

As a sole proprietor I would agree - yes. But I think this is role-specific. For those who have high overhead / expenses and need to be an S or C Corp in order to write off their expenses, payroll does not benefit them. Because payroll pays them as a corporation they are not covered under unemployment / workman's comp (from my understanding).

Because everything goes through a C Corp for me, payroll doesn't have a strong impact on me one way or another.

As I'm INC it wouldn't matter one way or the other for me.

I have been neutral surrounding payroll prior to this, but amidst the pandemic crisis it would have been helpful (with regard to applying for aid) to have received either all 1099 tax forms or all w2 tax forms from employers.

But it would be great if a higher percentage of jobs did.

I just dont know how we can have write offs if we are "employees" if my rate was higher for payroll jobs to off set the lose I would consider it.

Overall, I am comfortable with 1099 income.

The kick back during tax season is chill, in the moment it isn't great because I never have money.

After this experience I need to be 100% 1099 income.

Not sure. It seems like one or the other is best but not a mix.

I'm not sure. Either all W2 or all 1099 would be better than having some of both. And I also have studios that will only pay me personally, and will not pay my business, which is also frustrating because it means having to process expenses and incomes for both.

I never was crazy about payroll system before covid, but now i realize it's much safer.

I'm s-corp and haven't ever been asked to use payroll so no opinion on this one.

What did they cover? Nothing! It's a complete B.S!!! My assistant was w-2 from payroll and because each job is an individual start and end, she's not covered or considered for unemployment. Even tho, she paid taxes and unemployment insurance thru it. If this extra covid-19 pandemic section was not created by the FedGov, she would have not qualified. and it took 6 weeks for them to do anything about 1099, which is still not a guarantee.

If taxes were taken out for s corps.

Not necessarily safer. However, it is great to get an invoice paid quick and on time through payroll.

I'm a Corp, so I have no opinion I can file for unemployment against my own corp.

Not sure how to answer this - not entirely sure of what the benefit(s) are to me as a sole prop if being paid through payroll for every job ...

I think it can go either way as long as PUA is still an option.

I don't know. (Which isn't the same as having no opinion.) :)

I dont care if its one the other- but having both makes it difficult, especially in a crises like Covid 19. Consistency of having just one would be nice, which ever one it is.

A lot of my jobs are one offs, I am not sure if having a lot of w2s with 1-2 day rates worth of pay is helpful.

Not sure how to answer this -- not entirely sure of what the benefit(s) are to me as a sole prop if being paid through payroll for every job ...

I say yes with hesitation. I cannot say for sure.

Payroll only works if rates are higher and or insurance is covered.

It seems in cases like this if might of been a better choice.



Unemployment, Grants + Loans

Unemployment situation:

12%

I did not apply for unemployment.

12%

I am comfortable with the amount of regular unemployment I am able to receive

36%

I was able to apply for or receive PUA

41%

I do not feel I will be receiving enough unemployment due to having both w2 and 1099 income

Are you concerned with unemployment complications if you take shoots before your unemployment runs out?



46% Yes



7% This does not apply to me



25% No



5% I do not understand the rules of unemployment



17% I would like more guidance on this

Have not been able to apply for PUA online it won't take my Social Security says I already have an account which of course I've never done or applied for unemployment in my life so it states I need to call the number I call every day 100 times a day nothing but automated call also was denied a PPP loan.

I am only 1099, have not applied for unemployment yet.. But will next week.

I am in the middle of the process and have no idea how this works but I'm trying!

I have 3 w2s that enabled me for UI, so I could not get PUA and had to FIGHT to get back pay for the two months I was told to wait. Pay is LOW. Thankful for the \$600 add on but that is temporary- very nervous about the future.

I was able to get a PPP loan.

Applied for PUA on Monday, application is still being processed. If I am approved for PUA, the amount they are telling me I will receive is enough to cover my bills and rent BUT not enough to cover groceries, monthly CC payments, subscriptions to things like Adobe CC, etc. I did not qualify for regular Illinois UI.

Haven't gotten a dime from UI, it's not allowing me to certify.

I tried early on and they accepted me based on only 5 w-2's . The problem is that the amount they approved me for is almost nothing. Now I've tried to apply for the púa and it won't let me in. I think I would get much more through that and for a longer period of time but I'm shit out. I don't know who to talk to or contact to straighten it out.

opted for PPP.

*I'm not sure yet. I was able to apply for regular UE since I had two small W2s but did not know until May 11th. With the two W2s I would only get \$51 a week. The entire process was a nightmare and I eventually got lucky and got an email direct to UE guy! He went back and certified from me starting mid March and added my 1099s to my UE and it bumped up weekly to \$408! However I got a call from UE today to discuss my 1099s since they are confused what kind of work I do; that the work is in Chicago since a lot of them are out of state addresses, and who hires me etc etc. I'm also annoyed to read that the \$600 through PUA goes through December and through UE only until July. What a mess. This whole thing. Sigh.

I was able to file a claim on PUA site on May 11 but have been unable to sign in to the Illinois Job Link site (which is apparently a requirement in order to receive funds) in order to upload a resume and fill out questionnaire. Busy signal when I call, unanswered emails....So I reached out to my State Rep and Senator's office. Senator's office answered and asked me to email them what my issue is and someone will get back to me in possibly two weeks.

Not comfortable with regular unemployment, but it is better than nothing.

I was able to apply for unemployment with my W2 but my W9 were not recorded with a monetary value, so I am starting to receive money from the state but it is not the correct amount, I am also not able to then apply for the PUA. My certification days never seem to work right, never can get anyone on the phone...

I applied at the end of March for regular with one W-2= denied). Applied for PUA May 11th and I am still waiting to hear decision.

Def less than needed for overhead, but I realize I am in a blessed circumstance with unemployment benefits at all.

I cant be denied from Unemployment bc of my ONE W2, so I dont qualify for PUA. I have 14 1099's and only one W2. After taxes, unemployment sends me \$44 a week before the \$600 added bc I can only go off of the one W2. And I made over 70k last year....

Did you receive PPP/SBA or other federal funding?



46% Didn't apply



22% I applied and didn't receive any



24% Yes



8% Wasn't able to apply in time or because of technical issues

Did you receive grant money?



50% Didn't apply



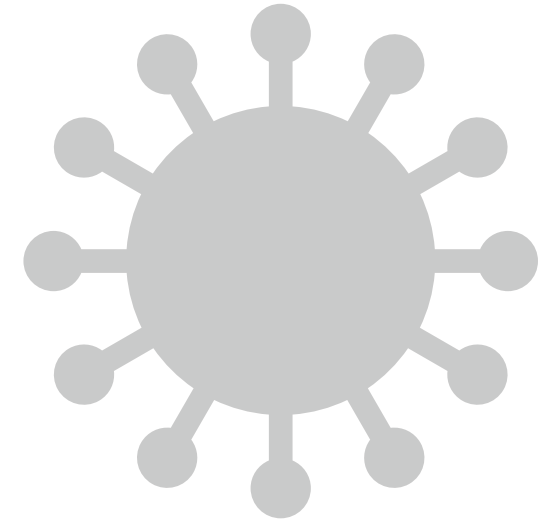
17% Yes



28% I applied and didn't receive any

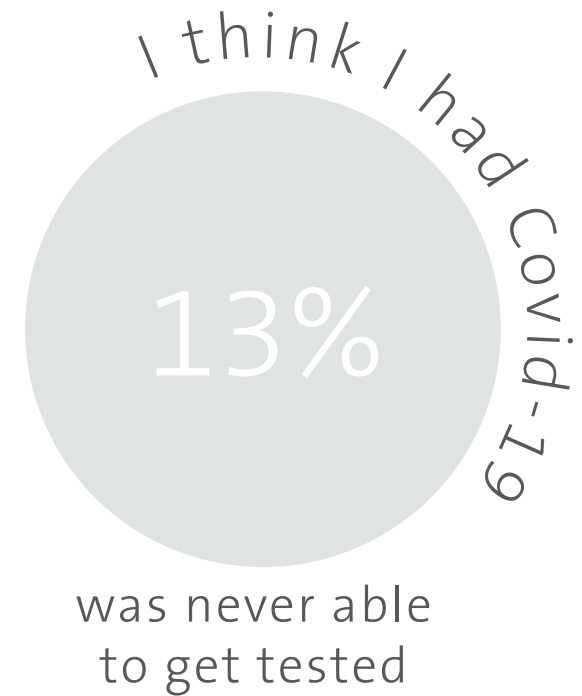
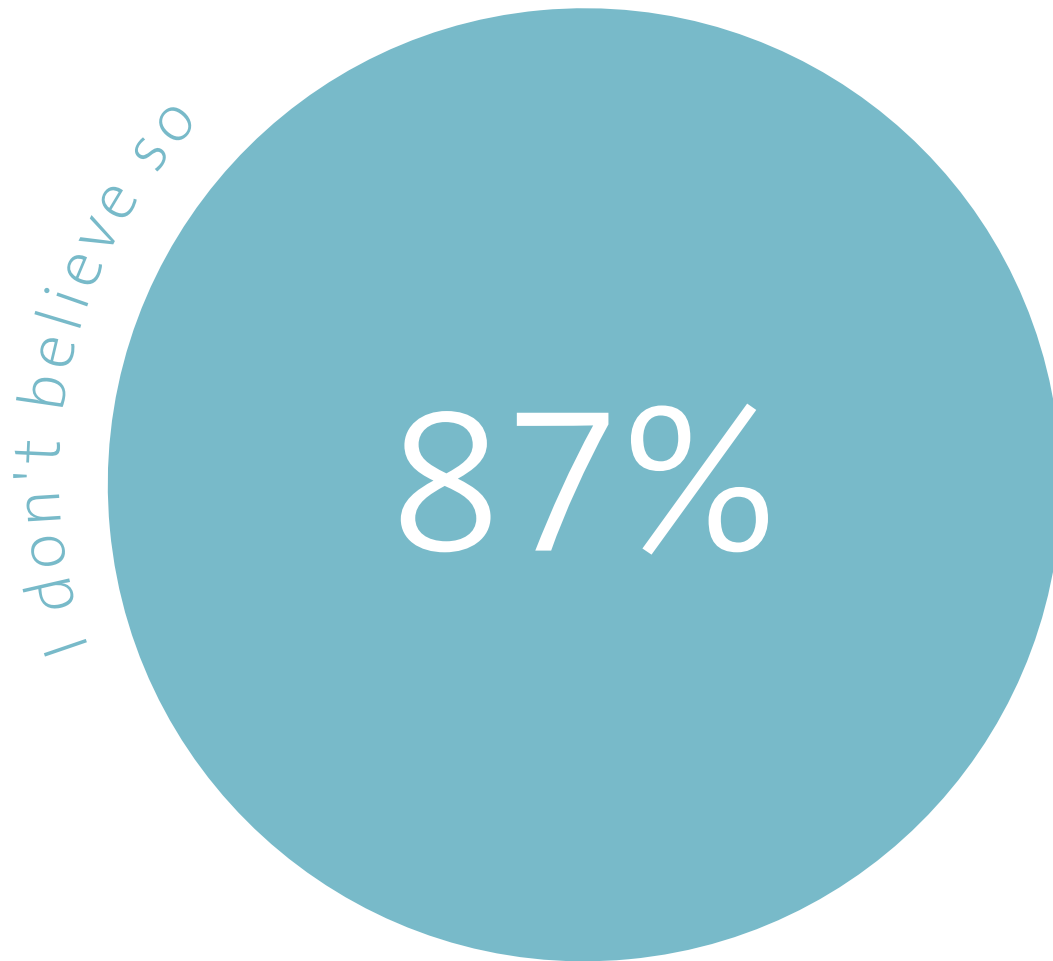


5% Wasn't able to apply in time or because of technical issues

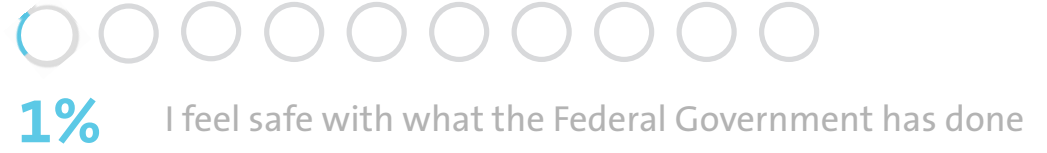


Health + Safety

Have you been exposed to Covid-19?



Do you feel safe with the measures the government has taken to protect you from Covid-19?



Too much misinformation coming from the federal government.

can't say I am confident that people are following the guidelines but I think IL has been making some smart decisions.

I think IL is doing a decent job to keep people inside and enforcing other rules, but it stresses me out that different states have different regulations.

Hard to say as we are not back working. I think pritzger is doing a good job.

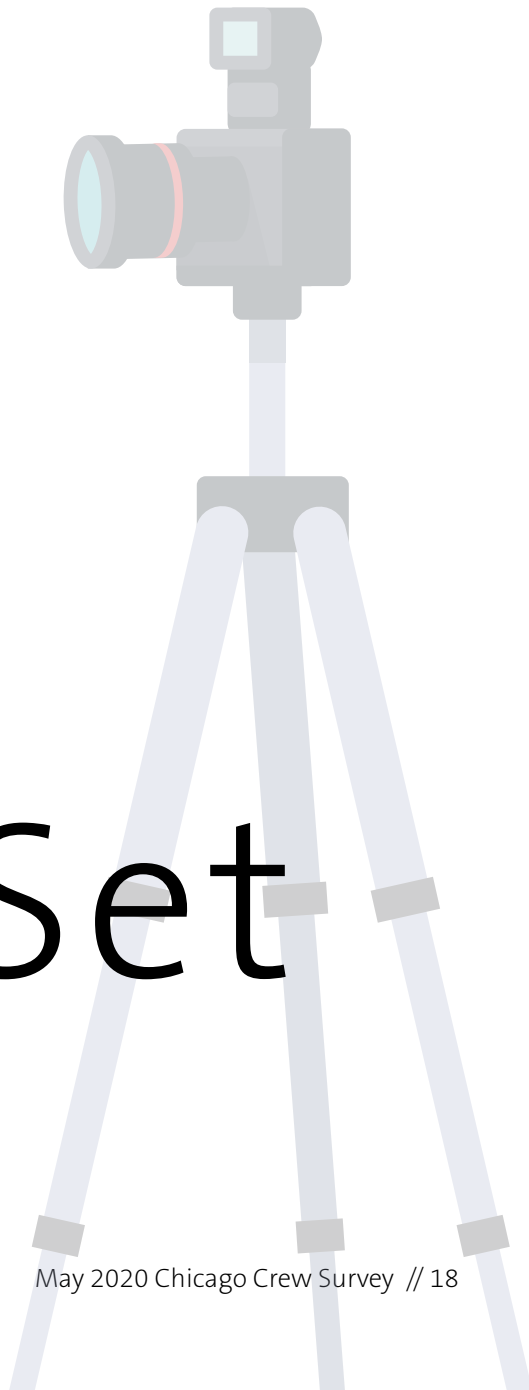
I am glad that IL put its shelter in place quickly, but I think there could be more enforcement twith social distancing measures and businesses that should not currently be open but are carrying on regardless. It seems obvious to me that those ignoring the instructions are just creating more risk and a longer timeline for getting past the pandemic.

Yes and No

I think the Federal Government is inept and causing many unnecessary deaths because they have no consistent strategy in place and they fire all the experts.



Returning to Set



When might you be comfortable returning to set?



32% As soon as possible



28% Not sure yet



24% When Pritzker / State of IL says it's safe for non-essential workers to return to work



11% Sometime this summer



4% After the 2nd wave



3% After fall

I trust production would do everything possible to create safe work environments, but I would be very concerned regarding people on set having minor symptoms and ignoring them to stay on set. Certainly VERY common before Covid, and not unlikely now.

If I could afford it my real answer would be after 2nd wave.

When there is a treatment or vaccine.

Kinda all of the above. It's a tricky situation for stylists and props store will have to be open and accepting returns and it would have to feel safe shopping.

Difficult to answer. Also wanted to check, "After the 2nd wave."

I could be convinced otherwise depending on the job or if money situation worsens/don't receive unemployment funds.

How do you feel about being approached for work right now?



53% Interested but only with a small crew and proper PPE



36% Interested but need detailed information about specific jobs



33% Happy to work, hope more people start calling



16% I think it's not appropriate under current shelter in place/phase reopening rules



8% Not interested but afraid of upsetting people, don't know how to reply



7% Not interested, don't feel safe

I'm torn. Not getting enough through unemployment to make ends meet so want to work a little but scared. We mix with so many people when we work on each job!

Would like it to be standard procedure for the production to lead with the safety info. I have been getting calls for jobs and in some cases unless I bring it up, it does not seem to be of concern to the production.

I would like income but also do not want to risk exposing myself and my family. With small crews I don't really have faith that there is an expert or specific crew member that will be making sure we are all following guidelines and being safe. In addition, as a stylist, I feel like there is more of a chance of exposure. I would be shopping, renting, doing returns, etc... so I am putting myself at risk and my coworkers if I deal with someone who isn't wearing a mask, or bring back props that aren't clean.

Mostly concerned about a "lack of work" and taking a job to not have another one coming and losing my UI. I think we need more time as cases seem to go up...

I am pregnant and have a son with a heart condition. It's not worth the risk. Until there's thorough fast testing and /or a vaccine I won't feel safe in an enclosed room with other people for a prolonged period of time.

I do hope there is less clients on shoots & I hope that remote approvals can somehow be made to work faster.

With proper precautions I don't see a problem however as a stylist it's difficult to work from shop when stores and malls aren't open not everything is available readily online.

Eager to work, I will wear a mask etc.

I have a B.S in Biology and Chemistry from UIC. I took Microbiology 1 and 2, Epidemiology, Immunology, Physiology, Genetics, Molecular Biology, and so on. I also had a medical interpreter license in Illinois and worked in all type of medical/hospital setting for about 10 years, which is why I'm so good at Pharma/Medical ads. Not to mention that I watch hours and hours of news everyday now. I am probably the most trained on Infectious Disease "Wardrobe stylist". I know how to protect my self and others and how to prevent the spread.

Would also want flexibility from clients on what is possible on set. Meaning, they can't have every option because it's really hard to actually get anything right now.

Kinda all of the above. My issue is specific to styling, being on set with a small crew all in PPE would be okay if not a little uncomfortable - breathing in masks, wearing gloves etc. but as a stylist there's so much off set work involved shopping and returns. Not to mention most stores aren't even open right now and would have to be a lot of online ordering and then online returns? Not sure how this would work exactly!?! Unless someone has a big prop closet and can work using that solely which never happens.

Will depend on if its in the future and how unemployment works first.

Need the money but I'm high risk.

What things do you want to know when hiring people reach out to put you on hold?

(check as many answers as you want)



87% As many job details as possible



80% What safety plans will be in place



78% Where you will be shooting



75% How many people will be on set



68% What PPE will be provided on set

How propping will be handled. Shopping and returning with stores closed. Prop storage until returns can take place. Obviously can order a lot online but need longer lead times to take delivery times into account and shipping hold ups and delays right now.

I want to feel confident that everything is being considered, and to be given permission to decline.

For some reason, getting all of the basic details about a job sometimes feels difficult and this has always bothered me. In my opinion, knowing as many details about what you can expect on a job and what you are saying yes to is now imperative.

I believe that with the possibility of many people on hold in case of last minute sickness, crew should be told if they are on hold as a backup crew. That way I know if I am holding multiple jobs as a backup. Not to detract from the hold position (ie first, 2nd hold) but that I can tell someone who wants me as a first hold that they cannot have that first, but it is probable that I will be available. I think that is going to be tricky until there is a system in place for crew and holding jobs.

If talent and crew will be tested for covid. What will be the process is people do get covid on set?

Also, as a prop stylist, my prep time concerns me. Being able to access items in time and do it safely.

Rate, reimbursement for bring in own food, kit fees...

Just the usual. I'm going to assume all production will have common sense protocol in place.

How many people would you be comfortable with on set if you had a shoot sometime during the next few months? (Assuming all possible safety measures are being taken)



Any.	And only outside if I don't need to shop or rent anything.	Depends on a space.	Depends on space and protocols in place.
It's highly unlikely for the jobs I have been working lately. Most around between 10-20.	Really that changes daily the more and less we know about transmission.	I'd say up to 7 on set. there could be others like hair and makeup and stylist. I'd say those on set should stay on set. So styling and grooming assistants should stay at their stations. Maybe 1 PA walk talent to and from set.	Depends on the size of the location could be more than 20 on a huge stage or outdoor location.
As long as space is large enough. I also think talent should only come during allowed times and not have to be there sitting around all day.	Very location specific. Shooting in Resolution Studio with a larger crew feels possible, whereas fitting the same crew in Progear's studio feels riskier.	Up to 15? I dunno, this shit is weird.	I will need to consider jobs on an individual basis, but based on the numbers at this moment, being on set still seems quite risky.
Anything more, 10-20 people could be hired for a job but not be in a room at the same time.	Has a lot to do with the size of space indoors, or if we are outdoors.	Depends, I may feel comfortable with more people.	Remote approvals would be great... no extra people ie., reps, agency, interns, clients etc.
Up to three.	It depends on how large and well equipped the shooting space it.		

What assurances do you need to feel safe to return to work? (check as many answers as you want)



66% Curve in Illinois trending down



65% Mass Covid testing so anyone is able to get tested before coming to set



47% Consistent information from our government and leaders



45% Curve in U.S. trending down



26% More information about transmission rates

All crew testing negative for covid.

All of these measures are helpful, but since I assume that not all of them will be available it seems important to say that complete and thorough measures will be necessary and appreciated.

I think this is the state of things for a long time to come, so that assurances are mostly related to everyone on set committed to a safe lifestyle - masks, mostly social distancing etc.

A viable vaccine.

testing would be nice, but it really comes down to being aware of your surroundings, and yourself. The virus gets inside your body thru eyes, nose, mouth, as far as we know. Washing hands and wearing masks goes a long way.

This isn't going away anytime soon. I've purchased ppe, alcohol, alcohol wipes, disinfectant, disposable single use applicators and face goggles. Preparing as much as possible for when go back to work.

I'm African American and have Asthma. The red bullseye is closing in on me.

This won't happen, nobody can communicate and it's disgusting. But this is what I'd like to happen.

The promise that everyone in the crew will be masked and gloved.

Detailed info from the jobs I get offered about new safety protocols.

I would honestly be fine working right now while trying to maintain proximity and wearing facemasks when that's not possible.

Know that safety guidelines (PPE, etc) are in place.

Creative / clients adjusting expectations - either scaling shoot sizes down or scheduling shot lists at a slower pace than normal.

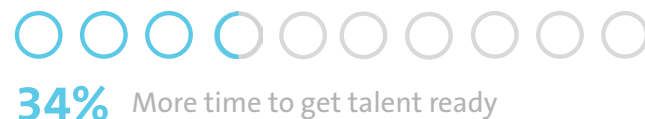
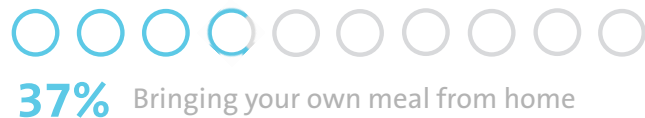
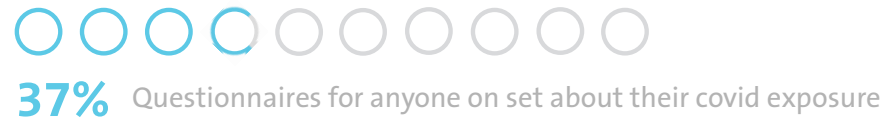
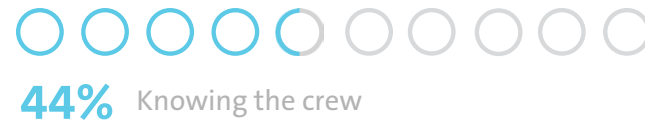
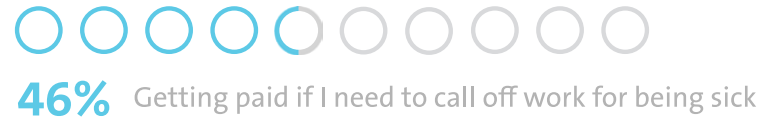
Testing would be ideal but not realistic at this time.

I am okay returning to work. I do not need assurance I feel comfortable.

It's more about the safety of the people I'll be working with if I know the rest of my crew is taking safety precautions seriously in their day-to-day life and we all continue protocol on set.

I need to be assured that as an artist I will have TIME. No more get talent ready in 10! I need to feel supported and safe in order to contribute the same to my talent.

What protocols will be most important to feel safe on set? (check as many answers as you want)



Our kit budgets should increase and not be fought.

I've gone to jobs sick with colds etc because I literally couldn't call in sick, ie truck full of ALL the props etc. So I guess it would help to feel secure knowing people wouldn't be pressured doing the same with Covid, and that it wouldn't ruin the entire job if one were to call in sick during the shoot and someone else could take over.

Concerned about the necessity of close contact between models and HMUA and wardrobe. Doesn't seem possible to social distance.

I'm okay providing my own PPE. I wouldn't expect it from a production house.

Im props styling so I also think the buy and return model is especially unethical at this time.

As the tech people crowd around the cart, even when I have additional monitors for them elsewhere. I would want assurance that people won't get into the bubble.

Medical grade PPE. Cloth and DIY is useless.

Concerned people won't take mask wearing seriously, i'd like to make sure its not an option to NOT wear it.

Mandatory hand washing especially before and after eating, restroom etc. Have hand sanitizer easily accessible.

Or reimbursement for PPE. Additionally as part of my job I need to go shopping and do returns which increases my risk factor each time I have to go out into places with other people that may or may not be taking precautions, also in even a football field sized room, if someone has COVID and we're inside with them for the standard 10-12 hours chances are high that we can contract it. [LINK TO ARTICLE BY ERIN BROMAGE.](#)

What sort of systems are in place from production to know what to expect. Have a certain standard of "cleanliness" across the board and expectations of crew and clients for safety.

With props and wardrobe, I will be interacted personally with van rental company, prop houses, stores, shipping centers and I will be bringing these items to a studio. Most props/ wardrobe gets returned so soft goods cannot be washed. Things like vases, glassware, etc can be wiped down but all of this will take extra time.

Talent wearing masks while getting ready.

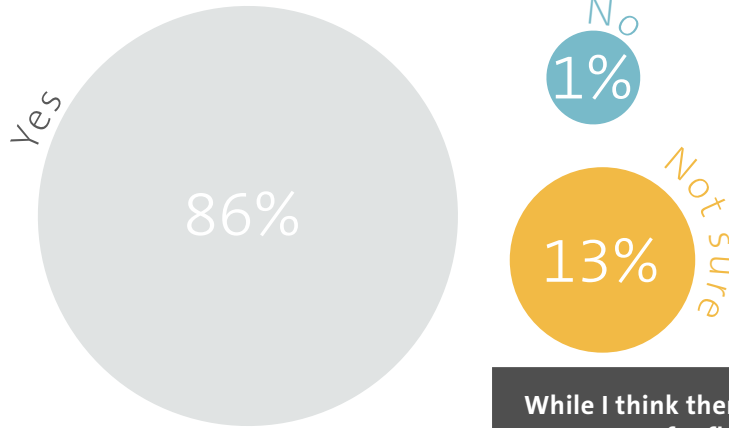
Creative direction needs to be locked in before going to set. A lot of on set discovery requires people to interact closely. I think we need to know what is happening so its clear who is doing what/when to ensure social distancing.

I honestly feel that just common sense measures are all that is required.

I think that re: the above answers "knowing the crew" is the least important measure listed here because unless a person has been tested this is only a false sense of safety. As an assistant I have safety concerns surrounding the fact that we are expected to do whatever is asked of us on set, which often means we are tasked with some of the least desirable jobs such as taking out group garbage, cleaning group bathrooms, handling or carrying other people's belongings or gear etc. I do not want to be compromised or expected to do jobs that are unsafe. Given prior expectations, I know that we may need to be our own advocates on this.

PPE for all crew. Paid medical if I should get sick. Hazard pay.

Do you think there should be standard guidelines that all productions follow?



If there are standards it takes the judgement off of anyone being overly cautious, or those who may think all precautions are too strict and not socially distance etc. If we have guidelines everyone follows people can decide if they are comfortable working or knowing your crew will all be following the same rules.

I think it would be nice if there was standards but types of production varies so widely from a three person crew shooting table top would Have much different issues than a 40 person film production crew with talent and extras location versus studio so many variables in this industry but a guideline of standards would be great.

While I think there may be some room for flexibility, I think guidelines are the easiest way to get whole crews up to speed with new expectations and safety measures. Guidelines also ensure that precautions can be simply discussed and also enforced if necessary.

Everyone should have the same standards, just like job safety expectation per OSHA.

It couldn't hurt. But most of it is common sense, right? If by now, people don't know proper behavior for Covid-19, they shouldn't be in public.

Common sense measures. Separating clients and crew. Hand sanitizer. Face masks. Attempting to maintain distance. From what I understand many catalog houses have continued to operate throughout this by using these same sensible measures.

I feel like if all producers can agree on a consistent approach and guideline to how sets should flow that would be ideal. obviously some will be more specific just like every set has its own way of flow but a standard that everyone knows going in - so there won't be confusion.

Yes, but with options for producers to add to it.

I don't know what's fully going on. Everyone is acting like we will have some disease floating around for the rest of our life that we can't stop. I'm confused about it because I've never had something like that in my life before, so I don't know what the future holds. I thought this was going to be like the last SARS situation where this would just eventually go away. From what is reported, people are acting like we will have this for the rest of human existence.

I really think that a predictable routine across productions will help everyone feel (be) safer.

I say yes, but there are so many different types of production. For example, outdoor settings seem a lot safer than indoor.

I don't know the answer to this though. So many moving parts.

Social distancing should be enforced. smallish crews, but assistants are still necessary.

Should be several tiers of rules? At the simplest level, how should a solo shooter get gear safely - those needs are much different than a product shooter with 1 assistant in a studio they own, as well as a large production that includes talent where there's inherently physical contact. I can't imagine a 1 size fits all approach will suit our unique needs.

'Suggested' guidelines are welcomed. We are freelance and can decide to work or not. Logical efforts to stay safe is expected.

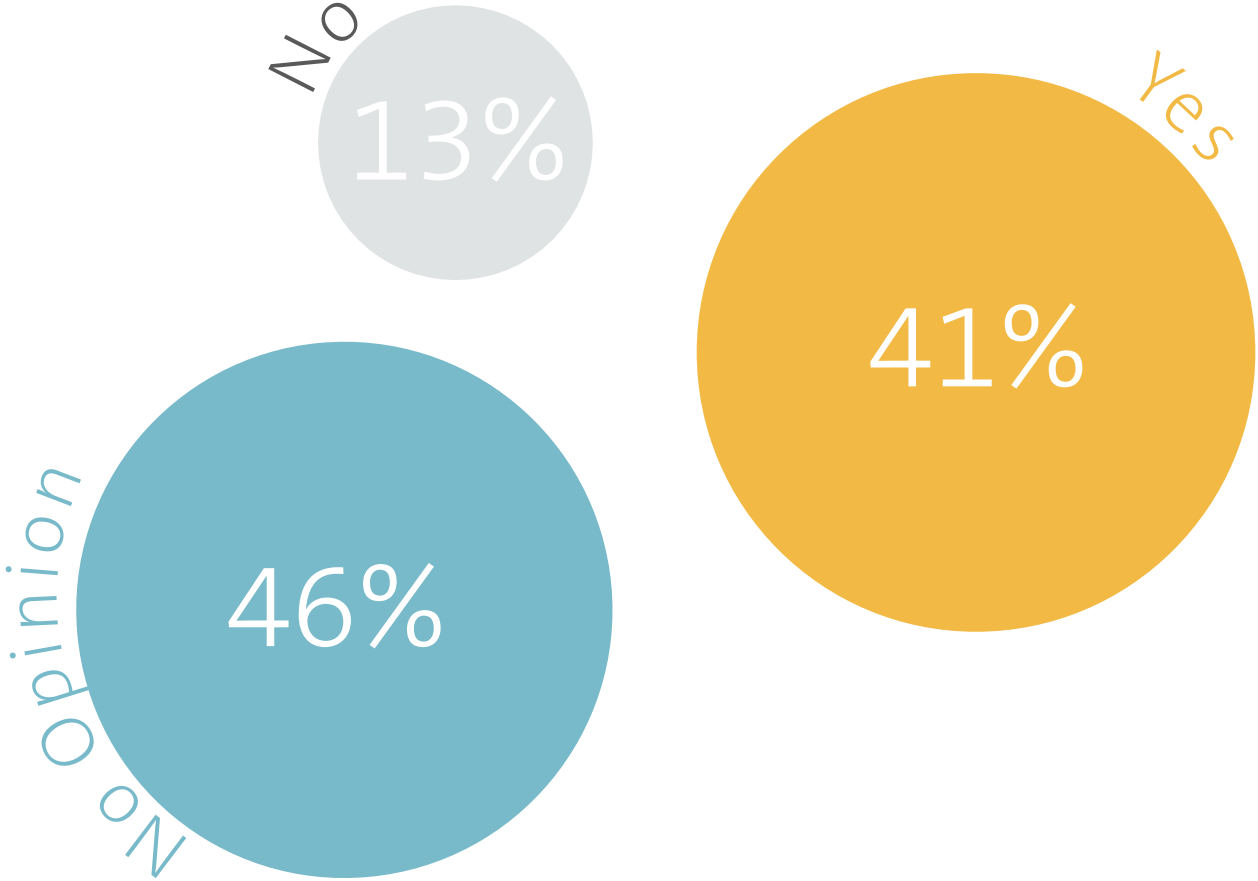
I think as we start to get back to set life it would be helpful to know that everyone is following the same rules - wearing masks, social distancing, hand washing, keeping product / props / etc on set sanitized, and any other regulations that apply.

I think being open about your lifestyle (mostly socially distant, not at all etc) and how many people you are exposed to on a regular basis. Also everyone wearing masks and larger shooting spaces.

A stylized illustration of a diverse group of people, all wearing face masks. The figures are rendered in simple line art with flat colors (shades of gray and white). They have various hairstyles and are looking in different directions, creating a sense of a community. The text 'Production Community' is overlaid on the center of the image.

Production Community

Do you feel supported by the production community during this time?



How have you been keeping up on photo industry news and conversations during the lock down?



80% Talking with other crew members



70% Talking with photographers, producers and reps



30% APA Webinars



30% Instagram Live



21% Freelancers Union



18% The Art of Freelance blog



18% ASMP Webinars



18% I am not keeping up with photo industry news/
conversations during this time



16% Workbook Radio w/ Dear Art Producer Podcast / Webinars



9% Facebook Live



7% AICP

I have turned into a full time stay at home wife and mom, so I haven't had much time to explore - but the little bit im able to see or hear about has sounded very helpful and supportive. Talking to my crew families has been super wonderful for me.

I haven't heard of most of these resources. Just took a screenshot so that I can get more involved. Thanks!

Facebook Photo Industry group.

Facebook groups.

Also talking a lot with Chicagoland area chamber of commerce.

Facebook groups

Other Webinars - The Wing, Vogue, etc.

The FB coronavirus Photo industry board has been super helpful with info.

I don't think our industry has much leadership, the way say a union crew would. I also think the needs/rates/concerns of reps and photographers are so different from crew/assistants. Fex the APA has never felt like a resource for me as it would for a photographer.

It's a weird balance right now!

Host free sanitation programs for all crew.

When non-essential workers are given the green light to work again, it would be helpful to hear from various studios and production houses if they are actually going to be actively bidding work or if they choose to play it safe a while longer. It's so hard to know when work will resume, and if a single job jeopardizes unemployment benefits and other jobs don't follow in a timely fashion, that could be financially very difficult. As an assistant, I feel this info might be passed to more senior crew, but it may not trickle down to my level.

What could the production community be doing more of to help support you during this time?

I don't really expect the production community to support me, I know everyone is struggling and we should all support each other.

I think you guys are doing an amazing job of checking in with crew (both personally and professionally), providing resources for financial aid, and keeping us informed of the newest information out there.

I think everybody's reaching out and supporting each other it's been lovely to see and experience i've had several Calls from photographers directors producers and other crewmembers just to check in And I've reached out to others as well we are a community.

I appreciate those leaders in our community who are focused around creating true safety measures and protection for crew upon our return much more than those who are just focusing on tactics for getting the industry back to work quickly. Please carefully consider the risk vs reward that those on the bottom of the pay scale will be asked to take.

Photographers set up aid for assistants but there wasn't anything for other crew. I wish that agencies and art directors would have stepped forward more, that those who hire maybe would have taken time to give advice. How do we redirect our work or portfolios, could there have been a way to network more, for example stylists who could have created content from home or in their studios, was there ongoing social media content that could be or could have been created. Maybe an online portfolio of what we have to offer remotely. A more centralized area for logistical information for our industry specifically, I am following arts organizations but we are a little different.

Stop trying to figure out how to go back ASAP! Stay home, be part of the solution.

The public showing of concern and planning for the safety and well being of all crew and production members when we return has been very encouraging!

Creating petitions and calls to explain to the govt that we need to be able to apply for both PUA and Unemployment to get the help we deserve.

I think it would be great to have a bi-weekly newsletter or some type of platform where we could post if we are looking for work or where work could also be posted. Those who are ready to get back to set and healthy could apply for jobs virtually and those who need to source crew could search the platform.

Have a database of all freelance members so information can reach everyone. Freelancers and crew members can sign up to this singular database to receive important information during times like these. That way it's accessible for everyone.

I feel like production community has been awesome sending out emails and keeping conversations going. I love Chicago production and really feel like they will do what is right to keep everyone safe moving forward.

More direct communication about what to expect next. Any gigs on the horizon.

As an individual freelance operator I don't really feel the production community needs to do anything for me.

I think the FB groups are helpful. I also think moving forward a demo video of what life on set might look like would be interesting. It sounds over the top, but I think would help people feel safe.

More discussions on the Federal loans and grants and how to navigate them. I personally am considering returning my PPP loan because I went on unemployment and I'm afraid of not using the loan correctly and getting repercussions. I would've loved to hear about the rules and paper trail that comes with this loan. Even if that came after the loan was offered.

I think it's really important for there to be an industry standard in safety protocols and rates across the board. So communication on all outlets of our industry is important and what I would like to see happening.

More convos about crews and with crew members.

We just need to slow down and take our time while we get the availability for testing going better.

Seems like a tough job is going to get even tougher! Best of luck, its going to be interesting. The good producers will do well, I worry about mediocre producers not being able to handle the extra added workload to keep everyone safe.

Raise kit rentals and rates to accommodate the increase of expenses and doing business for makeup and hair artists.

Be kind to the food assistants who need to shop for shoots! Extra time to shop (online if necessary) could be helpful.

I worry about how seriously the rest of people working with me have been taking all this. I have but if I work with them...

Pay people sick leave. Many people work sick because there is no sick pay in place.

I'd love to know what assistant's standards are for returning to set. It would suck for people to go back without having strict protocols. Specifically, photographers who hire photo assistants WITHOUT producers. Are they taking protective precaution?

Any thoughts for improvements on productions going forward during the pandemic?

It is an issue that people are all responding to this pandemic with varying degrees of concern, and that aside from testing there is no way of accounting for anyone's degree of exposure to the virus. Some individuals are at greater risk, have health concerns or live with people who do.

No one should be compromised or threatened by those who feel casually about legitimate health risks. Since it will take time for groups to get used to work flow changes, it seems like having someone dedicated to monitoring safety guidelines on set is valid.

Enforcing safety standards on set (PPE, 6' rule, cleaning, staggering crew)

To be careful Not to blackball people who aren't willing to take the risk and work until COVID is no longer a fear.

Not really. Production has gotten better with more thoughtfulness regarding crew, save one specific production company.

Main improvement is health and safety and to make sure EVERYONE is honoring it.

I think producers need to have meetings with production heads to talk about specific concerns and limitations; ie sourcing product- work stations etc for food department.

Keep the clients on set to a minimum.

Ensure to the city and the state of Illinois that we will take all precautions necessary to keep everyone safe so we can get back to work.

One of my biggest concerns is that individuals are inevitably going to disagree about what level of precautions should be taken, both while on set and in our personal lives outside of work. Both of those situations can greatly influence the safety of everyone on set. If someone comes to work and is talking about how stupid it is that we have to wear masks at Walmart or a great party they went to, I'm going to have a tough time believing that person is not putting me and my family at risk. Its a tough situation but I think there has to be somewhat of a "circle of trust" within the crew that everyone is doing everything they can (distancing, minimal contact with public spaces, masks, sanitation etc) both on AND off set to protect the crew and overall production itself.

Let's make sanitization standard, let's provide PPE in case some people weren't able to secure for themselves, have production reach out to everyone before shoot begins to ask how they feel, maybe take temperatures.

Any thoughts for improvements on productions going forward during the pandemic?

Much of stylist spend time shopping in stores - it would good to set guidelines to how many times stylist and PAs leave set to go on errands. This could put them at greater risk or bring virus on set. Also we do a lot of pre-production shopping. We will need more time to order props and schedule pick ups.

Cavicide, masks, faceshields, spray alcohol and Clorox wipes would be needed in the future.

Great questions on this!

I'm actually very comforted and happy to see how seriously producers in Chicago are taking this and the efforts they are making to connect with crew, look out for each other, and provide information and support.

Someone specifically should be hired to clean during productions.. ie bathrooms, Doors, surfaces.

Minimize amount of agency and client on set. Sometimes it's just ridiculous. So this might be a good way to help with that number. Also in terms of minimizing shopping/returns exposure and not burning the few online accounts that might shop in time. Decisions about what props and wardrobe clients want need to be very very narrowed down OR allow stylists to make those decisions and trust in them. Also because UI is such a pain to apply for and we all have lives etc... it would be great dates of bookings could be decided with more advance notice and be firm.

Thoughts or suggestions for productions beyond Covid-19?

I'd say the more information the better. If the job is going to be a grind, I'd like to know. Little budget for gear? Tell me.

It was already a pretty tough time for production work. Maybe help finding none freelance jobs for people who would like something consistent.

More financial protections for crew, deal memos and advances.

Always have at least one meat dish for lunch and don't let vegetarians take over.

I'm afraid we will be asked to do more for less compensation.

Productions will get smaller I think. I wonder what impact that will have on assisting as a sustainable profession. My guess is it will be negative. I think that also makes entry level jobs harder to come by which eventually will hurt the apprenticeship process that trains a lot of young photographers.

I think many artists will not be able to sustain themselves due to lack of work, emergency funding, and no sick pay.

I am afraid that even after weathering this COVID-19 challenge, we are going to get hit with the economic fallout in a year or two, as we did in 2009, and at that point unemployment for 1099 workers will no longer be available.

I think it will be a WHILE before we are fully working again. That scares me considering finances and the lack of help from the government.

I think it will take time to get back to the level of production we were producing. I also think we will be a less wasteful industry because resources will need to go to other places that are far more important.

I wonder if some clients will need to cut budgets and will see that they were able to survive (if they're one of the survivors) without spending money on "expensive shoots" and will minimize that spending line for normal future times.

Talent coming in hair and makeup ready and replacing my job all together.

The amount of work slashed in half.

I think it's already been tremendously affected although I'm not that young with 20+ years of experience in the industry many of the industry are young with little savings riding the freelance roller coaster The financial destruction I think is going to be the hardest for crew peeps.

I think business will decrease more than 50% for at least the next year.

Temporary: Crews will be smaller, less work for the masses. Productions will need to slow down- more time and resources needed = more \$\$\$.
Long Term: agency and client will lean toward in-house work where possible, we will possibly see more animation and less photography. HOPEFULLY we will get standardized protocols.

Clients will use more stock photography and ad \$\$ will be cut, social media ad will increase. Hopefully rates will not be cut.

I am worried as a wardrobe stylist I am concerned about return rules for product and overall budgets for keeping product worn.

Extreme safety measures. I hope we are busy and over loaded with work after all of this though! I hope stylist dont struggle bc to keep numbers low or keep less hands on, production doesn't use us as more. I hope our producers fight to keep our important jobs continue.

All of our jobs are going to be reduced most likely.

I'm afraid budgets will be slashed.

How do you think our industry will be affected?

I think that many of us who are assistants will loose work due to having minimum crew on set, and forced to find work elsewhere. This could potentially add stress to the lead stylist on set.

I think it will get busy when the ban is lifted. I'm worried to work to much at that time and expose myself and my family to to much. Seems hard to control as we are on hold with many most of the time, if those jobs all come through there you are stuck working to much. I don't think you can call to back out and try to explain that to a photographer or client.

I am very worried that a normal cadence of productions will not happen for a very long time - maybe a year, and that it is going to be hard to make a living on such a sporadic schedule. I'm also worried that brands are going to be spending a lot less on photo shoots in general, which may affect day rates.

I worry that rates will drop like they did for a while after 9/11. I hope that is not the case, but I'm still concerned.

I think we will probably be having to do more with less, doing more projects on an individual/remote basis when possible. Also managing client expectations as to how things have changed.

I fear almost all industries will be affected. I fear budgets will get cut, crew will be cut, day rates may be cut....

think there will be less work for all of us, and the budgets will be lower. more pre production decisions for wardrobe and props since less clients will be coming to the actual shoots.

Negatively. I'm scared I won't go back to work because of falling out with connections I've recently made within the industry.

I think crews will be smaller. Budgets even smaller. Probably mostly just a photographer and a model or product.

I think the work will come back slowly, a lot of my work were from out of town clients and photographers and I dont see that coming back soon. I also feel that photographers will do jobs with no crew or smaller crews which will impacted how we work and get hired, or being hired for jobs.

SO hard to know! But certainly things will change in the immediate. Will be interesting to see...

How do you think our industry will be affected?

I think people will start cutting their rates to get work. I feel like clients and agencies will have tighter budgets and the rates that we've fought for with all these years of experience will set us back 10yrs by trying to stay competitive.

I think that many people will change careers in the course of this pandemic and that we may see this more extremely in our industry.

While I hope it increases the value of our freelance workers, time will tell if we will be able to come out of this financially positive. I think the effects will hurt business far longer than the shelter in place. It will be interesting if our rates will increase because of the pandemic and cost of running business. Part of me wants to believe that to be true, but I also feel that we could be effected by lower budgets thus resulting in lower rates. With decreased people on set in the short term, work is going to be much more competitive for hire.

This could be slow moving moving forward. Hoping clients will have interest in prioritizing advertising and have the liquid to spend again. Many are still flying in from hotspots on either coast so may affect things getting scheduled for months I fear.

Uplifting Stories

Happy thoughts +

I think our industry is truly doing the best we can but I would like to see the convo switched more towards realistic next steps and a structure for photoshoots that we should all follow. Also a union would be SO helpful.

Glad to have wonderful humans to bounce frustrations, suggestions, and support with!!

I trying to have phone calls or zooms with people/friends in our community, I havent been able to get to everyone I would like to talk to but Im trying, I owe you a phone call for sure!

Love how the community has rallied for small businesses.

It meant a lot to see the “Art for Assistants” campaign go up early in the timeline of this crisis. It reminded me that we have some really amazing creatives in the industry who are appreciative of their support crew and thinking beyond their own hardships.

Generally speaking, people are happy to offer advice on filing for unemployment.

Photographers using their platforms like art for assistants, raising money for photography assistants.

A group chat with other photo peeps has been a great source of info, humor and togetherness lately!

It's been great seeing people reach out and check in on each other.

The assistants I've talked have all said they miss their work friends and family and we've shared if information about available grants and loans and their processes.

It's been amazing to see Art For Assistants come to life. I wish all of the Chicagoland Photographers participated in this. Even if full funds aren't able to be raised, at least a little goes a LONG way in helping the crew that has been your silent partners during your shoots. This goes for every avenue: photo assistants, h&m, food stylist, etc.

I have been in touch with so many crew members during this time. It feels like we really are looking out for each other.

Every producer I have worked with or am friends with have reached out and I think that is most important. Knowing that people are thinking of you and understand the stress.

I thought the Art for Assistants program was a great idea. Paul Elledge and other photographers were doing some nice work.

I've had so many people reach out just to check in, see how I was doing, and to let me know that I'm being thought of. It's really special to know that although we are all freelancers, we care for each other as family.

Good relationships with the photographers I work with who support me during this time and keep in touch somewhat regularly.

Survey crafted by

Christy Schmid
PRODUCTIONS

with help + feedback from Flynn, Sage Reed and Jenna Baltes.

I hope you all feel safe to make choices that are right for you and your specific situation. Please consider talking to the people you work with most often about safety on set and please ask as many questions as you need to in order to feel confident in your decisions.

More info at christyschmid.com/covid-19/