



Standards and Protocols for the Use of Intimacy Coordinators

January 2020

Introduction

Nudity and simulated sex often have an important role in the telling of a story, whether in the film, television or interactive world. Although performances in these scenes convey strong feelings and powerful emotions to an audience which can be integral to a storyline, SAG-AFTRA also recognizes the unique vulnerability that arises for performers when performing hyper-exposed work.

SAG-AFTRA believes that implementation of the following standards and protocols for the use of intimacy coordinators will allow productions to run more efficiently, provide a safety net for performers and establish specialized support that empowers both cast and crew.

What is an intimacy coordinator?

An **intimacy coordinator** is an advocate, a liaison between actors and production, and a movement coach and/or choreographer in regards to nudity and simulated sex and other intimate and hyper-exposed scenes.

What does an intimacy coordinator do?

- Acts as an advocate who serves as a liaison between actors and a production;
- Ensures that performers and other production personnel adhere to proper safety protocols;
- Serves as a resource in realizing a director's vision;
- Assumes the role of a movement choreographer if requested by the director to enhance believability;
- Strives to build an environment in which actors understand what is expected of them in hyper-exposed scenes and to give their **informed and continued consent**.

When do you use an intimacy coordinator?

SAG-AFTRA believes that intimacy coordinators should be hired in scenes involving nudity or simulated sex or upon request for other intimate and hyper-exposed scenes.

How does an intimacy coordinator provide value to both performers and production?

For **performers**, an intimacy coordinator:

- Provides an important safety net for performers working in hyper-exposed scenes that respects the boundaries of actors.

For a **production company**, an intimacy coordinator:

- Ensures the safety of personnel in hyper-exposed scenes, facilitates coordination between production departments to fulfill the director's vision and helps to reduce financial, insurance or market related risks as well as avoid any unnecessary production delays.

An Overview of the Standards and Protocols for the Use of Intimacy Coordinators

The standards and protocols provide a framework for the use of professional, skilled intimacy coordinators throughout the entire production process (pre-production, on-set and post-production), and are designed to protect performers and facilitate exchange and collaboration with the least disruption to the production.

For questions, please contact us at intimacy@sagaftra.org

Recommended Standards and Protocols for the Use of Intimacy Coordinators

Intimacy Coordinators Serve as Professional Skilled Artists, with Broad Industry Knowledge, Skills and Training

As industry professionals, intimacy coordinators work closely with production personnel to realize the director's vision while promoting adherence to safety related terms and conditions.

The following are key areas of experience, expertise and training required to execute the responsibilities of the position:

Experience, Expertise and Training

- Awareness of on screen sexual and intimate storytelling.
- Communication.
- Power dynamics.
- Movement coaching and masking techniques.
- Knowledge and collaboration regarding the use of modesty garments and barriers for safety, comfort and sexual health.
- Navigation of on-set culture and understanding of on-set etiquette.
- Understanding of Guild and Union Contracts that affect nudity and simulated sex.
- Movement and Safety in facilitating the physicality of scenes.
- Consent.
- Bystander Intervention.
- Anti-Harassment.
- Mental Health First Aid/Trauma.
- Gender and Sexual Diversity or Sensitivity.

Additional Requirements

- Must have a state and federal background check.
- Shadowing or mentorship experience and an ability to adapt and implement the role's responsibilities, functions and protocols on a variety of sets.

Protocols for Intimacy Coordinators in the Production Process

The intimacy coordinator:

Pre-Production

- Meets with the executive producer/writer and director at a minimum, to discuss details of script breakdown and intimate scenes to determine: 1) degree of nudity, 2) specifics of simulated sex (as applicable), and 3) any other pertinent details.
- Ensures clear communication with actors regarding any nudity, simulated sex or hyper-exposed situation.
- Meets one-on-one with performers prior to the rehearsal and filming of an intimate scene and confirms consent for the descriptive language to be used in the nudity or simulated sex rider, and any other consideration for the filming of the scene.
- Ensures continued consent during rehearsal process.
- Facilitates resolution of any discrepancies in agreements or expectations between actors and productions.
- Communicates and as needed collaborates with departments such as assistant directors, costumes, props and makeup to ensure that the performers are provided with appropriate nudity garments, barriers, and prosthetics to reflect rider details.

On-Set

- Reviews nudity riders, scene content, modesty garments and barriers with performers, directors and assistant directors.
- Ensures the proper implementation of closed-set protocols and SAG-AFTRA Guidelines.
- Serves as a resource for directors and assistant directors (as needed) with any specialized movement or choreography to ensure consent and safety while enhancing believability and director vision.
- Ensures continued consent throughout the filming of scene (both consent to what their likeness is seen performing, and how the action is achieved) while minimizing interference in production flow.
- Protects minors, consistent with SAG-AFTRA Guidelines.

Post-Production

- Is available for support post-filming, if performers have questions or concerns.
- May verify that a final cut is consistent with contractual obligations and riders.

