

Okanagan Background Casting

General Information for Background Performers

Keep an Eye on Your Emails & Text Messages!

Once you have been booked you will need to monitor your emails and text messages to stay informed.

We will do our best to give you as much preliminary information as we can so you are prepared and know what to wear & what to bring with you.

We will not get your Call Time or Location until the evening before your shoot date. The reason for this is because we get this information from the Assistant Directors on set. They don't give it to us until they have finished shooting for the day - and then we need to communicate it to you!

Sometimes we get this information after midnight! (This will likely mean that you will have an afternoon/evening call time.)

Experienced extras will check their messages before bed, when they get up and before they head to set in case there are any changes.

No Social Media

The use of cell phones on set is strictly forbidden.

Photos are not to be taken in BG Holding or anywhere on set without express permission from an AD.

If you are caught using your camera without permission you will be asked to leave.



Things to Bring to BG Holding

There can be long waits on set. Professional extras will bring a book, cards, knitting or device to keep themselves entertained while they wait.

(Production is not responsible for lost or stolen items)

Bring some snacks and water. You will be provided a meal if you work longer than 6 hours.

Bring your ID! You will have paperwork to fill out in the holding area so that you can be paid.

General Hair / Makeup / Wardrobe Information

The following is general wardrobe information. Specific wardrobe requirements for your role will be communicated to you in an email once we have it.

DOs AND DON'Ts

- Avoid bright & bold solid colours, including large amounts of white/black.
- No bold busy prints - stripes/zig zags/bold floral patterns.
- No visible logos or obvious branding.
- Arrive with makeup applied as normal (not heavy).
- No bright nail lacquer. Please advise casting if your nails have permanent/fancy/bright finishes.
- Please let casting know if you have visible tattoos. We may ask that you bring wardrobe to cover them.
- Always bring at least 3-5 outfit options. Bring accessories like a shawl, scarf, tie, hat, handbag, jacket, overcoat, etc.
- Arrive in the outfit you think is most suitable.
- Make sure your clothes are clean and wrinkle free.

You will be seen by Hair / Makeup / Wardrobe crew when you are in BG Holding. They will assist you in picking out the best outfit for your role.

Getting Paid!

You will fill out a release form when you arrive. This is also your pay voucher. Ask an AD or BG Coordinator if you need help filling it in. You will need your ID, SIN number and any supporting documentation (record of SIN, work permit, etc. as applicable). It may be helpful to take a photo of your voucher, for your records.

Okanagan Background Casting is not your employer! You'll need to contact the Production company directly if there are any pay discrepancies. Your cheques will be mailed to you or to your agent within 2-4 weeks.



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If You Have an Agent...

Please let us know if you have an agent and make sure to fill the paperwork out accurately.

You need to put your Agency and their address on your forms. Your pay will go directly to them and be re-directed to you, unless you have another arrangement.

Terminology

BG: Background - collectively extras are referred to as 'the BG' or Extras.

BACKGROUND HOLDING: This is where the BG are held while waiting to go on set.

SET: Where the action is! You will be escorted to and from set from BG Holding.

AD: Assistant Director. The 1st AD will direct the Background Performers.

CONTINUITY: If your role has continuity it means you will likely work more than one day. You may be shooting the same scenes on different days - and they may want you to wear the same clothes and look the same. You will need to remember what you wore and did on set.

SECOND TEAM: These are the people who take the place of actors during set up and rehearsals, etc. They are the Stand-ins, Body & Stunt Doubles, etc.

CIRCUS: The area where the trucks, catering trucks, tents and trailers are set up on the filming location.

WRAP: When performers have finished for the day. Always check with an AD to make sure you are not needed any longer before you go home.

Taking Direction on Set

When you are on set you will hear a number of instructions from the ADs, such as:

'BACK TO ONE' or 'BACK TO FIRST POSITION': Go back to your starting position.

'CROSS': This is called out when a Performer crosses directly in front of the camera, to warn the camera operator.

'BACKGROUND!' or 'BACKGROUND ACTION!': When you hear this on set it's the cue for Background Performers to start their actions.

'LOCK IT UP!': Called out to indicate that all noise, traffic, activity or action should be halted as shooting is about to begin.

'ROLLING!' or 'ROLL CAMERA!': Called by the AD to start the camera rolling. All crew and BG in holding areas must be silent!



Other Tips!

- You may be asked to mime / pretend to speak. If so, try saying names of fruit! Mouthing the words 'watermelon, apple, pear', etc. can make it look like you're speaking.
- Keep track of your movements on set. You may have to do the same thing over and over again while they film different angles.
- DO NOT LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA! (unless directed to!)
- Be sure to let an AD or BG Coordinator know if you need to leave BG Holding to use the washroom or smoke/vape, etc. We need to keep track of where every person is at all times in case you're called to set.
- Make sure you use the washroom, have a snack, etc. before going to set. You may be there a while.
- Bring things to keep you comfy! Warm clothes, a blanket, gloves, raincoats, fans, etc.
- HAVE FUN!!!!

Parents or guardians must remain on set with children 16 and under.



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IMPORTANT!

BC RESIDENCY

Most, if not all productions filming in BC require background performers to be BC Residents.

You will need to prove that you are entitled to work in BC and that you reside in this province prior to being booked.

DOCUMENTS WE'LL NEED FROM YOU

Documents that are acceptable are government ID (Drivers Licence, Medical Card, Passport, etc.) **AND EITHER** your last Notice of Assessment from the CRA **OR THREE** documents identifying your residence (utility bill, phone bill, property taxes, bank statement, vehicle registration, insurance, etc.).

Obtaining these documents prior to being booked is crucial so it's a good idea to take photos/scans of the required documents ahead of time so you are ready to submit when we contact you.

COVID-19

Because of Covid-19 there are a number of restrictions when it comes to background casting.

Safety measures pertaining to Covid-19 will be communicated to you when you are booked. This information will include social distancing procedures, masks usage, sanitizing / hand washing stations, etc.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Due to people being in close proximity to each other in BG holding or on set, we are asking applicants if they have friends and family in their 'bubble' that would also like to be extras.

Depending on the scene and the role, people who apply in groups of 2 or more may be given preference when we are making our selections.

FOLLOW US!

Please make sure you have liked / followed the Okanagan Background Casting Facebook page. We will post casting calls to the page when looking for people and it's the easiest way to be notified.

In addition to that site, if you are self-represented it's also a good idea to keep an eye on the following local Facebook sites:

OSIF (Okanagan Society of Independent Filmmakers)
Okanagan Actors Alliance
Auditions Kelowna

People post there regularly looking for actors and extras.

LONG HOURS

There may be long periods of waiting when it seems nothing is happening but on set, actors may be rehearsing lines, the crew may be moving equipment, etc. Please be patient...you are getting paid even while you're waiting around!

The hours can be long and the weather can be poor. When you accept your booking to be an extra, please know WE NEED YOU ALL DAY LONG!

You will need to remain on set until we complete the shooting of that scene.

If for any reason you cannot spend twelve or more hours with us, please let us know prior to booking!