

## Guide for TV MJs Working Remotely

**1. Check in** with your EP and/or producer after checking in with the 206 instructor.

(Zoom link for meetings at 8 a.m., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. will be posted in Slack.)

**2. Pitch stories** you think are newsworthy in Trello.

- Go to the Story Pitches board for your day of air (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs.).
- Follow the prompts shown on the sample card.
- The slug (or name) of your story should be two or three words that best describe your story.
- Aim to get your pitch in Trello BEFORE your shift begins. Try to pitch one story, including possible sources, interviewees, and WHY it's a today story we care about!

**3.** Once you get your **story assignment**, ask any of the following questions (and more) so you're clear about what to do:

- Where are you getting information? (e.g. Associated Press, City News Service, city official, LAPD, etc.)
- Who should you reach out to for an interview (via Zoom)? Think about how and what source adds to your story.
- Do you need to shoot or find video for the story?
- Will your story require a graphic?

**4.** What's the **format** of your story?

- Copy - words only (usually :15 - :25)

- Intro - introduction to video, sound, or a graphic; usually words only
- VO (voice over) - words that will be read while video is playing (usually by an anchor)
- SOT - (sound on tape only, no script needed) - from your interview subject
- ANCG (full screen graphic) - words will be read while graphic is shown (used when there's no video OR there's a lot of information)
- Tag - words only that can follow a VO, SOT or ANCG; final part of story

**5. Research:** As a multimedia journalist, research is often the first thing you will do for your story. Here are a few sources you may consider:

- City News Service (CNS): [socialnews.com/news](http://socialnews.com/news)  
Login: usctv Password: checkallday
  - Associated Press: [apnews.com](http://apnews.com) (see AP wires in iNews or search AP online)
  - LA Times, NY Times, Washington Post, CNN.com
- VERIFY FACTS by checking multiple sources!
- Call/email official sources (e.g.. DPS, Mayor's office, Dr. Sarah Van Orman, etc.)
  - Call/email community sources (e.g. CHIRLA, Community Coalition, LA Community Action Network, etc.) Nonprofits are often good sources for specific issues and usually accessible for interviews!

**6. Rundown:** This is where you write your story. (Each day has its own rundown.)

- Check the format of your story (some stories start with Intro for the anchor, but some do not)

- Check to see how long/how much time is allotted for your story (look on the far right)
- Type scripts in all CAPS
- Type who reads the story IF it is indicated in the Talent/Anchor column
- Include CGs on your script (location for VO, name/title for SOT)

**7. Interviews via Zoom:** (no in-person interviews at this time):

- Be sure to let the interviewee know you are recording
- Make sure you're the one hosting the interview, so that the footage saves to your computer after the interview
- Be sure you record on your computer OR in the cloud
- Get interviewees to say and spell their name at start of interview
- Try to limit the interview to no more than 5 minutes
- Plan 3 to 4 questions and listen for anything else you want to follow up on  
(Think about information you need from each source - i.e. expertise, original point of view, personal reaction.. NOT something you can find on a website. EPs, producers or 206 instructors can review questions if you are not sure.)
- Close by asking if the interviewee has anything else they want to add

**8. Shooting video:**

- Social distancing must be adhered to if you shoot video with a camera and/or phone
- Hold phone horizontally

- Get variety of steady shots; a few wide shots, more medium shots and close up shots
- Hold each shot for TEN SECONDS; this will help when editing
- Avoid pans and zooms
- Always shoot more video than you think you need!

**9 . Selfie introductions:** (talk with your producer about this as a possibility for your story; ask producer/EP/instructors for additional instructions):

- Before recording yourself, write a script to be approved by producer
- Be sure to record in a well lit, quiet place
- Avoid beds, personal items, large distracting objects or all white walls in the background
- Try to talk clearly and look into the camera/phone, which should be at eye level
- Do 2 to 3 takes so you can choose the best one

## **10. Sending in your video(s) and interview(s)**

- Check in with producer or EP before sending video/interviews to make sure you only send what is needed for the newscast
- Be sure you give the video or interview the same SLUG (name) that is in Trello and/or the newscast rundown
- Send in video using [Mobile2Air](#) (if shot on your phone)
- Send any interviews done via Zoom to XChange (you will need access to the [USC VPN](#) - virtual private network)
- More instructional videos are on [resources.uscannenbergmedia.com](https://resources.uscannenbergmedia.com)

**11. Update Trello** as you work on your story

**12. Check in** with the producer and instructors when you have updates. Do not disappear for 2 hours! Treat your shift as if you were in class or the Media Center. If you are not available during your shift, you risk not getting credit for attending!

**13. Check in** with the producer and 206 instructor BEFORE the end of your shift.

This is an important part of your shift as you are often going to hand off your story to another student.

**If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, please talk with your 206 instructor, faculty advisor Stacy Scholder, or your day-of-air executive producer. Producing quality content for a day-of-air newscast is a TEAM EFFORT. Every MJ's contribution is important, valued, and needed to make the newscasts as informative, interesting, and relevant as possible for the USC community and beyond.**

**Fall 206 instructors**

M - Kris Kelley	<a href="mailto:kell743@usc.edu">kell743@usc.edu</a>
T - Justin Pye	<a href="mailto:jpye@usc.edu">jpye@usc.edu</a>
W - Sandy Kazarian	<a href="mailto:shkazari@usc.edu">shkazari@usc.edu</a>
T - Kris Kelley	<a href="mailto:kell743@usc.edu">kell743@usc.edu</a>