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Information for Background Performers

How does this work?

- I usually have an advance indication of numbers of actors who are needed on given days. As soon as I receive that information, I put out an email to all of our Background Actors to check availability. I will put actors on the Call Out list on a first response basis.
- I can usually confirm that you will be working a day and can give you wardrobe and location information a day in advance.
- I will never have your Call Time until the night before.
- All communication and information will be via email, so it is important that you provide us with an email address that you check regularly.
- If for any reason you can't make it, please let me know asap so that I can replace you.

Wardrobe: Background Actors are responsible for supplying their own clothes. It is important to really think about the character you are playing. You are expected to take at least three choices for Wardrobe Saff to look at. Don't forget about accessories – shoes, scarves, jewelry, hats, etc. No Logos on anything. Most background actors travel to set with a small suitcase on wheels and/or clothing on hangers.

What to do when you get to Set?

1. Look for **EXTRAS HOLDING**. You will see people with walkie talkies. Just say that you are a Background Performer and they will direct you to where you need to go.
2. You will have to sign in.
 - **Your agency is CTM International.**
 - **The phone number is 604-733-8837.**
 - **Your agent is Sandy Webster.**
 - **Take your SIN # if you don't have it memorized.**
3. You will have to sign out.
4. You will be paid \$10 an hour - plus overtime, depending on hours. You could be there 4 hours and it could be 14.

Other important details

- No cameras on set. Photos in the extra holding area are fine.
- You will be fed and there will be lots of snacks and coffee and juice.....r
so no need to take food or water.
- No live cell phones on set.

On-Set Terms

BLOCKING

Planning the position and movement an actor takes or does in a scene.

CALL TIME

The time you are to report to the set or location for work. It is always good practice to arrive 15 to 30 minutes before your actual call time.

CALL SHEET

This printed form lists the day's filming schedule along with the cast, crew, and props needed.

CAMERA READY

Definition for anyone who is ready to appear in front of the camera. Extras are usually instructed to arrive on set "Camera Ready." This means you should arrive completely dressed, with your hair and makeup done, and ready to begin for the day.

CAMERA RIGHT / CAMERA LEFT

Directions assigned when facing the same way the camera lens is facing. This means that actors and extras facing the camera need interpret the directions as opposite. For example if you are facing the camera and are asked to move a few steps camera right you will actually move to your left.

CIRCUS

The area where the trucks, catering trucks, tents and trailers are set up at the filming Location

CONTINUITY

The term for matching shots, action, or locations of actors, extras, or props. The matching of two shots from different camera angles or multiple takes so the shots seem to appear to match each other as if occurring at or within a time frame. To keep continuity, actors and extras need to repeat actions exactly as they occurred previously so to match the action when switching camera angles in the editing process.

FEATURED

When an extra is clearly visible on camera and not just a blur in the background.

FIRST TEAM

The main or principal actors. The stars of the show.

HOLDING

A room or area where extras are usually sent when not working on the set. It is important for extras to stay in the holding area when not working so they can easily be located when they are needed.

HONEYWAGON

The name of the big truck trailer with several individual doors on the side. This truck houses the bathrooms, changing rooms, and sometimes doubles as offices for crew members.

HOT SET

Any set or location that is being used for filming or taping. Even if the cameras are not rolling, a location can be considered "Hot" if all the props, lights, and camera arrangements are set up and ready. It is important to not disturb anything on a Hot Set as to maintain Continuity.

LOCATION

The set, stage, or area where filming is being done.

SET

The area used in filming a motion picture. A Set is usually a constructed environment designed to appear as a natural environment or existing location when filmed. Sets are frequently used because they are easier to maintain and control than are real locations.

TAKE

The single continuous action recorded for a scene. Each assembled scene usually consists of many different takes comprising several different camera angles.

UPGRADE

Like getting a raise or promotion, an upgrade is when an individual is moved from being an Extra to a Stand In, Photo Double, or Principal Player. Upgrades also provide higher pay rates.

WRAP

When shooting is done for the day You cannot leave the set until you are WRAPPED.
(Told that you can sign out.)

Verbal Cues on Set

ACTION

This is the cue the Director yells when the scene should start and the actors should begin their movements and/or dialogue. Extras usually begin their actions when "background action" is called.

BACKGROUND ACTION

This is the cue for the extras to begin their on camera movements. Often it is the 2nd Assistant Director or 2nd 2nd who calls "Background Action" just before the Director gives the call for "Action" and the principal actors begin their movement and/or dialogue.

BACK TO ONE

This is your command to reset and return to your starting position. When "Back to one!" or "From the top!" is called this means that the same shot will be done again. You will need to repeat same action as before.

CUT

The command given by the Director to stop operation of camera, action, and/or sound recording equipment. When you hear this command freeze where you are and wait for further direction.

CUT & HOLD

An order called out by the Director freezing all principal action until released.

FROM THE TOP

Same as "Back to One." This is your command to reset and return to your starting position. When "From the top!" is called this means that the same shot will be done again. You will need to do the same action as before.

ROLLING

Term used when the film camera is on and operating. Small wheels and gears actually roll the film out of the magazine, into the camera body, past the film gate and lens, on through the camera body, and back into the magazine -- hence the term rolling. "Rolling," or "Speed" will be heard on set as the camera operator starts the camera just before the action command is given.

SPEED

A call given by the sound mixer and camera operator when the sound recorder and film camera are running at the proper speed and the command for action can be given. Actors and extras should be on their marks ready to begin by now since the very next call will most likely be "action!"