



# Film Permit Waiver Instructions

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division

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The Ventura County Planning Division uses two zoning ordinances when reviewing film permit applications: the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (for structures and uses within the coastal zone) and the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (for structures and uses outside of the coastal zone). The Coastal or the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance will apply based on the location of the production.

A “film permit with waivers” is required when filming activities exceed specific thresholds as outlined in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance or the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance. The thresholds for waivers differ between the Coastal and the Non-Coastal Zones. This waiver process is in lieu of a much longer discretionary permitting process, subject to environmental review and hearings, which might be required when these thresholds are exceeded.

For filming in the Non-Coastal Zone, waivers are required when the following occurs:

- Filming activity takes place after hours, before 7:00 AM or after 10:00 PM;
- Filming results in excessive noise (e.g., explosions, gunfire, aircraft), light, glare, or dust exceeding that which is normal for the area, except when the nearest residence is more than 2,000 feet from the noise source;
- There are road closures that exceed three minutes in duration;
- Filming activity exceeds a total of 60 days on any lot in a 180-day period, including prep and strike days; or,
- Other thresholds listed in Section 8107-11.1.a-f of the *Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance* are exceeded.

For filming in the Coastal Zone, the following thresholds apply:

- There is after hours filming activity between the hours of 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM on weekdays or between 8:00 PM to 8:00 AM on the weekend;
- There are road closures that exceed three minutes in duration;
- Filming is proposed on properties zoned as Residential Beach or Residential Beach Harbor; or,
- Other thresholds listed in Section 8175-5.6.5 of the *Ventura County Coastal Zoning Ordinance* are exceeded.

Some properties have zoning that does not allow the issuance of a film permit with waivers. In these areas, filming cannot exceed the above thresholds without triggering the requirement for a discretionary permit. To find out what the zoning is on your property or at a filming location, check the [Ventura County GIS tool](#).

## Film Permit Waiver Process

Requests for a film permit with waivers should be made at least one week prior to the start of filming activities to allow adequate time for review. To expedite processing, the below information should be submitted as soon as possible:

- A detailed **site map** of the areas used for filming activities. The site map must indicate where all filming activities take place. This includes the areas where prep, filming, and strike occur, and related parking/base camp areas. If there are multiple locations, submit a site map for each location. To view a sample site map, click [here](#). If the production will need to use a private road to access the film location, the driving route must also be provided.
- A draft **film permit waiver statement form**. This form must be submitted to the Film Permit Coordinator for approval prior to canvassing the neighborhood. The Film Permit Coordinator will verify all pertinent information is included and accurate. The film permit waiver statement form can be downloaded at this [link](#). If a more detailed description of filming activities is necessary (i.e. maps, production schedules, call times), attach it to the form.

Where it is believed that there is a high percentage of residents in the waiver area who do not speak English, waiver forms in Spanish will need to be prepared. The film permit waiver statement form in Spanish can be downloaded [here](#).

The Film Permit Coordinator will provide a **radius map and address list** to the applicant. Note that there may be more than one dwelling unit at each parcel. Waivers are required to be distributed to each residence within the radius. Each accessory dwelling unit (ADU), farmworker dwelling unit, and apartment unit is required to receive a waiver statement.

Once the film permit waiver statement form is approved by the Film Permit Coordinator, distribute the forms to one hundred percent (100%) of the impacted residences. Permits will only be issued where approval is obtained from **fifty percent plus one (50%+1)** of the impacted residences.

### Radius Area

A radius area is the distance from the permit area(s) where the filming activities are taking place. It encompasses all the residences which may be impacted by the filming activities:

- In areas designated Open Space, Rural, or Agriculture in the *Ventura County General Plan*, a radius of 1,000 feet of the boundary of the film permit area(s) is required.
- In areas designated Urban and Rural Community in the *Ventura County General Plan*, a radius of 300 feet of the boundary of the film permit area(s) is required.

- In the Non-Coastal Zone only, residents of lots along a private easement that the production will use to access the film location must also be included in the notification process.

## **Waiver Distribution**

During the film permit waiver process, the film production is required to prove waivers were distributed to one hundred percent (100%) of the residences which may be impacted by the filming activities. The distance of the “radius area” is determined by the General Plan designation of the property, as described in the Radius Area Section. Residents must sign the waiver form and indicate if they “approve” or “disapprove” of proposed filming.

Notification of residents and/or property owners beyond that which is required by the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance may be required as determined by the Planning Director.

## **How Waivers Will Be Counted ([Sample Completed Waiver Form](#)):**

- The film production will need to obtain **fifty percent plus one (50%+1)** approval from the residences which may be impacted by the filming activities.
- Only one per residence will be counted, regardless of the number of occupants of a residence. Property owners who may live elsewhere do not have to sign waivers.
- Residents who sign the waiver must be 18 years of age or older.
- If there are multiple dwelling units on a lot (e.g., apartment units, condo units, mobile homes, farmworker dwelling, granny flats, etc.) a waiver must be sought from each resident of a dwelling unit. Apartment managers, for example, cannot sign on behalf of all the tenants in a building.
- Property owners cannot sign off for multiple residences under their ownership. A resident in each residence must sign off on the waiver form.
- If animals (e.g. horses) are housed in stalls on property within the affected area, then the caretaker or owner/keeper of these animals must sign the waiver (even where there is no residence on the property).
- “Vacant” residences and properties with no dwelling units or animals housed within 1,000 feet of the boundary of the permit area are not included in the waiver process and do not need to receive a waiver statement.
- “No response” from a residence will count as “disapprove” of the filming activity.
- Any property with “limited access” (e.g., fenced homes, gated communities, barking dogs, etc.) where a response is not collected will count as “disapprove.”

- Make sure that each waiver statement is completed by the resident (i.e., signed, and checked “approve” or “disapprove”). Otherwise, the waiver statement will count as “disapprove” of the filming activity.

The applicant and/or the production company is responsible for abiding by the above provisions when seeking waivers for a film production.

Once completed, submit all documents to the Film Permit Coordinator for review.

### **Cost of Film Permit with Waivers**

The fee for a film permit with waivers is updated on an annual basis. To estimate the cost of a film permit with waivers, review the film permit fee calculator [here](#). As with all film permits, there is a business license fee for each day of filming, a location fee for each location, and a fire department review fee. The application fee is a one-time fee paid when submitting the application, and all other fees are assessed after Planning staff reviews the proposed filming activity.