



FILM READY PROGRAM FAQs For Localities

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This FAQ helps New Jersey municipalities and counties implement Film Ready requirements, covering permitting, fees, notice, public-safety planning, and insurance standards, and points to templates you can adopt today.

Q: Who can be certified?

A: All New Jersey municipalities and counties are eligible, provided they complete the program's five steps: attend a workshop, designate a liaison, adopt a permit process via ordinance or Code of Conduct, upload locations to Reel-Scout, and submit local production resources.

Ordinance, Code of Conduct & Fees

Q: Do we need a film ordinance or can we use a Code of Conduct?

A: Either is acceptable. A film ordinance must include the program's required elements (fees, permit process, waivers, notice, permit periods, additional permits, bond, communication, insurance). A Code of Conduct outlines expectations without a fee schedule but should address core operational topics such as hours, parking, signage, permissible changes, equipment storage, sanitation, and pedestrian access.

Q: What fees are allowed?

A: **Permit application fees** (basic, expedited, nonprofit/student), the **Daily Film Permit** for public property (tiered by project budget), and a **Public Property Location Fee** negotiated with the production. No municipal fee may be charged for daily filming entirely on private property that doesn't impact public rights-of-way. Hidden fees are prohibited.

A Locality may assess additional fees for equipment/vehicle inspections, provided the Locality demonstrates that such fees are standard, customary, and comparable to fees charged by similarly situated Localities.

Q: Do you need to charge the maximum fee outlined in the fee schedule?

A: No. The fee schedule establishes a range of fees that may be assessed. The fee charged may be less than the maximum amount, but it may not exceed the cap outlined in the fee schedule.



Q: How are Location Fees defined?

A: A Location Fee is a charge negotiated between the Locality and a production to use the Locality's land/premises. It should specify payment amount, schedule, terms, and rates for prep days, filming days, overtime, and cancellations. Location Fees are distinct from permit fees and must not serve as hidden fees.

Q: What is a Film Permit?

A: A Film Permit is an official authorization from a town, borough, city, county or government agency that grants a production entity legal permission to film on public property while ensuring compliance with local laws and managing potential disruptions (including but not limited to noise, light levels, traffic, etc.) and covering liability for activities involving stunts or equipment. It acts as an agreement detailing the scope of filming (location, time, crew, effects, etc.) and protects filmmakers from fines and legal issues while establishing professionalism.

Q: Can a Film Ready Locality provide flexibility from provisions of its Film Ordinance for a film or television production?

A: Yes. A Film Ready Locality may include a blanket waiver provision in its Film Ordinance authorizing the Film Permit Representative, at their discretion, to waive or modify applicable provisions of the Ordinance for a film or television production, as authorized by the Locality.

Notice & Permit Periods

Q: Who must receive notice of filming?

A: Immediately adjacent residents, businesses, and merchants potentially impacted by added light/noise or impaired foot/vehicular traffic. Localities may ask for written, hand-delivered or registered USPS notice at least three (3) calendar days prior to filming and proof of service no later than two (2) days prior.

Q: What hours can we set?

A: Permit periods should at minimum allow filming from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., with crew wrap by 10:00 p.m, Monday - Sunday. Night restrictions apply only to exterior filming. Localities must allow weekend and night filming unless pre-existing laws (e.g., Blue Laws) prohibit.

Public Safety Plan

Q: Who participates in the public safety planning meeting?

A: Before filming, the police chief and the chief executive officer (e.g., business administrator), the chief fire safety officer (e.g., fire chief), and any designated public safety official meet with the producer/location



manager to agree on a public safety protection plan. Producers must disclose planned interior/exterior sequences to engage relevant departments.

Q: How are public safety services billed?

A: Off-duty police staffing and fire inspections are billed at the Locality's standard hourly rates under the agreed public safety plan.

Insurance Requirements

Q: What proof of insurance is required?

A: A Certificate of Insurance from an insurer with AM Best rating of at least A-VI, evidencing required coverages for all filming activities. Coverage must apply to the applicant and any agents, representatives, employees, or subcontractors.

Q: What Commercial General Liability limits apply?

A: Localities may require up to a maximum \$5,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate per project for bodily injury and property damage. However, localities may require higher limits or additional insurance coverage as determined by their risk manager on a case-by-case basis, as long as it is disclosed in writing in advance of production. The Municipality shall be included as an additional insured on a primary and non-contributory basis. Limits may be satisfied via a combination of underlying and umbrella/excess policies.

Example for informational purposes only:

The applicant shall provide the Municipality with a Certificate of Insurance as proof of insurance for all filming activities evidencing the following required coverages:

- Automobile Liability Insurance which shall be written to cover any owned, hired or non-owned automobiles/vehicles used by the insured or its staff and licensed for road use. Limits of liability for bodily injury and property damage shall not be less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence as a combined single limit.
- Worker's Compensation Insurance applicable to the laws of the State of New Jersey and shall include an endorsement to extend coverage to any State, which may be interpreted to have legal jurisdiction and Employer's Liability Insurance with limits of no less than \$100,000/\$500,000/\$100,000.

The Municipality shall be included as an Additional Insured on all policies, except Workers Compensation, on a primary, non-contributory basis for both ongoing and completed operations. Additional insured status shall apply to the full limits of liability purchased by the applicant, even if those limits are in excess of the



minimums set forth herein. Waiver of Subrogation in favor of additional insureds applies to all policies where allowable by law.

Sample Documents

[Sample Ordinance](#)

[Sample Municipal Code of Conduct](#)

[Sample County Code of Conduct](#)