

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

if you don't find the information you need here please contact the Placer-Lake Tahoe Film Office at 530-889-4091 or go to our website: www.placer.ca.gov/films

[FILM ORDINANCE](#)

[FILM REGULATIONS](#)

[PLACER COUNTY FILM PERMITS](#)

COSTS

How much does a county film permit cost? THEY'RE FREE!

How much do county-owned locations cost? (NOTE: we're not referring to private properties) They're **FREE** unless there is already a fee levied for the use of the space. For instance, county campground sites and our Veteran Halls have a use fee. A production would be expected to pay these. The vast majority of county-owned properties do not charge use fees.

Does the county charge cost recovery fees?

Yes, on a case by case basis, depending on the county-owned location and the production's impact. The production company may be charged for staff time and equipment. Most basic productions do not incur these charges (i.e., dialogue only, small cast & crew, no stunts or traffic impact, pyro, SFX, late night filming, animals, monitors required, etc.).

OBTAINING A COUNTY FILM PERMIT/APPLICATION PROCESS

Who must obtain a county film permit when filming in Placer County?

All commercial media productions and high school/college student media productions. This includes but is not limited to feature, independent and short films, TV shows (episodic, documentary, reality, game shows, etc.); trailers, commercials; music videos; social media/web content shows & ads; commercial print photography (magazine ads, catalog shoots); PSAs; corporate.

Do I need a film permit if I film at Lake Tahoe?

You can assume the answer is YES. But who's? Lake Tahoe is very large (approx. 21 mi x 12 mi). The lake straddles two states: the western half is in California; the eastern half is in Nevada - and split between three counties. There are also multiple federal, state, county, and city jurisdictions around the lake, some with regulations also affecting private property. Please contact the Film Office for assistance in sorting out what permits you may need.

What locations in Placer County require a county film permit?

1. County-owned locations & properties including county roads, buildings, and lands.
+ Insurance – the production company provides specific Proofs of Insurance to the County: [General Insurance Policy for Filming](#).
2. Locations in unincorporated Placer County including private properties.
Insurance goes to the property owner, per their insurance requirements. FYI – the Lake Tahoe area within our county's border is unincorporated however there are also state & federal lands and properties in this area and they have their own permit & insurance requirements.

Do I need a county film permit if I am filming on private property?

Yes, if the private property is in the unincorporated area of the County.

Do I need a county film permit if I am filming on city, state or federal property/land?

Generally, a county film permit is not required if the location is owned by another government jurisdiction because they have their own permit requirements. There may be exceptions: for instance, if you are filming in the Tahoe National Forest and have a film permit from them but want to also film on a county road going through their forest lands you need a county film permit to film on the county road.

Some of the government jurisdictions within our county borders include:

1. Federal lands and facilities such as the US Forest Service & Bureau of Reclamation;
2. State lands & facilities such as buildings, beaches, fairgrounds, parks & recreations areas.
3. Our six incorporated cities of Auburn, Colfax, Lincoln, Loomis, Rocklin, Roseville have their own film permitting processes. [See City Contact on Film Permit page.](#)

How long does it take to process a county film permit?

It varies because every production is different. We have a goal of 24 – 48 hours not including holidays and weekends for the most basic productions. We recommend contacting the Film Office in advance of submitting your complete application in case the review process brings up any special provisions or requirements that must be met prior to the permits being issued.

How do I start a new application for a county film permit? [Start here](#)

How do I go back to my [uncompleted/unsubmitted](#) application to update it?

INSURANCE

Do I need proof of insurance to film on county-owned property? [General Insurance Policy for Filming](#)

Yes - The application will not proceed to the review process without the proper insurance.

However, if you're filming on private property provide proof of insurance to the property owner, per their insurance requirements.

DRONE POLICY

Commercial production companies and their subcontractors planning to film using drones (UAS)

1. Must comply with FAA regulations, Part 107. If the device take-offs or lands the device from county-owned property, Placer County may impose specific requirements, on a case by case basis.
2. Several types of documentation are required as part of the application process. See the link above for all drone requirements.

B-ROLL POLICY

Placer County defines B-roll activities very specifically (see link above). Please review the definition. If your production meets all of the definition requirements and restrictions, you may use the term “B-Roll” as a description in the application. Your film activities are restricted to those limits in the definition.

COUNTY LOCATIONS WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

FORESTHILL BRIDGE - Also known the Auburn-Foresthill Bridge. Please contact the Film Office for more details. Here are some basics:

1. Filming at this location is allowed on a case-by-case basis.
2. The bridge and road (Foresthill Road) is county-owned property. County permit & insurance requirements apply.

3. The property below the bridge is part of the Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA) – this is state property. If production activity impacts the property below the bridge a State Parks permit and insurance is required.
4. Other permits and agencies may be involved depending on the nature of the production. The Film Office can help determine what other parties may be involved.
5. Because of the multiple county and outside agencies involved, permitting this location requires substantial lead time.
6. Prior to submission of the application, the relevant personnel from the production company must attend a planning/scouting meeting with representatives from all involved local agencies. The Film Office will set this up. This meeting is usually held several weeks or more in advance. This group meeting requirement may be waived for the simplest, small productions that don't involve traffic control, stunts, pyro and other complexities. Please contact the Film Office for more information.

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE/SUPERIOR COURT in Auburn some basics:

1. Filming at this location is allowed on a case-by-case basis.
2. It is a functioning State Superior Courthouse, operating in a county-owned building; the building also houses a County Museum.
3. Court use and court activities are not altered to accommodate a production's needs. This is also generally true regarding public access to the museum rooms.
4. Weekend filming is less restrictive because the courtrooms are not in use however the museum spaces are open to the public.
5. Production must scout the facility in advance with county staff prior to submitting an application. A checklist will be provided to production to assist with the scout and application process.
6. Plan extra lead time for this location.
7. [Historic Courthouse/Superiors Court Filming Policy](#)

WESTERN STATES ENDURANCE RUN

This annual 100-mile people race is held in July and precedes the horse race by about a month. The race starts in north Lake Tahoe and finishes in Auburn, CA, crossing multiple permitting jurisdictions. Requests for filming this event start with the race organizers. Our office can provide contacts.

WESTERN STATES/TEVIS CUP 100 MILE HORSE RACE

This is an annual 100-mile horse race held in August. The race starts in north Lake Tahoe and finishes in Auburn, CA, crossing multiple permitting jurisdictions. Requests for filming this event start with the race organizers. The Film Office can provide contacts.

LAKE TAHOE - [for more Tahoe tips and information:](#)

Lake Tahoe size: approx. 21 mi x 12 mi (33 km x 19 km)

Elevation: from 6000' to over 9000' (1800 m – 2800 m).

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2. Winter Filming –

- a. Winter weather in Tahoe means snow and ice as well as beautiful, snowy days on the ski slopes. In contrast, at the other end of our county, can look like Spring and Summer, all within an easy commute.
- b. Please make sure your personnel and equipment are ready for winter/cold conditions.
- c. There is no parking allowed on the shoulders/sides of roads from Nov 1 – May 1 to accommodate snow removal equipment.
- d. Many Tahoe-based local crew members are very experienced in working in winter conditions. Also there is there is specialized equipment available for winter conditions. Contact the Film Office for more details.