FILM PERMITTING AT BEACHES WITHIN VENTURA COUNTY

As described below, filming at the beach may fall under federal, state, county, or city jurisdiction. Depending on the beach location, the production may be required to obtain permits from more than one agency. For any filming that occurs in the water or at the mean high tide line (commonly but not always interpreted as “wet sand”), applicants must obtain a permit from the California Coastal Commission. Local cities and counties can permit up to the mean high tide line. If you are unsure who to contact, connect with the staff at the Ventura County Film Commission for more information.

Filming at Ventura County private or public beaches is regulated by the Ventura County Coastal Zoning Ordinance, which emphasizes protecting beach access for the public. There are strict requirements and thresholds in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance that limit filming hours and activities. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, filming at the beach can only occur during the weekdays and not on holidays. Filming is restricted to 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM on weekdays and to 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on the weekend unless the production gathers approval from 50%+1 residents impacted by the filming. The Coastal Zoning Ordinance identifies impacted residents. Some residential areas automatically require approval from residents (50%+1) to allow filming.

To protect the endangered Western Snowy Plover, filming at Hollywood Beach is not allowed in any form between March 1 and September 31.

Permitting Authority at the Beach (Cross Sectional)

Illustrative representation only. The mean high tide line typically includes portions of the beach that are often, but not always, covered in water.
Jurisdictional Authority at County Beaches:

Mean High Tide Line (Wet Sand) and Beyond or in the Ocean (All Locations)

The California Coastal Commission is the permitting agency for the wet sand and ocean water. Contact the California Coastal Commission (South Central Coast) at (805) 585-1800 or by email at SouthCentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov.

Dry Beach

Contact the local city or county where the beach is located. For a list of Ventura County film permit coordinators, visit Ventura County Film Commission.

Dry Beach – Unincorporated Ventura County Only

The Film Permit Coordinator for the unincorporated Ventura County beaches can be reached at (805) 654-2457 or by email at Film Permits@Ventura.org.

Channel Islands Harbor

For filming at Channel Islands Harbor or use of Channel Islands Harbor parking lots, contact the Channel Islands Harbor District Harbormaster, Captain Gary Hirtensteiner, at (805) 382-3007 or by email at Gary.Hirtensteiner@ventura.org. Some sites at the harbor fall under the jurisdiction of the City of Oxnard. Gary Hirtensteiner will help determine if the filming location falls under the Harbor District jurisdiction or the City of Oxnard jurisdiction.

Silverstrand and Hollywood Beaches

For filming at Silverstrand or Hollywood Beach, contact the Channel Islands Harbor District Harbormaster, Captain Gary Hirtensteiner, at (805) 382-3007 or by email at Gary.Hirtensteiner@ventura.org.

State Owned Beaches and Parks

The California Film Commission coordinates film permits on behalf of the California Department of Parks and Recreation which includes many popular State parks and beaches in Ventura County including Point Mugu State Park, Leo Carillo State Park, Emma Wood State Beach, and McGrath State Beach. Contact the California Film Commission to be connected to a Film Permit Coordinator.
Permitting Authority at the Beach (Aerial View)

Illustrative representation only. Please confirm with the appropriate jurisdiction when the filming location is known. The mean high tide line typically includes portions of the beach that are often, but not always, covered in water.