

Filming Permission in Dubai

The Basics

If you plan to do a shoot in Dubai, you are required to get a shooting permit from the Dubai Film and TV Commission (DFTC). The DFTC is a single point of contact and is responsible for contacting other government bodies including Dubai Municipality, Dubai Police, the Roads and Transport Authority and location owners to secure all approvals before issuing a permit.

Government regulations require any party wanting to shoot in Dubai to get a shooting permit. This applies to shoots on public, government-operated and private property. Not anyone can apply for shooting permits – only companies licensed in the United Arab Emirates to obtain them. This means if you don't fall into this category, you have to hire a UAE-licensed company to apply for the permit on your behalf.

Something to be aware of – some companies will not apply for permission for shoots unless one of their staff is on the job. The reason for this is the company applying for and securing the shooting permit will be held responsible if any regulatory or related issue arises during the shoot. Having someone on location reduces the chances of any problems. (Atlas Television follows this policy).

DFTC aims to grant shooting permits within five working days of the application being submitted. For most shoots, the application is made on line. If a permit is going to take more than five working days to process, DFTC will generally let the applying company know. Be aware of public holidays – these will add to the application processing time if they fall in the course of the five working days.

The five working days applies to non-scripted shoots. If you are shooting a film or TV series that has a script, you will need to get script approval and that can take up to 25 working days.

Fees

The cost of a filming permit depends on the type, location and duration of the shoot. All permission applications start with an application fee of 500 dirhams (about US \$137). If the application is successful, the fees below apply for public locations. For private locations, the fee will range from no charge to a maximum charge of 25,000 dirhams (about US \$6,850) per day.

Some examples of private location charges: if you are shooting an interview and b-roll in your client's Dubai office there will clearly be no location charge. If you want to shoot somewhere such as the Burj Khalifa or in one of Dubai's malls, a location charge will generally be made and it will vary depending on what's required. Private locations that charge permission fees may also make additional charges for security or cleaning services.

The company applying for and securing the permit may also charge a fee for handling the application. The charge will vary from company to company. Atlas Television charges an admin fee of 500 dhs on shoots with less than 3,000 dirhams (

Standard Fees – Public Locations

Type of Shoot	Fee	Duration
Reality and magazine shows, Lifestyle shows, formats	2,500 dhs	Up to 30 days
News, Current Affairs	2,500 dhs	Up to 14 days
TV and online ads	2,500 dhs	Up to 3 days
Corporate Videos	2,500 dhs	Up to 7 days
Aerial shoots	No fee	Up to 7 days

What's Required For The Application

The company you engage to handle your application will need the following details from you:

- Your company details: Company name, address, website address, phone number
- List of people who will be on the shoot and scans of their passports
- Details of the shoot: Who it's for, the purpose of the shoot, the content of what will be shot
- List of equipment for the shoot

You will also need to provide a "No Objection Certificate" – a letter on your company letterhead confirming you would like Atlas Television to apply for your permit and that your company does not object to Atlas carrying out the shoot.

Once you provide the information above and the No Objection certificate, Atlas will submit the application. Generally the permit will be delivered within five working days in line with DFTC's policy.

The full terms and conditions that apply to Dubai filming permits are on the following website. It is best to read them (they're not that long) before your shoot.

<http://www.dubaifilmcommission.ae/filming-in-dubai/how-to-film-in-dubai/terms-and-conditions>