

Montana Economic Development Industry Advancement (MEDIA) Act

An incentive for media production in Montana

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRODUCTION COMPANIES

OVERVIEW

The Montana Film Office of the Montana Department of Commerce administers certification of the MEDIA Act, Montana's media production incentive enacted in 2019. Montana offers transferable tax credits to qualified productions from production and post-production companies that produce or complete post-production on a qualified production in Montana.

Pre-certification is required, for production and post-production with a non-refundable \$500 filing fee. The application may be saved for editing until complete submission. A PDF of the form for pre-application review is available at montanafilm.com. Production companies earn up to a 35% transferable tax credit on the base investment in Montana. Post-Production companies earn a 25% transferable tax credit on wages incurred in the state. Application link, specific incentive portions and provision of the tax credit, instructions, and legislation are available on our website, montanafilm.com.

FILING INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE PRODUCTION:

1. The application for production of qualified productions must be submitted before the start of principal photography.
2. Register the production company name with the Montana Secretary of State (SOS). Contact the Montana SOS Business Services Division to obtain the appropriate form for your business (Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, C Corporation, S Corporation, LLC.) Forms can be downloaded online at sosmt.gov/business or requested from the SOS Business Services Division by calling 406-444-3665. A filing fee is required. Approval is within 7-10 business days.
3. Complete and submit the MEDIA Act application for either Production or Post-Production.
4. Information on Corporate Officers, EIN or SSN will be required.
5. Script, Storyboard or Synopsis will be required.
6. Budget and estimated spend, credit estimation will be required.
7. The term does not include any form of business owned, affiliate, or controlled, in whole or in part, by a company or person that is in default on a tax obligation of the state, a loan made by the state, or a loan guaranteed by the state.
8. Obscenity Certification to certify this production does not contain any material or performance defined as obscene by Montana Code Annotated, section 45-9-201.

9. Non-Tobacco Certification to certify that this production will not receive any money for tobacco product placement, advertisement, or other tobacco use in the production.
10. Submit the MEDIA Act Pre-Certification Application in its entirety to the Montana Film Office.

Submissions are not complete until the \$500 non-refundable filing fee is received. Upon approval of this pre-certification and fee receipt, production companies will receive a letter from the Montana Film Office with specific instructions on the program.

DURING PRODUCTION:

Keep accurate records and receipts of qualified Montana expenditures and payroll records for employees working on the production, including a completed Form FPC-RD (Residency Declaration) for all Montana residents. The credit is equal to 20% of qualified expenditures incurred in connection with the state-certified production during the tax year. Additional credit amounts are allowed, not to exceed 35% of the production company's base investment in a tax year. The additional credit amounts include 25% of the compensation paid to a Montana resident and 15% of the compensation paid to a non-resident, not to exceed \$150,000 credit per person.

DURING POST-PRODUCTION:

Keep accurate records and receipts of qualified Montana payroll records

AT TAX YEAR END:

Submit receipts, payroll records, and other forms of verification for the expenditures incurred after principal photography ends to the Montana Film Office AND the Montana Department of Revenue at the end of the tax year (Within 60 days) following project completion in order to claim the credit. This includes any qualified expenditures incurred after the completion date of principal photography and before the end date of Montana post-production indicated on the approved MEDIA Act certification application.

A completed application and filing fee is due to the Department of Revenue when you begin the income tax return process. Production companies will receive information from the Montana Film Office with specific instructions and tax forms to claim the tax credits. This will include submitting the following forms to the Montana Department of Revenue:

- A Montana tax return on the appropriate form for your entity
- Film credit form provided by the Department of Revenue
- The production company must pay a fee of \$500 for productions with a base investment of \$350,000 or less, and \$1000 for productions of more than \$350,000 or for post-production.
- The tax credit claimed on the appropriate schedule for your entity.

Please note: Pass-through entities (partnerships, S corporations, and LLCs) must pass through the tax credit to its members, shareholders or partners based on the same proportion that is used to report their income or loss for state tax purposes. Initially the production company that incurred the qualifying employment and expenditures will file a Montana tax return to establish the amount of tax credit available for pass through. After this amount is established, each member, shareholder, or partner must file a Montana income tax return to claim their portion of the tax credit.

The production company can apply the tax credit against its Montana tax liability. Any remainder is available to carry forward for the four succeeding tax years. The production company may also transfer the credit to another party. A transfer fee will apply.

CONTACTS

Montana Film Office

Attn: Allison Whitmer
Department of Commerce
301 S Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
406-841-2881 office
406-841-2871 fax
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Montana Department of Revenue

Business and Income Tax Division
Attn: Micah Christensen
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Helena, MT 59604
406-444-4373 office
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