



FAQ For Letter in Lieu of Optional Permit

1) What is an optional permit?

- The Film Permit regulations (43 RCNY § 9-01(b)(2)) allow MOME to issue an "optional permit" to a person engaged in filming or still photography who is not required to obtain a "required permit."
 - o Find out more about "[required permits](#)" on MOME's webpage.

2) What is a "letter in lieu of an optional permit (LiLOP)"?

- A LiLOP is a self-certification that a person engaged in filming or still photography on NYC public property may obtain if they qualify for an "optional permit."
- There are several benefits to obtaining a LiLOP instead of an Optional Permit, including:
 - o First, you do not have to apply for a LiLOP, so you save time and resources and you don't risk application denial. You can print a LiLOP off of MOME's website.
 - o Second, just like an "optional permit" the LiLOP is a document you can present to authorities when shooting on a City sidewalk, City park pathway or walkway of an NYC DOT City bridge. As long as you can check all the boxes on the LiLOP, you have the same right to film or take still photographs as someone bearing an optional permit.
 - o Third, LiLOP holders are not bound by the Code of Conduct and other requirements that apply to optional permit holders.
 - o Fourth, LiLOP holders are not bound to a specific time or place.
 - o Fifth, you aren't subject to limits on locations in MOME's Hot Spot List.
 - o Sixth, a LiLOP allows the details of your filming activity to remain confidential. (Optional permits are subject to document disclosure demands by the public under the Freedom of Information Law.)

3) What are the requirements to obtain and use an optional permit?

- A person seeking an optional permit must apply for it.
- If MOME approves the application, the activity is limited to the date, time, and place specified on the optional permit. MOME may deny the date, time, and place requested.
- In addition, optional permits are subject to the Code of Conduct and most of the same requirements as required permits.
 - o Optional permits are not subject to fees, insurance, and indemnification.

4) Where can I use a LiLOP?

- Only on a City sidewalk, City park pathway or walkway of an [NYC DOT City bridge](#). (These limitations also apply to optional permits.)
 - o The LiLOP may not be used on any bridge operated by the [MTA or Port Authority](#) or other agencies. (Port Authority and MTA bridges charge tolls. NYC DOT City bridges do not have tolls.)
 - o The LiLOP may not be used on private, state, or federal property even if it's located within New York City.
 - o The LiLOP may not be used to shoot on private property such as in a privately owned plaza or building, like a store or an office.
 - o The LiLOP may not be used in an area covered by someone else's required permit or optional permit.
 - o While the LiLOP may be used on a City park pathway, all activity within other areas of a City park is at the park's discretion.

5) What makes me eligible for the LiLOP?

- If you meet all of the criteria listed in the LiLOP and do not need a required permit from the City of New York, then you may use the LiLOP.

6) Do I have to use the LiLOP?

- No. If you meet all of the criteria listed in the LiLOP and do not need a required permit from the City of New York, if you choose, you may still shoot without the LiLOP. In fact, the vast majority of people who shoot casual photos in NYC do not obtain an optional permit or a LiLOP.

7) If I will have props, can I use the LiLOP?

- It depends. You can use a LiLOP if you have props, so long as any prop is handheld at all times. If you place any prop such as a sofa, food cart, or picture car, etc., on the City's property, you will need a required permit.

8) If I have an actor in police uniform, can I use the LiLOP?

- No. For any actor in police uniform on an exterior set, or in an interior set that is viewable by the general public, you must apply for a required permit and request NYPD assistance for your shoot.

9) If I have weapons on set, can I use the LiLOP?

- No. For any weapon on an exterior set, or in an interior set that is viewable by the general public, you must apply for a required permit and request NYPD assistance for your shoot.

10) If I'm doing a stunt, can I use the LiLOP?

- No. For any stunts or activity that can be seen by the general public, you must apply for a required permit and request NYPD assistance for your shoot.

11) My camera is handheld but I want to use a ladder to shoot from a higher angle, can I use this LiLOP?

- No. To use any additional equipment that is not handheld, including ladders, lights on stands, camera carts, apple boxes, etc., you will need a required permit.

12) Can I use a slider with the LiLOP?

- No. Because a slider is set on two tripods, it's considered exerting exclusive use of a portion of the sidewalk. You will need to obtain a required permit.

13) Can I use a Steadicam rig with the LiLOP?

- Yes. Because a Steadicam rig is being worn and/or carried, it's considered handheld equipment and a required permit is not necessary unless there are additional reasons why you need a required permit.

14) Can I film driving shots using the LiLOP?

- No. Any driving shots requiring vehicle-to-vehicle filming, hood or side camera mounts, tow rig, process trailers, or pulling a vehicle into or out of a curb lane would need a required permit.

15) What if the picture car is not driving, but just parked in the curb lane. Can I use the LiLOP?

- No. Because the picture car is exerting exclusive use of the parking spot, you will need a required permit.

16) I have production vehicles. Can I get parking with the LiLOP?

- No. Parking privileges are granted only with required permits.

17) Can I use a drone to film with the LiLOP?

- No. Drone use is prohibited in the 5 boroughs of New York City.

18) Is there a limit to the number of people that can be on location without a required permit?

- There is no limit on the number of people that can be on your set. However, you cannot completely block the sidewalk, thereby exclusively using the space. There will still need to be at least half the sidewalk available at all times for pedestrian traffic flow.