

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Administrative Code – Film Fees and Rebate Program]

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Administrative Code Sections 57.5 and 57.8 to: 1) decrease filming fees for smaller-budget productions; 2) include documentary films, docudrama films, and “reality” programming among eligible productions for the Film Rebate Program; 3) exempt productions by nonprofit entities, public service announcements, and qualifying student productions from film fees; and 4) make environmental findings.

Existing Law

Under San Francisco Administrative Code Section 57.5, the Film Commission charges daily use fees to film companies seeking to engage in film production. The Board of Supervisors has ratified the non-codified Film Commission fee schedule as follows: \$100 a day for still photography; \$200 a day for a commercial, corporate media, industrial media, video, short subject, or web video; and \$300 a day for a television series, movie, pilot, or documentary. The current fee structure applies these fees to all production companies regardless of their budget with the exception of the productions for nonprofit entities, public service announcements, and student productions.

Under San Francisco Administrative Code Section 57.8, the Film Rebate Program, which provides City rebates for certain film productions (i.e., feature length films, television series) to encourage filming in San Francisco, does not currently extend to any documentary film, docudrama, or “reality” programming.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed Ordinance decreases film use fees to \$100 a day for productions with budgets less than \$500,000 for the filming of any commercial, corporate media, industrial media, video, short subject, or web video. The Ordinance also codifies the remainder of the existing fee schedule and exemptions.

The Ordinance extends the Film Rebate Program to include documentary films, docudrama films, and “reality” programs. The Ordinance also requires the Film Commission to issue a report to the Board of Supervisors regarding the results of the Film Rebate Program by December 31, 2011.

Background Information

This Ordinance is intended to encourage smaller productions, documentary films, docudrama films, and “reality” programming to film in San Francisco by making filming more affordable.