

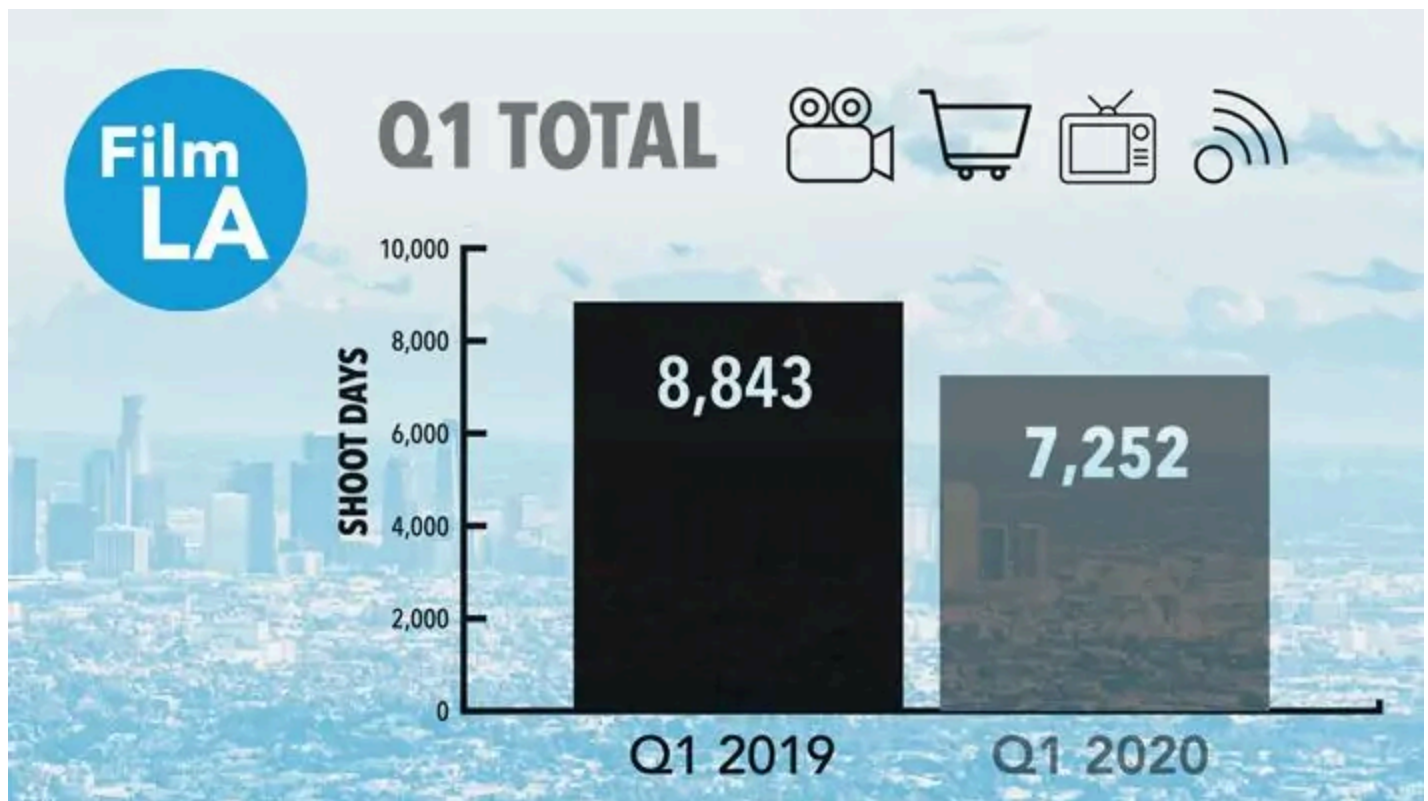


Sign in

NEWS CATEGORY ▾

RESEARCH UPDATES | APRIL 23, 2020 | 11:50 AM

COVID-19 Shutdown Sends Production Levels Lower



On-location filming in Greater Los Angeles is down more than 18 percent so far in 2020 and continues to fall, according to a report released today by FilmLA.

Among other documented impacts to business in the wake of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, declines in a key measure of entertainment industry output highlight the economic challenges facing LA's signature industry.

After starting strong in January, on-location filming in LA slowed in March following a series of voluntary cutbacks and progressively tightening public gathering limits. The 1,091 local productions filming in February 2020 dwindled to 644 projects in March before filming ended completely on March 20. On that date, the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health and other state and local authorities issued complementary "Safer at Home" Orders, which closed the region to on-location filming until further notice.

As of today, with the shutdown poised to extend deep into the second quarter, FilmLA analysts predict that local Shoot Day losses are already unrecoverable for the year.

“FilmLA joins with all of Los Angeles in prioritizing the health and well-being of our communities during this unprecedented challenge. Our concern extends also to the economic security of local families, including the nearly one in five Angelenos with ties to this business and the thousands of small businesses they support. Our thoughts are with all most closely and seriously affected – whatever the uniqueness of the circumstances.”

Paul Audley, President of FilmLA

Audley also promised that FilmLA and its staff – operating remotely and on a reduced schedule since March 13, 2020 – will be prepared for a rapid return to work once it is safe for production to resume.

According to FilmLA data, overall filming in Greater Los Angeles region saw an 18 percent decline to 7,252 Shoot Days (SD) from January through March, compared to 8,843 SD in early 2019. Headed into April, local production levels were trending 21.5 percent below their 5-year average, and continuing to drop by the day.

The hardest hit filming sector in the first quarter was Television, which saw an overall decline of 20.6 percent (2,491 SD compared to 3,139 SD in 2019). This is significant, for as revealed in FilmLA's *2019 Television Production Report*, 198 out of 465 (or 42.5 percent) of scripted shows produced across all platforms were shot in Los Angeles. Episodic television also accounts for 70-75 percent of filming activity on major sound stages in LA.

Looking at Television Shoot Days by subcategory, TV Comedy production decreased 53.9 percent in Q1 to 251 SD. TV Drama production dropped 25.7 percent to 889 SD. TV Pilot production fell 19.4 percent to 87 SD for the period, and Web-Based TV slipped 13.1 percent to 225 SD.

Pilot season, which typically runs from late February to early May, was greatly impacted by the production shut down and will be discussed in greater detail in future reports from FilmLA Research.

Surprisingly, TV Reality production increased 11.7 percent in Q1 with 771 SD (vs. 690 SD in 2019). This increase may be due to the influx of streaming providers which launched their platforms during the first quarter of 2020.

Television projects enrolled in California's Film and Television Tax Credit Program were active during the quarter. Incentivized TV Dramas generated 293 SD, or 33 percent of the filming activity in the category. The TV Comedy category received 21 incentivized SD in Q1, for 8.4 percent of category activity.

The second largest category tracked by FilmLA analysts, Commercials, slipped 12.5 percent in the first quarter to 1,214 SD (1,387 SD in 2019).

Feature film production slid 6.1 percent to 665 SD in the first quarter compared to 708 SD in 2019. Historically, the Features category has been the third largest category tracked by FilmLA, in terms of total SD. Many feature films are enrolled each year in the California film incentive; a sampling of recent incentivized features includes: *Everything, Everywhere All At Once*, and *King Richard*.

[Download the Report](#)

For updates regarding the effect of the Novel Coronavirus on local film production, please visit FilmLA's COVID-19 Resource Center.

» ABOUT FILMLA RESEARCH

FilmLA Research is a program of [the FilmLA Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established in 2025 to support a thriving film economy in California. The Research department produces and shares data on the U.S. film economy and global production trends, highlighting California's legacy as the leading film production destination.

FILMLA, INC.® is a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization and the official film office for the City and County of Los Angeles, among a growing number of local municipalities. Through expedited permitting, comprehensive community relations, film policy analysis and more, FilmLA works to attract and retain film production in Greater Los Angeles.

NEED STAGE SPACE IN MANHATTAN BEACH?

Short- and long-term
lease options now
available at MBS
Media Campus.

[LEARN MORE](#)



MEDIA INQUIRIES

Please contact: media@filmla.com

RECENT NEWS



Labor Day Permit Deadlines 2026



Flexible. Friendly. Fast.
The FilmLA Advantage

CONTACT FILMLA



[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) © Copyright 2026 FILMLA., INC[®], All rights reserved.