MusicContract

Artist Management Agreement

Free template: a 3-month trial, then a one-year agreement

How to use this template

1. Start with Part 1, a 3-month trial. The manager earns a percentage only of new deals they bring in. Nobody gets backed into a long contract or pays anything up front.

2. If the trial goes well and you both want to keep going, sign Part 2. It runs one year at a time, so you can renegotiate the percentage and the sunset clause every year.

3. Fill in every blank. Suggested numbers are only starting points. Cross out anything that does not fit your deal, and both of you initial the change.

Important

This is a general-purpose template for artists, producers and songwriters and their managers. It is not legal advice and has not been reviewed by an attorney in your state. Laws on management and booking differ from state to state. Have an entertainment attorney review it before you sign Part 2, and before you rely on it in a dispute.

Part 1: Trial Management Agreement

3 months. Commission only on new deals the Manager brings in.

Who this is between

Artist: _____, also known as _____ ("Artist").

Manager: _____, company (if any) _____ ("Manager").

1. Trial period

The trial starts on _____ and ends 3 months later, on _____, unless both of us agree in writing to extend it. Either of us can end the trial early by giving the other _____ days' written notice (suggested: 7). Email or text counts as written notice.

2. What the Manager will do

The Manager will look for and bring the Artist new work, such as sessions, bookings, placements, collaborations and deals, and will help with outreach and scheduling.

Projects covered: _____

Projects not covered: _____

3. Commission: new deals only

The Manager earns _____% (suggested: 15% to 20%) of the money the Artist actually receives from a "Manager Deal". A Manager Deal is a deal that the Manager first introduces to the Artist during the trial and that the Artist agrees to in writing.

The Manager earns nothing on anything else, including the Artist's existing clients and relationships, deals the Artist finds on their own, and these existing deals: _____

4. The Artist approves every deal

The Manager cannot sign anything for the Artist, accept an offer for the Artist, or promise the Artist's time or money without the Artist's written OK. Email or text counts.

5. No upfront fees, no surprise expenses

The Artist pays no upfront fee or retainer. The Artist pays back an expense only if the Artist approved it in writing before it was spent.

6. Getting paid

Payments from a Manager Deal go to the Artist. The Artist pays the Manager's commission within _____ days (suggested: 14) after the Artist receives the money, with a short note showing how it was worked out.

7. When the trial ends

If we do not sign Part 2, this agreement ends with the trial. The Manager keeps earning the commission in section 3 on money from Manager Deals signed during the trial, for money the Artist receives up to _____ months (suggested: 6) after the trial ends. After that, the Manager earns nothing more under this agreement.

8. The basics

The Manager is an independent contractor, not an employee or partner. The Manager gets no ownership of the Artist's songs, recordings, names, likeness or social media accounts, and may use the Artist's name, photos and bio only to promote the Artist. This page is our whole deal for the trial, and any change must be in writing and signed by both of us. Electronic signatures count.

Artist	Manager
_____	_____
Signature	Signature
_____	_____
Printed name	Printed name
_____	_____
Date	Date

Part 2: Artist Management Agreement

One year at a time. Sign after a trial that went well.

Who this is between

Artist: _____, also known as _____ ("Artist").

Manager: _____, company (if any) _____ ("Manager").

1. Term

This agreement starts on _____ and lasts one year. It renews for another year only if both of us sign a renewal. Each renewal is a good time to revisit the commission rate and the sunset clause, which can grow as the relationship grows.

2. What this covers

Projects covered (for example: artist names, aliases, production, songwriting, features):

_____

Projects not covered: _____

3. What the Manager will do

Advise on the Artist's career; find, pitch and negotiate deals; book sessions and shows; handle scheduling, travel and session logistics; do outreach to other artists, managers, labels and publishers; and keep the Artist informed about every offer.

4. Commission

The Manager earns _____% (suggested: start at 10% to 15%, up to 20% as the Manager proves their value) of the Artist's Gross Income from covered projects earned during the term. Optional: the rate goes up to _____% after _____.

"Gross Income" means money the Artist actually receives, not counting: money passed on to other musicians, producers, co-writers or featured artists; recording, production, video and tour costs paid to others; refunds and chargebacks; and sales tax. An advance counts as income when the Artist receives it, except any part that must be spent on recording or other costs paid to others. Other exclusions: _____

No commission is owed on anything listed in Schedule A.

5. The Artist has the final say

The Manager cannot sign anything for the Artist, accept an offer, or promise the Artist's time or money without the Artist's written OK. Email or text counts.

6. Expenses

The Artist pays back reasonable expenses the Manager spends on covered projects, with receipts. Any single expense over $_____, or more than $_____ in total in a month, needs the Artist's written OK first.

7. Money and records

All payments go to the Artist (or the Artist's business account). The Manager does not collect the Artist's money unless we agree in writing. The Artist pays the Manager's commission within _____ days (suggested: 14) after receiving the money, with a short statement. Either of us may check the other's records about commission once a year with _____ days' written notice.

8. Ending the agreement

Either of us can end this agreement for any reason by giving _____ days' written notice (suggested: 30). Either of us can end it right away if the other seriously breaks this agreement and does not fix it within 15 days after written notice.

9. Sunset clause (after the agreement ends)

After this agreement ends, the Manager keeps earning a reduced commission only on money from deals that were signed while this agreement was in effect. The Manager earns nothing on new deals signed after it ends.

Year 1 after it ends: _____% of the normal rate (suggested: 50%). Year 2: _____% of the normal rate (suggested: 25%). After year _____, nothing.

10. Booking licenses

Some states, including California and New York, require a talent agency or employment agency license to book live shows or find employment for an artist. The Manager will not do work that needs a license the Manager does not have.

11. Ownership and accounts

The Manager is an independent contractor, not an employee or partner, and may manage other artists. The Manager gets no ownership of the Artist's songs, recordings, names, likeness, brand or social media accounts, and all passwords and logins stay the Artist's. The Manager may use the Artist's name, photos and bio only to promote the Artist and deals the Artist approved.

12. Promises we each make

Each of us promises we are free to sign this agreement and are not under another deal that conflicts with it. The Artist promises their music is their own original work (or properly cleared). Each of us is responsible for costs caused by breaking our own promises in this agreement.

13. The basics

This is our whole agreement and replaces Part 1 from the start date above. Changes must be in writing and signed by both of us. If one part is found unenforceable, the rest still applies. The laws of the state of _____ apply. Electronic signatures count. Each of us had the chance to have a lawyer review this before signing.

Artist

Signature

Printed name

Date

Manager

Signature

Printed name

Date

Schedule A: Deals and income the Manager does not commission

List existing deals, clients, catalogs and income streams that started before the Manager (for example: existing publishing deals, regular clients, past releases).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____