

GET IT IN WRITING

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Live Events Network – Get It In Writing Guidance

Why get it in writing?

Historically, the live events industry has lacked standardised booking conditions and contracts, which has too often left workers exposed to unfair treatment and job insecurity. This guidance is here to help change that. It helps you set out your own terms and conditions (T&Cs), based on the booking conditions most freelancers in live events already follow. Clear terms protect you when things go wrong, such as late cancellations, delayed payments or non-payment, and they make sure your clients understand and accept your expectations from the outset.

Your word against theirs

Picture this. You work five days on a show and invoice for five days at your day rate. The client rejects the invoice, saying they only ever agreed to a lower figure. You know what was said on the phone, but there's no email, no message, nothing in writing to show what was actually agreed. Suddenly it's your word against theirs, and a rate you were completely sure of becomes very hard to prove.

A single written confirmation before the job would have settled it in seconds. That's the whole idea behind getting your terms agreed up front.

Make it your own

The purpose of the guidance is to provide a minimum level of protection and awareness to all live events workers – especially those who are not covered by a contract or whose contract doesn't cover the basics.

Your terms and conditions are personal to you. You may find this document works with only minor adjustments, or you may need bigger edits to reflect how you work. You can also create different versions tailored to different clients. **The examples listed in the guidance are provided for illustrative purposes and are not intended to be exhaustive - it covers**

the areas where we've seen the most need for clarity. Additional crew items, terms or conditions may apply and should be included as necessary.

Get your client's agreement

To make sure your terms are legally recognised, you need proof that your client has agreed to them. We recommend asking for written confirmation by email, simply stating that they accept your terms. It's a small step, but it can be crucial protection if a dispute ever arises.

Where to find answers

You'll also find Frequently Asked Questions at the end of this document. They cover how to edit and use the guidance, how to send it to clients, what it means for your legal standing, and where to go for support. If something in the guidance raises a question, it's worth looking there first.

Help us normalise it

We strongly encourage all workers to adopt this guidance and make it standard practice. The more of us who do, the fairer, safer and more stable our industry becomes for everyone.

The Bectu Live Events Network Committee

How to use this document

This guidance is formatted as a template, not a finished document. Please don't just copy it and send it as-is, adapt it to you first.

Using it is simple. Read through the Terms & Conditions template and **make it your own**: fill in anything shown in [square brackets], choose between the options where the brackets give you a choice, and **delete any clause that doesn't apply to your work**. The italic notes are guidance to help you decide, so once you've made your choices, delete those too.

When you're happy with it, send it to your client by email as soon as you've been offered the work, ideally before the job is confirmed. Ask them to reply confirming they're happy with your terms, ideally by a deadline you set, and keep that reply. That written "yes" is the bit that really counts, and it's what protects you if anything is ever disputed.

Send your terms for every job, even short ones and even with clients you've worked with before. If anything changes once you're on the job, get the change agreed in writing too. If you're unsure about anything, your Bectu rep or official can help you tailor the document to suit you and your role.

Terms & Conditions for Services

[insert Name/Company Name]

Dear [Client's Name],

Thank you for booking my services. I'm excited to work with you and have outlined the agreed terms below for your records.

1. Engagement Details

- **Role:** [insert job title]
- **Daily Rate:** £[insert fee]
 - A "day" is defined as up to [10/12] hours from the agreed shift start time.

2. Overtime Rates

- **50% of the daily rate** for shifts between [10-15/12-18] hours from the start time.
- **100% of the daily rate** for shifts exceeding [15-20/18-20] hours from the start time.

3. Additional Costs

- **Breaks:** Paid and included in the daily rate.
- **Travel and Parking:** Invoiced at cost, with mileage charged at [55p per mile] (HMRC allowable rate).

4. Subsistence

- **Food will be:** [provided on site / invoiced at cost / paid as a per diem]
- Where meals are provided, they will be substantial and served at appropriate times, with a hot option in the evening, in a designated area away from the operating equipment.
- Where I arrange my own food, it will be covered at cost (with receipts provided) or by the agreed per diem.
- If no food or provision is made, a one-hour break will be scheduled for me to make my own arrangements.

5. Accommodation

- Accommodation will be required when the venue is more than [50] miles from my home address [or: outside the M25 / outside Greater London]
- [Add if it applies to you: Accommodation will also be required when a shift finishes after [1am] and the venue is more than [50] miles from my home.]

- When required, accommodation will be arranged and paid for by you **[or: booked by me and invoiced at cost]**.
- As a minimum, the room will be for my sole occupancy and will be warm, clean, quiet and comfortable, with a private toilet and washing facilities, and within reasonable travelling distance of the venue.
- *[Optional additions: including breakfast / to a minimum of **[3/4/5]**-star standard.]*

6. Payment Terms

- Invoices are payable in full within 30 days of submission.
- Unless agreed prior to booking, statutory interest will be applied after 30 days of non-payment.
- This rate **[does/doesn't]** include consolidated holiday pay, sick pay, or tax.

7. Changes to Booked Hours

If the agreed hours are reduced during the engagement, the full amount as per this agreement will still be payable.

8. Cancellation Policy

- **Within [1 week] of the start date:** [50%] of the full booked fee.
- **Within [72 hours] of the start date:** [75%] of the full booked fee.
- **Within [24 hours] of the start date:** [100%] of the full booked fee.

9. Insurance

- **Travel insurance:** For international bookings, you will provide travel insurance.
- **Public liability:** I hold public liability insurance to the value of **£[insert number]**.
 - *Only include this line if you actually hold public liability cover. If you don't, delete it.*

10. Substitution *[if applicable]*

If I am unable to fulfil the booking personally, **[I will make every effort / it is not my responsibility]** to provide a substitute **[of equivalent skill and experience]**.

11. Equipment/Kit Supply *[If applicable]*

I have agreed to supply the following: **[Describe kit/equipment/consumables]**.

- **Fee for supply:** **£[insert fee]** per **[day/week]**, in addition to the labour rate outlined above.
- **Equipment Insurance:**
 - Insurance of your equipment: Any equipment you provide, or hire in for the job, will be insured by you.
 - Insurance of my equipment: Any equipment I supply will be insured by **[me / you]**.

12. Workplace Compliance

You agree to provide a workplace environment that complies with the [UK Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)¹. All tools and equipment provided onsite will be maintained in accordance with the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998](#)².

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working with you and delivering excellent service.

Best regards,

[Your full name]

[Your contact information]

Frequently Asked Questions

Using and editing this document

How much should I edit the T&Cs template? Can I add my own terms or use different versions for different clients?

As much or as little as you like! One of the joys of going freelance or running your own limited company is that you're your own boss (with a few headaches thrown in...). That means you set your own terms. What we've pulled together here is for illustrative purposes and based on the terms live events members use most often. It's a starting point, not a rulebook. Add bits, cut bits, tweak bits. It's your business, so make it work for you.

If there's something missing that matters to your work, add it in. And if you work for different sorts of clients, feel free to make as many versions as you need and send the right one to the right client. Just keep good records of what you agreed with each client and when, a clear paper trail saves a lot of head-scratching if anyone's memory gets fuzzy later on. Whatever you change, the golden rule stays the same: make sure your client sees your terms and agrees to them.

Sending Your Terms & Conditions to Clients

Should I send my Terms & Conditions before I accept a booking, or when I confirm it?

Share and agree them as soon as possible, this could be when you have been confirmed for the job or when you accept a booking but you should always have them agreed before the job starts.

¹ <https://www.hse.gov.uk/managing/index.htm>

² <https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm>

Please be clear that the booking isn't confirmed until your terms are accepted. You can raise terms after a booking, but it's not the smoothest route; it's always better to be upfront from the start, so everyone's clear and happy before the work begins. If your T&Cs haven't been agreed beforehand, you might not be covered in the event of a cancellation.

It's worth sending your T&Cs for every job, no matter how short, and even if you've worked with the company before. Don't rely on terms you agreed for a past booking still applying to this one: the person who agreed them may have moved on, and a new contact never accepted anything. A fresh confirmation each time keeps everyone clear. And if the job gets extended, or anything about your role changes partway through, get those changes agreed in writing too.

Are these Terms and Conditions the same as an invoice, or do I send both?

Different things entirely, and yes, you'll usually send both! The easy way to remember it: your terms and conditions are the deal, your invoice is the bill.

Your terms and conditions come first, before or as you agree the work. They set out what has been agreed: things like your rate, what counts as a day, overtime, cancellation, when payment's due etc. They're what you want your client to agree to up front. Nothing's owed yet; you're simply agreeing how the job will work.

Your invoice comes later, once the work's done. It's your request to actually get paid: the dates and hours you worked, the total you're owed, and how and by when to pay you (bank details and all).

The two work as a pair. Your invoice leans on your terms, that "payable within 14 days" (or whatever your terms are) line only has teeth because your terms set it up first. So send your terms at the start to agree the rules, then your invoice at the end to get paid under them.

When Things Get Tricky With A Client

What if a client only accepts some of my terms, or gives me their own that contradict mine? Which ones apply?

The principle that runs through all of this is simple: the terms that govern are whichever set you and your client actually agreed to. So it comes down to what gets accepted.

If a client only accepts some of your terms, don't assume the rest still apply. Be crystal clear about which version you've both agreed to, and get that agreed version in writing. It's far better to sort this out before the job than to discover halfway through that you each thought something different. And if a client won't budge on something that matters to you, you're always free to negotiate, compromise, or walk away, your union rep or official can help you weigh it up.

If a client hands you their own contract instead, the same rule applies (lawyers sometimes call this tangle the "battle of the forms"). As a rough guide, the terms that apply tend to be the last set both parties agreed to before the work started, so if you sign the client's contract, theirs will usually govern, not yours. Simply having sent yours first doesn't make them win by default. Read anything they ask you to sign carefully, don't sign what you don't understand, and if it's a big or unfamiliar contract, get your Bectu official to look it over first.

Can I use these terms if I'm booked through an agency?

Yes, though it's a little less straightforward with an agency in the mix, so it's worth a quick explanation.

Start by working out who you're actually dealing with. An agency is a middleman, it places you with a separate end client, so your engagement is with the agency, not the client. A production company that engages lots of freelancers is usually your direct client: it's hiring you for its own work, not placing you elsewhere. Either way, the same principle applies: your terms bind whoever agrees to them.

So if the agency or company agrees to your terms, it's on them to honour them, including making sure the job can actually be run that way. If they can't, they shouldn't agree to them in the first place, or they should renegotiate with you. If something then goes wrong on the end client's side, that's the agency's issue to resolve, not yours, and you keep both what you agreed to and all your statutory protections (health and safety, working time and so on).

The catch: this only holds if your terms are the ones that got agreed. Many agencies will ask you to accept their standard terms instead. If you do, those govern the job, not yours. So always be clear about whose terms you're working under, and push for yours where you can.

A client has asked me to work against my own terms. How do I hold my ground?

Stay calm, stay professional, and point back to what was agreed. A friendly reminder, "just to confirm, we agreed X in the terms you accepted on [date]", is often all it takes, and putting it in writing keeps a clear record.

That said, you're always in control of how firmly you hold the line. If a good client makes an honest mistake and asks nicely, be as accommodating as you like, plenty of people treat their T&Cs as a safety net for when things go badly wrong, not a rulebook to enforce every time. But if a client's taking the mick, you're well within your rights to stand firm and enact your terms straight away. The choice is always yours.

But remember, no one can require you to work unsafely, and that's never up for negotiation. And if you're being pressured, you don't have to handle it alone, your Bectu rep or official can back you up.

Insurance

Should I have my own insurance, such as public liability or equipment cover? Does this template assume I do?

The Terms & Conditions template gives you space to state your public liability cover (see clause 9), but that's there for people who have it, not an assumption that you do. Should you have some, though? Quite possibly. In live events, many clients and venues expect you to carry public liability insurance (PLI), and some won't let you on site without proof of it. And if you own kit, you may

need to insure it against damage, loss or theft, the template's equipment clause covers supply and fees, not insurance.

This is where being a Bectu member really pays off. Members can get rock-solid public liability cover from just £40, some of the best-value PLI you'll find anywhere in the industry. You can bolt on extras too, like extra kit insurance or professional indemnity. With over 40,000 members behind the bargaining table, these are deals that are genuinely hard to beat elsewhere.

As with any insurance, do read the policy details so you know exactly what's covered. And if you ever spot a gap or something that doesn't sit right, tell us! We run an open-door policy and will work to put it right. Simple, and it keeps the cover working for everyone.

Bectu and Getting Support

I'd like to give feedback, join Bectu, or get more involved. Who do I talk to?

We'd love to hear from you on any of these!

To give feedback on this document, contact your rep or email bectuliveeventsnetwork@gmail.com. Your feedback helps us keep this guidance useful and up to date.

To become a member, you can join online at bectu.org.uk/join. Membership gives you a voice, expert support, and a real say in shaping the future of your industry.

And if you'd like to get more involved with the union, brilliant, there's always room for more active members. The best first step is to contact your rep, local branch or regional officer, who can point you towards the committees, networks and roles that suit you. If you're not sure who they are, email a&e@bectu.org.uk (The Arts and Entertainment Division of Bectu).