



**Freelancer Rules & Rates – effective 1/1/2012  
Revised (language only) 3/15/2016**

**Setting up a NEW freelancer:** In order to set up a new freelancer, the editor must e-mail [freelancepayments@npr.org](mailto:freelancepayments@npr.org) with the freelancer's name, e-mail address and type of work performed (i.e. radio or digital piece, review or blog post, commentary, two-way, tape sync, photo/video\*, etc.) NOTE: if this is a radio piece, we will also need you to give us a **RATE** – *Base, Regular or Top* – see below. The rate should be based on the individual contributor's skill and experience. NPR editors make this determination. The freelancer will then receive a welcome email with an invitation to the Content Provider Management System (CPMS) portal where they will fill out their W-9, download an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form, and confirm their information.

\*In this case, photo/video designates visual assets created by a freelancer reporter or producer etc. in the course of that commissioned work, not to visual work that was commissioned separately.

**PAYING a freelancer:** In order to get paid, the freelancer must e-mail an invoice to [freelancepayments@npr.org](mailto:freelancepayments@npr.org) with a cc to the editor/producer/NPR staffer who accepted the work. **We encourage freelancers to invoice us within 30 days.** In the case of a radio piece, the invoice should include the slug, the intake number, and the **LEVEL** of the piece which should be pre-determined by the editor based on the descriptions below. In the case of all other work, please state the type of work performed (i.e. review or blog post, commentary, two-way, tape sync, photo etc.)

**RATES**

**Base Rate**

Level 1 \$645

Level 2 \$430

Level 3 \$375

Superspot: \$200

Digital Story: \$150 additional – We may, on occasion, ask a reporter to work with an NPR digital editor to write a separate, sharply focused digital piece that goes beyond a basic write-through of the radio script. The story would be written specifically for and include elements that speak to a Web audience.

**Regular Rate**

Level 1 \$1,075

Level 2 \$565

Level 3 \$430

Superspot: \$200

Digital Story: \$150 additional – We may, on occasion, ask a reporter to work with an NPR digital editor to write a separate, sharply focused digital piece that goes beyond a basic write-through of the radio script. The story would be written specifically for and include elements that speak to a Web audience.

## **Top Rate**

Level 1 \$1,500

Level 2 \$915

Level 3 \$540

Superspot: \$200

Digital Story: \$150 additional – We may, on occasion, ask a reporter to work with an NPR digital editor to write a separate, sharply focused digital piece that goes beyond a basic write-through of the radio script. The story would be written specifically for and include elements that speak to a Web audience.

## **LEVELS**

### **Level 1 Piece**

These pieces would typically:

- Involve research and original reporting
- Require the reporter to have substantial subject matter expertise
- Involve time-consuming reporting
- Have a sophisticated narrative
- Require travel by the reporter
- Have sound that does not involve phone tape
- Be rich in a variety of sounds demonstrative or supportive of the story

### **Level 2 Piece**

These pieces would typically:

- Involve multiple interviews
- Involve interviews conducted where the interviewee is carrying on activities relevant to the story
- Involve sound, scenes, and advanced radio storytelling techniques
- Involve reporter having good prior knowledge of subject matter

### **Level 3 Piece**

These pieces would typically:

- Involve interviewees found through other reports/news conferences
- Contain interviews conducted mostly in one place or on the phone
- Involve less extensive use of sound and scenes

### **“Superspot” Piece**

These pieces would typically:

- But not exclusively be one-day turnaround stories
- Be two minutes or less in length

**In addition to paying for pieces through the CPMS system, FREELANCERS MUST NOW INVOICE for any and all of the following. In rare instances, an editor may choose to pay more than the rates set forth below as in the case of a long established book reviewer or commentator.**

**Book or Movie or Music Review or Blog Post** (These would be stand-alone pieces, not related to a radio story.)  
\$200

**Commentary**  
\$250

**Two-Way** – this fee is paid when we do a two-way with another journalist or a non-NPR reporter. We do not pay subject matter experts (SMEs) for two-ways.  
\$150

**Tape Sync/Vox Rates\*\***  
2hrs \$110  
3hrs \$140  
4hrs \$175

This rate usually includes all expenses\*\*\* and travel (i.e. mileage) unless the editor thinks that additional payment is needed in a particular case. Example: a freelancer travels 100 miles to collect tape for NPR's sole use.

\*\*Reminder that tape syncs are not covered under the freelance agreement. Per our e-mail agreement – see below, all audio collected during the course of a tape sync is the sole property of NPR.

**Photo**  
\$25 for each photo used

**Day Rate**  
\$300

Negotiable based on the editor's estimation of how much effort is needed. See also note regarding expenses.\*\*\*

**Purchase of other audio (actualities, natural sound, etc.)**  
\$30 each

\*\*\***Expenses:** Note that we must receive some form of receipt for expenses. An invoice on its own is not sufficient for expenses. Although we will accept scanned receipts, please note that original receipts must be kept for seven years to comply with our internal auditing procedures.

**Newscast spots are paid from the rundown each day so freelancers DO NOT need to invoice for newscast spots. Newscast spots will be paid at the following rates:**

Q&A: \$30  
Domestic Voicer: \$40  
Domestic Wrap: \$45

Q&A: \$30  
Foreign Voicer: \$45  
Foreign Wrap: \$50

**NOTE: Kill Fee:** If we request work (commentary, tape sync, review, photo, radio or digital piece, newscast spots, etc.) and it is accepted and/or recorded, we will pay the freelancer in full for the work even if we don't use it. The editor who approved the work will need to send an e-mail to [freelancepayments@npr.org](mailto:freelancepayments@npr.org) requesting that the freelancer be paid the kill fee. If NPR cancels the assignment before it's completed, the assigning editor will make a determination as to the appropriate compensation.

### **\*\*Tape Sync E-mail Agreement**

Dear [Person Name],

We would like you to collect tape for us on [event date]. We will pay you \$\_\_\_\_. You are not our employee and are responsible for any taxes you might owe on this amount. The tape you collect cannot be used by anyone else for any other purpose. It belongs solely to NPR.

NPR shall be the sole and exclusive owner of all rights in the audio recordings you make for us, all materials furnished by NPR, all materials created, developed or otherwise submitted by you, whether directly or indirectly, in connection with this project. You agree that any work prepared for NPR in connection with this project, which is eligible for copyright protection in the United States or elsewhere shall be a work made for hire. If any such work is deemed for any reason not to be a work made for hire, you hereby transfer and assign to NPR all rights in such materials.

Sincerely,

[Requester Name]