

Guidelines for Booking Talent

When booking an entertainer for your event, you'll want to choose wisely! There are many performers – but not all are true professionals. Please consider these guidelines when making your selection:

References – Always ask for at least three references, with name, phone and date they performed. Call the references and ask specific questions: What they liked? Were there problems? Would they book them again?

Web site – Check it out! A good site can be the sign of a professional entertainer.

Dress – Be very clear about what type of dress you want (formal, casual, “anything goes”)

Times – Agree upon start and end times for the performance, set-up time, how many breaks, and how long for breaks. If you ask the group to play beyond the agreed upon time, expect to pay extra.

Contract – Ask for a written agreement; professional entertainers expect to provide this. It doesn't have to be a formal contract and can be a simple one-page document. Make sure it includes performance date; event location name and address; your name and phone numbers; phone numbers for the entertainer (including a cell number); description of performance; number of people and/or instruments; deposits (if required); payment information, including when and method (cash, check to whom); rain-or-shine clause; permission to the entertainer to sell CDs (if requested); insurance coverage; and, cancellation/date-change options.

Payment – It is customary for a professional entertainer to ask for an advance, non-refundable deposit. You are asking them to hold the date for you and refuse other offers, so expect to pay. It is not unusual for bands and musical groups to ask for cash payments at the conclusion of the performance. This enables the musicians to split the money that evening. Tips are always appreciated, but not required.

Permits – If your event will include outdoor amplified music, in many areas (like the City of Naples) you will need a permit. Permit processing requires a minimum of 90 days, and the application will require information about the entertainment.

Miscellaneous – Ask for play list suggestions or provide requests. Address what would happen if the entertainer is sick on the day of the event. Confirm the entertainer's on-site needs – electrical, chairs, stage, etc.