



— GUIDE FOR AGENCIES

How to know what you owe each freelancer at month end

Five steps so that paying your freelancers doesn't depend on a spreadsheet only one person understands: the rate in writing, the cost born with the piece, what counts as completed, upfront expenses and month end. With a checklist and templates to copy. Works with any tool. You don't need PortaliaFlow to apply it.

THE FIVE STEPS

- 01 **A rate per piece type, in writing**
- 02 **The cost is born with the piece, not the invoice**
- 03 **What counts as “completed”**
- 04 **Upfront expenses, with a note and an approval**
- 05 **Month end, per person**

01

A rate per piece type, in writing

Most month-end tangles start before the first piece: a rate agreed by word of mouth, “the usual”, or an hourly price nobody times. A rate per piece type and per person, written down, settles the argument before it exists.

- ☐ One rate for each type of piece you produce (reel, carousel, video, story, post, other) and for each person. Not per hour, unless someone is actually going to count the hours.
- ☐ Written and sent: a message to each freelancer with their rate list and an “agreed?” for them to answer. Keep the reply.
- ☐ Decide what the rate includes: how many rounds of changes, whether adapting to another channel is another piece, and who supplies the materials.
- ☐ If there's a fixed monthly retainer, it goes separately and in writing too: what it covers and what is paid per piece on top.
- ☐ Review rates on a date (every six months, every year). If they change, they change for new pieces from a specific day, not halfway through one.

TEMPLATE · RATE AGREEMENT (ONE MESSAGE)

Hi [name]. So we don't have to discuss it piece by piece, these are your rates from [date]: reel [amount] · carousel [amount] · video [amount] · story [amount] · post [amount]. They include [n] rounds of changes; beyond that we talk before going on. The client supplies the materials. Agreed? Reply to this message and I'll consider it settled.

02

The cost is born with the piece, not the invoice

If what you owe each person gets written down when their invoice arrives, at month end you're reconstructing the month with the chat open. Write the cost down the moment you assign the piece: you already know who's doing it and at what rate.

- ☐ Every piece, when assigned, carries its person, its type and its cost (that person's rate for that type). Three facts, in the same place as the piece.
- ☐ Whoever delivers the piece is who gets paid. If you change the person halfway, change the cost too; if the piece is split in two, write down two.
- ☐ A piece with no person has no cost, and a piece with two people has two lines. No “we'll split it later”.
- ☐ Corrections are not a new piece: the cost is the piece's, within the rounds agreed in step 1.
- ☐ Write down the client and the project as well: at month end you'll want to know what each client costs you, not just what you owe each person.

TEMPLATE · COST SHEET (ON ASSIGNMENT)

Piece: [title] · Client: [client] · Project: [project] · Type: [reel / carousel / video / story / post] ·
Person: [name] · Rate: [amount] · Status: [in progress / completed] · Payable from: [date]

03

What counts as “completed”

What cools a good freelancer off fastest is not knowing when they get paid. “When the client approves” is a deadline they don't control; “when I get round to it” isn't one either. Decide one rule and keep it.

- ☐ Choose the moment a piece becomes payable: when it's delivered, when the client approves it or when it's published. One rule for everyone.

- ☐ If the rule is “on approval”, the freelancer shouldn't pay for your client's delay: set a cap (“at most [n] days after delivery”). That risk is yours, not theirs.
- ☐ A piece the client cancels after it's been produced gets paid: the work is done. What doesn't get paid is what wasn't done.
- ☐ Mark the change of status the day it happens, not on closing day: that way what's payable is already counted when you get to month end.
- ☐ Put it in writing when you take each person on: from when it counts, when it's paid and how.

TEMPLATE · PAYMENT RULE (FOR THE WELCOME MESSAGE)

A piece becomes payable when [it's delivered / the client approves it / it's published], and at most [n] days after delivery. What's pending is closed on the [n]th of each month and paid by bank transfer before the [day]. If a piece is cancelled after it's done, it's paid all the same.

04

Upfront expenses, with a note and an approval

A licence, a trip, a purchase for the client: the expenses a freelancer or someone on the team pays upfront end up as a message with a photo of the receipt, and get paid late or forgotten. Give them the same path as the pieces.

- ☐ Every expense, one note: what, how much, in which currency, for which client and in which category. With the receipt attached.
- ☐ Who approves it and by when. An unapproved expense isn't a debt; an approved one is.
- ☐ If the expense is for a client, book it to that client: it's their cost, even if your freelancer paid it upfront.
- ☐ If you work in several currencies, record each amount in its own and don't convert by hand until payment: what you owe is what was paid.
- ☐ An expense that repeats every month (a tool, a subscription) isn't an upfront expense: put it in your own name.

TEMPLATE · EXPENSE NOTE

Expense: [what] · Amount: [amount] [currency] · Date: [date] · Client: [client or “agency”] ·
 Category: [category] · Paid upfront by: [name] · Receipt: [attached] · Approved by: [name, date] ·
 Paid on: [date]

Month end, per person

If the four steps above are done, month end is a list, not an investigation: what you owe each person, piece by piece, plus their approved expenses. It gets reviewed, paid and marked.

- ☐ A fixed closing day and a fixed payment day, the same every month. Make sure everyone knows them.
- ☐ Per person: the pieces completed in the period with their cost, the approved expenses and the retainer if there is one. Approve it line by line, not "the total".
- ☐ Whatever isn't completed on closing day goes to the following month, no exceptions: that way nobody negotiates the close.
- ☐ When you pay, mark each line paid with the date. Whatever isn't marked is still owed, even if you think you remember paying it.
- ☐ Keep each month's close (export or print it): it's your record when someone asks about a piece from four months ago.

TEMPLATE · MONTH-END CLOSE (ONE MESSAGE PER PERSON)

Hi [name]. Close for [month]: [n] pieces completed ([piece · client · amount, one per line]), approved expenses [amount] and retainer [amount]. Total: [amount]. If anything doesn't add up, tell me before [date]; it's paid by bank transfer on [date]. Thanks for this month.

What you can do this week, without changing tools

- ☐ Send the rate agreement to the person you work with most and keep their reply.
- ☐ Write down person, type and cost on every piece you assign this week.
- ☐ Write the payment rule in one sentence and send it to the whole team.
- ☐ Set next month's closing day and payment day.

YOU MAY ALSO FIND USEFUL

How to put your client approvals in order What to agree, how to ask for an approval that can be given, and what to do with changes and with clients who don't reply.

What to put in a brief so the piece comes out right first time The five questions every brief has to answer before production, with templates to copy.

How to tell a client is cooling off before they leave The four signals that a client is cooling off, how to measure them by hand every month and what to do about each one.

How to show your client what you do for them every month Five steps so your client knows what you do for them without a twenty-page report: what to tell, let them see it, what's pending on their side, a fixed rhythm and the twenty-minute meeting.

And the twenty-five templates from the five guides, together: [**All the templates on one page \(portaliaflow.com/en/templates\)**](https://portaliaflow.com/en/templates)

portaliaflow.com/en/approvals-guide · portaliaflow.com/en/brief-guide ·

portaliaflow.com/en/client-health-guide · portaliaflow.com/en/client-updates-guide

If you'd rather month end took care of itself

Everything above can be kept in a spreadsheet. PortaliaFlow does it from what already happens in the portal, on an instance under your brand:

- ✓ Each person has their rate per piece type and, if you want, their retainer or monthly salary. Only you see those amounts: neither the manager nor the editor.
- ✓ The cost is born with the task, at the rate of whoever does it, and whoever delivers is who gets paid. When the piece is completed it becomes payable, without anyone having to claim anything.
- ✓ You see what's owed per person and period, piece by piece; you approve it and mark it paid from there.
- ✓ Expenses are submitted from the portal with a category, a client and a currency, and you approve them. Each amount is kept in its own currency, from a fixed list.
- ✓ Expenses and costs export to CSV; the charts show the cost mix and cost against budget for each project; and on the team tab you see what each person has delivered, had approved and completed each month.

And to see what the freelancer sees from their side: **[What your team will see, from the invitation to the completed piece \(portaliaflow.com/en/what-your-team-sees\)](https://portaliaflow.com/en/what-your-team-sees)**

And on that same page, to move a sample piece through the team's workflow yourself, with made-up data: **[Try it: this is how a piece moves through your team \(portaliaflow.com/en/what-your-team-sees#prueba\)](https://portaliaflow.com/en/what-your-team-sees#prueba)**

And what it doesn't do: it doesn't move money (you pay from your bank and mark it paid), it doesn't issue invoices, neither yours nor your freelancers', and it doesn't replace the rate agreement with each person.