**You will:**

1. Agree and accept that the Program is on an 'invite only' basis and you may be invited or asked to leave the Program at any time and without advance notice to you.
2. Maintain the minimum requirements of entry to the Program. We reserve the right to remove you from the Program if your performance in the Program falls below our minimum performance requirements.
3. Respond to messages in a timely matter, as this increases your chances of being recommended - and if you do bid on a Recruiter project, let the Recruiter know that you are interested and why you should be recommended.
4. Inform the Employer of your availability and ensure that you are responsive during those times.
5. Provide an outstanding level of customer service at all times (we expect you to be polite, not demanding, easy to deal with).
6. Help to guide your Employer through the process of completing a project and ensure that they have an excellent customer service experience.
7. Provide work that is of excellent quality.
8. Deliver work on time.
9. Maintain an 85% project acceptance rate.
10. Maintain a dispute rate below 10% (with no more than 2 serious disputes in the last 6 months).
11. Maintain a completion rate no lower than 85%.
12. Keep communications and payments on-site only.
    1. Any cases of communication or payment going off-site will result in expulsion from Freelancer.
13. Maintain a good relationship with all Recruiters; make sure you respond politely, accurately and with a high degree of professionalism. Any language abuse, spamming or threatening statements will not be tolerated.
14. Switch off your Preferred badge whenever you are unavailable to take projects, too busy, or wishing to take a break from the Program. If you are planning to take a break from the Program for more than two weeks, please contact preferred@freelancer.com

**You will not:**

1. Communicate with Employers in any unprofessional way, for example speaking badly about a Recruiter, Freelancer, or other freelancers.
   1. Unprofessional communication, rude or threatening behaviour, or blackmail of an employer will result in your immediate removal from Freelancer.
2. Discuss fees with Employers (project fees or Recruiter project fees).
3. Request upfront payments from your Employers.
   1. If for any reason you break this condition and request upfront payments, we reserve the right to freeze withdrawals on your account until work has been delivered to the Employer or the funds have been returned.
4. Request ratings & reviews before project completion.
5. Exchange personal email addresses, phone numbers, Skype, or any other form of off-site communication.
6. Mention your profile on any other freelancing site or attempt to bring an Employer over to any other site. If you have your own portfolio site that you'd like to share with the Employer, please send it to your Recruiter and have them share it.

**If your initial connection with an employer was established on a Recruiter project, any subsequent projects connected to the original work will also need to be Recruiter upgraded.**

**Any Attempt to circumvent or avoid the 15% project fee will result in a 30% penalty fee and a warning. Repeated attempts will result in expulsion from the Program. If in doubt, check with the recruiter or PF support.**

USER GUIDE

**How to Best Prepare Yourself for the Preferred Freelancer Exam**

The following is a guide to the Preferred Freelancer Service Level Agreement, which is aimed at assisting Preferred Freelancers in passing the Preferred Freelancer Service Level Agreement Exam.

The exam is divided into several sections in order to gauge your knowledge of the Service Level Agreement. That being said, the exam is not only comprehensive of the agreement but also how best to conduct yourself as a freelancer on this platform.

**Fees**

With Recruiter projects you will only be charged the fees on release of milestones, not when you accept the project, like on non-Recruiter projects.

Should the employer want to create a "Hire Me" project with you, you need to notify a Recruiter about this as you were invited to the project via the Preferred Freelancer Program. If that Recruiter is unavailable, you should let another Recruiter know and provide them with the project id or send that information to [preferred@freelancer.com](mailto:preferred@freelancer.com).

You should not discuss this fee with your employers, as it is unprofessional and can cause employers to mistrust you. Doing so will also result in a warning from the Preferred Freelancer Team.

Should you choose to circumvent fees you will be charged 30% of the awarded value of the project or be removed from the Program. For example, closing a Recruiter hourly project to create a non-Recruiter fixed price project without informing a Recruiter would be considered fee avoidance and you would be charged or removed for those actions. It should be noted that if you are removed for fee avoidance you will not be able to rejoin the Program.

**Off-site Communication**

Off-site Communication is a hugely important topic for Preferred Freelancers to be aware of. To protect our freelancers and our employers, we ask that you do not exchange any Skype details, phone numbers, emails, or any other off-site communication.

Additionally, this means that you are not allowed to put any contact information (including your portfolio from another site) in your bids or profile.

It will not be considered off-site communication on a Recruiter project once the project is awarded. However, you do need to inform the Recruiter that you are exchanging contact details, as they need to make note of this so you do not receive a warning for offsite communication.

We are aware that there are times when you may need to share some contact information before a project is awarded for example when an employer shares login credentials of their website - these cases are permitted. If you're ever unsure, please check with a Recruiter before exchanging contact details.

If you do exchange contact details without permission, you will receive a warning from the Preferred Freelancer Team and a three-day suspension of your Preferred Freelancer privileges (this is called a timeout). Continuing this practise will result in your complete removal from the program.

We understand that communication is crucial in the process to have a project awarded and for it to be successfully completed, however it is equally as important for there to be evidence on-site of your communication with the employer. The reason for this is that if you end up having a dispute in the future, we cannot use any off-site communication as evidence, thus you may end up losing a dispute you should rightfully have won. If an employer asks to speak with you off-site, contact your Recruiter (or message any Recruiter and provide them with your project ID) and they will be able to advise.

**Availability**

It is important to keep both the employer and the Recruiter updated on the status of a project, especially if there is going to be a delay or if something unexpected has occurred. Should you consistently fail to deliver on time and not update employers on why the project is delayed, you will be removed from the program.

Additionally, when a Recruiter opens a new chat for you and an employer is unavailable, the best thing to do is to send a short message introducing yourself and letting the employer know your working hours and when you will be available to discuss the project.

It is very important that you turn off your Preferred Freelancer badge when you are unavailable to take projects, going on vacation (or leave) or if you are too busy to take on new projects.

Turning off your badge does not mean that you have left the program, but rather that you are unavailable to accept invitations to new projects. It is important for you to know that should you take on new Recruiter projects when your badge is off you will still be subject to pay the Preferred Freelancer projects fees.

You can turn your badge on and off by going to your Profile, then 'Settings' and then 'Account'.

If you want to exit the Program, the best way to do so is to email [preferred@freelancer.com](mailto:preferred@freelancer.com) or contact support and the team will help remove you from the Program.

**Upfront Payments**

A freelancer should not request a milestone payment to be made immediately once the project has been awarded: this is called an Upfront Payment.

This means that should you carry out any research for establishing whether you can take on a project, you are not allowed to request a milestone release for this alone without delivering any work yet.

Moreover, on Recruiter projects you are not allowed to request 50% at the beginning of a project, as this would be considered an upfront payment.

Occasionally you may need to purchase something in order to complete a project, for instance, a license or a template. Once you and the employer agree to the deliverables and associated milestones for the project, the fee for the additional purchases should be included in the first milestone, as no milestones should be released without work done.

Should you request an upfront payment your withdrawals will be frozen immediately until the work is delivered.

**Professional Communication**

Professional Communication is a vital skill that we constantly monitor to ensure that we not only have skilled experts in the Program, but also communication savvy freelancers.

When you are responding to an invitation on a project, the best way to have a Recruiter engage with you is to inform the Recruiter of your related experience and to give a relevant example. You can also show that you have thoroughly read the project brief, ask important questions and write a personalised bid. The wrong approach would be to simply ask them to recommend you for a project. You need to demonstrate to them why you would be the best option so that they can relay that information to the employer.

When addressing Recruiters and employers, you should start with 'Hi there' followed by introducing your name and/or your company. If the employer is unavailable please do not spam them with messages. Simply send a short message introducing yourself and letting the employer know your working hours and when you will be available to discuss the project.

Should you blackmail, threaten or otherwise engage in unprofessional communication with an employer, you will be immediately removed from the Program. Additionally, you will be ineligible to re-join the Program.

**Minimum Requirements**

Preferred Freelancer Team members will conduct regular checks to ensure that you continue to maintain the standards required of you once you are admitted. We are proud of our community of Preferred Freelancers and want to keep you the best of the best. Please ensure you keep up your great reviews, a high standard of profile and portfolio, and at a minimum a Plus membership. Failure to meet any of the requirements may result in removal from the program.

You also need to accept 85% of projects, complete 85% of projects and ensure disputes are under 10% within a six month period in order to remain in the Program. You will receive an email warning when your acceptance rate is too low.

As a Preferred Freelancer we need to know that the work you deliver is your work; it is therefore not permitted to consistently divide awarded projects into smaller parts for other freelancers to complete.

We also monitor duplicate accounts in the Preferred Freelancer Program. Duplicate accounts in the program are not allowed. Should you have more than one account, you will be required to close it immediately.

Your profile should have a well written description along with a professional individual photo if you are an individual or a company photo and/or logo should you be a company. It is vital that you keep your portfolio updated as it is the best way to showcase your top work and highlight the caliber of your skills.

As a Preferred Freelancer, you and your team (in case that you're a group) are expected to complete awarded project work yourself. If you don't have the skills to complete a project, you shouldn't place a bid.

While hiring a freelancer for minor work where some additional help is required is occasionally permitted, hiring other freelancers on the platform (or other platforms) to complete your awarded projects will not be tolerated.

Any Preferred Freelancers found to be outsourcing their projects without the permission of a recruiter will be immediately removed from the program.

If you do wish to get minor assistance through the use of other Freelancers on the site then you must:

* Ensure that you have informed a Recruiter and received their permission to proceed
* Ensure that you comply with any Non Disclosure Agreement and Intellectual Property Agreement that the original project may have

Should you wish to add another of your skills to the Program you need to email [preferred@freelancer.com](mailto:preferred@freelancer.com) or make a ticket asking to add a new skill and the Preferred Freelancer team will assist you.

**Milestones**

You should only accept a project once you have cleared every single detail of the project with the employer, updated your bid (if necessary), agreed on a structure of milestones, and once the employer has created at least one milestone.

On occasion you may need to remind an employer to release a milestone. It is okay to do that when you have delivered the work corresponding to the milestone and the employer has already given you positive feedback.

There are occasionally times where you may have too many incoming milestones. The Preferred Freelancer team will alert you if this occurs and you will be required to update them on the Recruiter Projects and finish the projects in order to receive invitations to Recruiter projects again.