

Union fees

Idea of these fees: to give studio musicians and vocalists a share in follow-up income the master generates. They are called „Re-use“ or „conversion“ fees. The idea traces back to when the idea of licensing recordings became popular which meant that by re-using an existing recording the musicians would lose their jobs (and they wouldn't be actually playing it again - which was the typical case before).

Union fees apply on the master side for „union recordings“ (meaning recordings made by union musicians/singers), which is major recordings from US and UK.

US Unions: SAG-AFTRA (vocal artists), AFM (instrumentalists, producers)

for uses of US masters outside US there is a simplified calculation (4% on „US-Share“ (=75% of master fee), min 150 USD, Max 4500 USD) —> applies to each of the unions (AFM and SAG-AFTRA).

Using US masters in US: complicated calculation based on number of people involved, length of session etc. —> AFM/SAG-AFTRA have to quote this (they will check in their archives on the session documents on who was involved in that recording).

UK union: MU (musician's union)

for uses of UK masters you have to contact MU, they will give a quote.