

# Guide to AFM Sound Recording Agreements

Looking to record an album under a union agreement, but don't know where to start—start here!

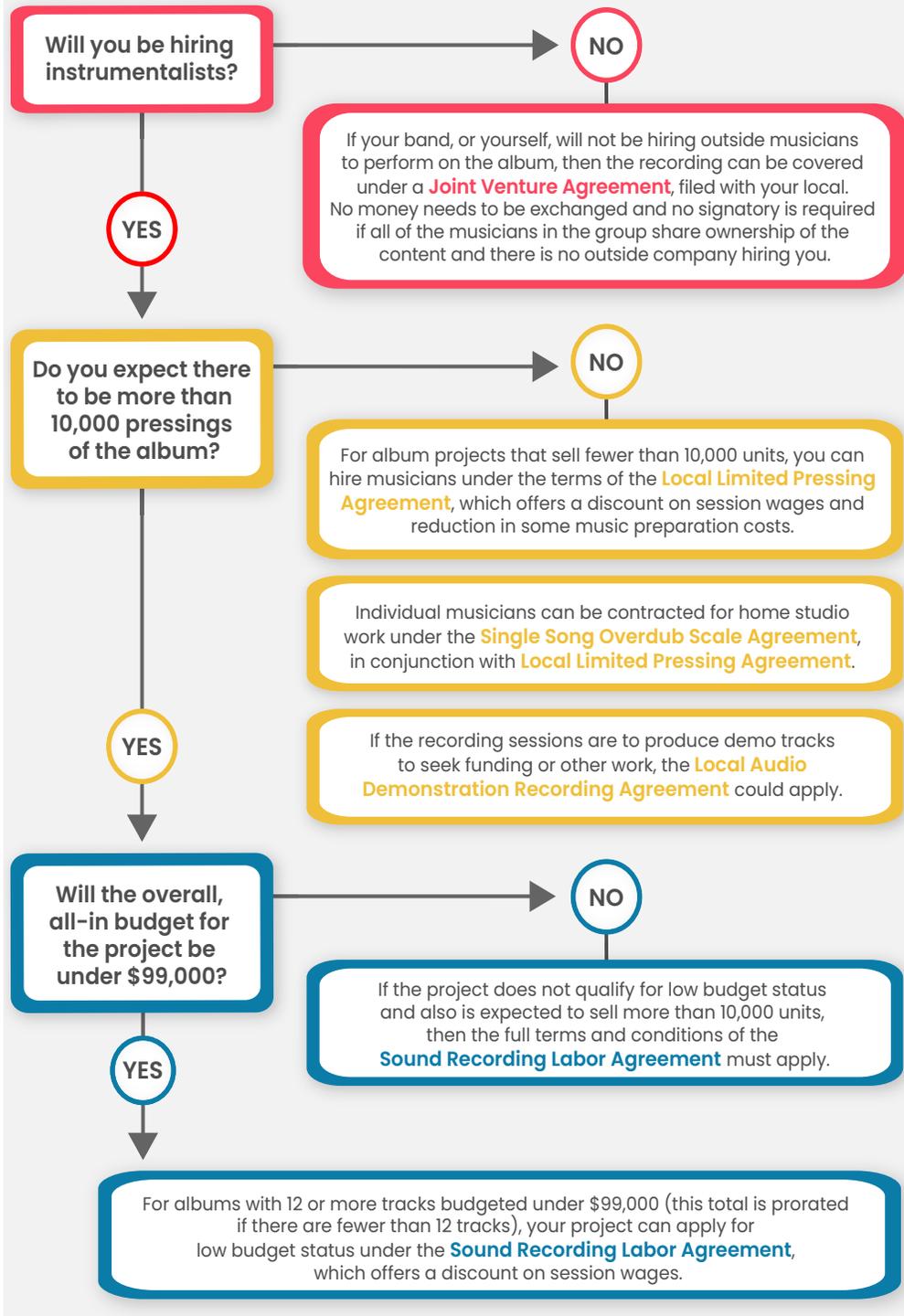
AFM member recordings are covered under a variety of sound recording agreements. This chart identifies some of the more common agreements that can be used to protect your work and the work of the musicians you hire. This chart is for individually produced album recording projects only, not for symphonic or theatrical products.

It is not meant for audiovisual projects, such as films or concerts.

Recordings covered by these agreements are eligible for announcement in the *International Musician*. See page 14 for details. If you have any questions about where your project fits, contact your local or the EMSD department.

## Album Recording Flow Chart

Note: these questions should not be applied to symphonic or theatrical recordings.



## Joint Venture Agreement

The pandemic saw more musicians offer their performances online in response to the physical venue closures of 2020. This avenue of distribution has continued even as venues have reopened, but self-produced online content must be protected. The AFM has developed the Joint Venture Agreement specifically for that purpose.

The Joint Venture Agreement evolved from AFM's "Bandstand Records" guidelines, which allow independent bands to self-produce their recordings with key union protections, when no wages are paid and in the absence of an employer. Originally developed for audio recordings, the Joint Venture Agreement now has a video component. This makes protecting self-produced online media a breeze for musicians.

Since Joint Venture Agreements are filed locally, it is important that local officers get the word out to their members. To ensure the agreement is used properly, the AFM Electronic Media Services Division (EMSD) has established the following guidelines:

- Recordings may be solicited for exhibition over the internet, as long as all musicians on the recording consent to that exhibition.
- The member(s) involved in the recording(s) must maintain control and ownership of the product.

The Joint Venture Agreement is the simplest of all AFM agreements, yet it offers vital protections to musicians who create their own media, when that media is monetized later. You can find the Joint Venture Agreement in the Document Library on the AFM.org website.

## Local Limited Pressing

Album projects that do not reach the 10,000-unit sale threshold may be filed under the Local Limited Pressing Agreement. The scale wages under this agreement are established by the AFM local in whose jurisdiction the recording takes place. Benefits, such as pension and for health and welfare, are established at the same rates as the main Sound Recording Labor Agreement. Digital streaming is permitted, though a small back-end percentage (0.55%) of digital receipts are owed twice annually to the Pension Fund, unallocated.

## Single Song Overdub Scale

If you are not calling sessions in person, but are contracting individual musicians to record parts from their home studios, you and the musician can utilize the AFM Single Song Overdub Scale Agreement to establish a rate and pay the musician by the song, rather than by the hour. A copy of this agreement can be found in the Document Library on the AFM.org website.

## Local Audio Demo Recording

Some audio sessions are called for projects not intended for release. These products may be created for use in seeking funding for other projects or works, such as live engagements. These demonstration recordings are filed on separate local agreements. Contact your AFM local for more information.