

The Model Release Form

The Craft of Writing · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

A "model release form" can be any set of words you make up that clearly expresses an agreement between you and the "model" (person who's agreed to pose for your photos). It could be as simple as this:

I [model's name] of [address] acknowledge that I have agreed to pose in photographs for [your name] understanding that these photographs may appear in publications anywhere in the world and I hereby give my permission freely and for no payment [or whatever you agree].

[Signed by the model]

DON'T send the releases to the publication. Just have them on standby in case the publication asks. You do NOT need to get permission from strangers to include them in photographs for publication if you are BOTH in public places, that is, you're standing in a public place and all the people in the photo are also in a public place. However, professional and amateur models do have certain rights in POSING, and that's why you need model releases. Also, if your photograph is to go to a photograph agency, it will demand a model release, to enable it to license your photo to advertisers. If your photo ended up in an ad promoting something that the person in your photo objected to or embarrassed them, you could be sued. Old rule: when in doubt, get a model release. If that's impossible (such as a moving crowd scene) your editor will understand.

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