

PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE - checklist for charity picture libraries

For specific legal advice, contact a specialist lawyer.

COMMISSIONING

Photographer brief/contract

- Is use of the images exclusive to the commissioner
- Can they be used in other libraries? Are there issues of sensitivity?
- Who is responsible for getting model release forms signed?
- Do you/the photographer have a system for linking names and images?

Model Release/permissions

- Must be understood by subjects
- Cannot ever be watertight (If there were such a contract, no-one would sign it)
- Must be consistently filled out and collated with job material

Check list for the shoot

- Model releases/permissions forms
- Matching names to photographs (the above not useful otherwise)
- Things NOT to photograph
- Sensitivity issues

GENERAL GUIDELINES

It is important to raise the level of awareness throughout the organisation about the way images are used, the message they are promoting and the sensitivity issues relating to subjects.

- The meaning of an image can change depending on the caption that goes with it, or even the text that is near it. If you show an image of a young man next to text talking about youth crime and drugs – don't be surprised if he finds it defamatory.
- Model releases on their own do not protect you from defamation claims.
- I always use the rule of thumb – and this applies whatever has been signed. *How would you feel if this was a picture of you or your family?*
- Always caption images correctly and make sure that they are used in the correct context.
- Use models for sensitive issues
- Place a time limit on use of the images if they may be sensitive
- Keep good records so images can be matched to people/to model release/to caption information/to usage