



2026 Budget: Music Licensing Fees

As you begin to build your budget for FY2026, consider if your Chapter/Club needs to obtain music licenses.

In the United States, if you are playing music that is protected by copyright for public consumption, a music license is required. This includes playing pre-event music (live or pre-recorded), walk on music during events and entertainment (bands, DJs, etc.). The organization benefitting from the works being played is the responsible party for obtaining the license (not the vendor or band actually playing the works).

There are three main performing rights organizations - ASCAP, BMI and SESAC. Each covers different "books" of creators, so many organizations choose to seek licenses from all three organizations to avoid limiting the works played to just one organization's catalog of covered works.

For more information, visit:

www.ascap.com

www.bmi.com

www.sesac.com

In Canada, SOCAN (Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada) and Re:Sound fees are also due when recorded music is played at events with and without dancing. The fees are based on the number of guests and are typically paid by the business/service provider playing the music (AV companies, DJs, restaurants, etc.) but sometimes must be paid by the company producing/planning the event.

[SOCAN](#) represents songwriters, composers, and music publishers.

[Re:Sound](#) represents artists and record companies.