

CJSP CREATIVE FIELD TOOL

Rights-Readiness Checklist

A practical pre-release and catalog-repair checklist for independent music creators

PURPOSE: Use this checklist to identify missing ownership, metadata, provenance, registration, collection, and evidence steps before release - or to repair an existing catalog after release.

Work or release: _____ Review date: _____

Reviewer: _____ Version: _____

NOT STARTED	IN PROGRESS	READY	BLOCKED
[]	[]	[]	[]

How to use this tool

- [] Complete one checklist per release, work, or repair batch.
- [] Mark N/A only when you can explain why the item does not apply.
- [] Store a receipt, confirmation, export, screenshot, identifier, or dated note for each completed registration or material decision.
- [] Stop at BLOCKED when ownership, splits, identity, or authority is uncertain. Do not guess.
- [] Reconcile what you submitted against what the external system accepted.
- [] Treat legitimate external processing as documented pending work, not as a creator failure, when every required action within the creator's control is complete.

IMPORTANT: This is an operating checklist, not legal, tax, or accounting advice. Rights and collection rules vary by role, territory, agreement, and provider. When ownership is disputed or unclear, obtain qualified professional advice before claiming or registering rights.

1. Separate the work from the recording

WHY THIS MATTERS: A musical composition and a sound recording are different assets. They may have different owners, identifiers, administrators, and collection paths.

- [] Identify the musical work: title, writers, writer shares, publishers or administrators, and alternate titles.
- [] Identify the sound recording: primary artist, featured artists, version or mix, label, recording owner, and release date.
- [] Confirm whether this is an original work, public-domain work, cover, interpolation, adaptation, translation, remix, or work containing samples.
- [] Resolve samples, interpolations, covers, collaborations, or outside contributions before claiming ownership.

- [] Record the source of every ownership decision and who had authority to make it.

2. Lock the canonical identity record

- [] Choose one canonical title and preserve punctuation, capitalization, subtitles, and version labels consistently.
- [] Record every creator and rights-holder name exactly as registered with the relevant organization.
- [] Record legal names, professional names, account identifiers, and organization membership numbers in a protected internal record.
- [] Reconcile songwriter, publisher, and administrative shares to the applicable organization's required convention; document how the submitted shares relate and confirm the totals required by that system.
- [] Document recording ownership shares and reconcile them to the applicable registration or collection system's required convention.
- [] Assign or capture the correct identifiers when available: ISWC for the work, ISRC for the recording, UPC/EAN for the release, and provider-specific work or recording IDs.
- [] Check the proposed record against the catalog for duplicates and near-duplicates before creating another registration.

DO NOT CONFUSE: An ISRC identifies a recording. A UPC identifies a release product. Neither one, by itself, registers the composition, proves ownership, or activates every royalty pathway.

3. Preserve creation and provenance evidence

- [] Preserve dated source files, drafts, stems, project exports, lyric versions, artwork sources, and final masters as applicable.
- [] Record the people, tools, services, and material inputs used to create the final work and recording.
- [] Preserve licenses, terms, permissions, releases, split agreements, work-for-hire agreements, and sample clearances that apply.
- [] Record which human approved the final creative and release decisions.
- [] Create a hash or manifest for final delivery assets when custody or later verification matters.
- [] Keep provenance evidence separate from public marketing copy; disclose accurately without exposing private or security-sensitive data.

4. Register the composition and performance rights

- [] Determine which performing rights organization or society represents each writer and publisher for the relevant territory.
- [] Register the musical work with accurate titles, writers, shares, publishers, and identifiers.
- [] Confirm that writer and publisher roles are not accidentally collapsed or duplicated.
- [] Check whether alternate titles, arrangements, or substantially different versions require separate handling.
- [] Save the submission receipt and later verify the work appears correctly in the organization catalog.

5. Activate mechanical collection

- [] Identify who owns or administers the composition share being registered.
- [] Register or claim the work through the applicable direct or represented mechanical-collection pathway, including an administrator, mandate, society, or reciprocal arrangement when that is the proper route.
- [] Confirm existing represented territory coverage before opening additional accounts or making overlapping registrations.
- [] Match recordings to works using verified titles, writers, artists, ISRCs, release data, and provider rules.
- [] Review unmatched, partially matched, duplicate, or conflicting records instead of forcing a match.
- [] Save batch ledgers, submission receipts, acceptance states, rejection reasons, and provider work IDs.
- [] Reconcile submitted count, accepted count, held count, failed count, and remaining catalog gaps.

CJSP LESSON: A green submission state is not the finish line. The useful receipt is the reconciled ledger showing what was submitted, what the provider accepted, what failed, and what remains.

6. Register the sound recording and neighboring rights

- [] Confirm the sound-recording owner and label name for the relevant recording.
- [] Register eligible recordings with the applicable neighboring-rights or digital-performance collection organization.
- [] Record featured performers, non-featured performers, rights owners, ISRCs, titles, versions, and release dates accurately.
- [] Check for recording duplicates created by title variants, remasters, edits, or distributor migrations.
- [] Save submission evidence and verify the accepted catalog after processing.

7. Map territories and international administration

- [] List the territories where the catalog is distributed, streamed, broadcast, licensed, or otherwise earning.
- [] Identify which organization or administrator covers performance, mechanical, and neighboring rights in each territory.
- [] Check agreements for exclusivity, mandate scope, term, territory, and overlapping representation.
- [] Do not claim international coverage until affiliation or account access is confirmed.
- [] Keep territory-specific applications, agreements, tax forms, account approvals, and catalog exports together.

8. Verify distributor and release metadata

- [] Confirm the approved master, artwork, title, version, artist names, contributors, explicit/clean status, genre, language, and release date.
- [] Confirm ISRC and UPC assignment and prevent accidental replacement when migrating or redelivering catalog.
- [] Confirm songwriter and publishing metadata are complete where the distributor collects them.
- [] Confirm territories, stores, pricing or monetization selections, and any platform disclosures.

- [] Compare the live store presentation against the canonical release record after delivery.
- [] Do not assume distributor delivery completes PRO, mechanical, neighboring-rights, or international registrations.

9. Build the evidence packet

- [] Canonical work and recording record
- [] Final master, artwork, lyrics, credits, and release metadata
- [] Split agreements, permissions, licenses, releases, and relevant terms
- [] PRO, mechanical, neighboring-rights, and international submission receipts
- [] Accepted identifiers and links to provider catalog records
- [] Failure, hold, duplicate, conflict, and correction log
- [] Dated reconciliation showing complete, incomplete, blocked, and not-applicable items

10. Final release gate

GATE	PASS CONDITION	STATUS
OWNERSHIP	The work, recording, splits, and authority are documented.	[] PASS [] HOLD
IDENTITY	Titles, names, versions, shares, and identifiers agree across the canonical record.	[] PASS [] HOLD
PROVENANCE	Creation inputs, permissions, decisions, and final assets are preserved.	[] PASS [] HOLD
REGISTRATION	Applicable direct or represented performance, mechanical, neighboring-rights, and international pathways are submitted or explicitly scheduled.	[] PASS [] HOLD
RECONCILIATION	Receipts exist; available provider outcomes are checked; legitimate pending processing is identified and documented.	[] PASS [] HOLD
BLOCKERS	No unresolved ownership, clearance, duplicate, identity, or authority issue is being hidden.	[] PASS [] HOLD

Readiness decision

- [] READY - All applicable actions within the creator's control are complete, evidence is stored, and any legitimate external processing still pending is documented.
- [] CONDITIONAL - A non-ownership item is scheduled, assigned, and time-bounded.
- [] HOLD - Ownership, clearance, identity, duplicate, authority, or material evidence remains unresolved.

OPERATING PRINCIPLE: Our work. Our rights. Our micros. Nothing more, nothing less.

Post-release reconciliation

- [] Verify the release is live under the correct artist, title, version, artwork, date, and identifiers.
- [] Verify registrations appear in the relevant public or account catalogs after processing.
- [] Review unmatched recordings, unclaimed works, conflicts, rejected registrations, and missing territories on a defined cadence.
- [] Correct the canonical record first, then propagate corrections deliberately; do not create competing facts.
- [] Record what changed, why, who authorized it, when it was submitted, and whether the receiving system accepted it.

Adoption record

What changed because this checklist was used?

[illegible]

Outcome evidence or link: _____

Built from operating experience at CJSP Creative. Version 1.0 - August 2026.

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