VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Broadcasting

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Broadcasting

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Broadcasting The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

First edition, November 2026, revised 12 November 2026. Built from VyRal's lane research as it stood on 11 November 2026.

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How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

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The short answer for your trade

The reporters and stringers doing best aren't necessarily at the biggest outlets — they're the ones who diversified. Branded and B2B content work pays $1-2/word for the exact same reporting and writing skill, real income most working journalists have never priced.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	Kill fees — real work paid at a fraction of the rate	Major	VERIFIED	1
2	Branded/B2B content — the door is real, the quoted rate is the top of the market	Moderate	VERIFIED	1
3	Self-employment tax set-aside	Major	STRUCTURAL	1
4	Per-word/per-project rate vs. real hourly	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
5	Local/regional newsroom pay gap	Significant	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
6	Gear — the cost nobody counts	Moderate	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

Non-compete clauses keep anchors and reporters from taking a better job in their own market

My contract can bar me from working for another station in my market after I leave, so I either sit out, move my family, or stay put for less money.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-07-01. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Station mergers wipe out local newsroom jobs, often with little warning

When one company buys a second station in my market, it runs one newsroom for both. Whole staffs get cut, veteran anchors included, and my contract often lets them end it without cause.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-05-11. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Stringers and freelancers drive their own cars to stories while fuel costs climb

I chase stories in my own car. When gas goes up, the outlet's mileage rate doesn't, and the difference comes out of my pay.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-07-14. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Severance on the way out can be half the union's target, or capped

If I'm let go, company policy may give me one week per year of service, capped, while the union asks for two weeks per year, uncapped. I don't find out which applies until the day it happens.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-05-11. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: Kill fees — real work paid at a fraction of the rate

Size grade: Major · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. Assignments killed before publication in the past year, and the kill fee received against the full commissioned rate.

Why it leaks. A commissioned piece can be fully reported, written, and delivered, then killed before publication — the freelancer did the real work but is contractually owed only a fraction of the agreed rate, and many never track how often this happens across a year.

The number to hold it against. A kill fee is a reduced payment made to a freelancer when a commissioned assignment is canceled and never runs. Source: Kathryn Hayes, "Freelance Writers and Stringers," The SAGE Encyclopedia of Journalism, 2022.
VERIFIED · Near-primary — research body

> **Ask yourself:** In the last year, how many commissioned pieces got killed before they ran — and what did the kill fee actually pay compared to the full rate?

1. Kill fees - full work paid at a fraction, never tracked

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. List every commissioned piece from the last year that was killed. For each, write the agreed fee, what the kill fee paid, and how far along the work was.
2. Check each contract or assignment email: was a kill fee written in? Was it paid? If one is owed under your agreement and unpaid, invoice it now quoting the line.
3. For work that was fully delivered and accepted before the kill, ask whether the full fee applies under your agreement.
4. If you work in New York State or Illinois, those states have freelance worker laws that require a written contract and set a 30-day payment deadline when the contract doesn't name one. Complaints go to the New York Attorney General or the Illinois Department of Labor. Whether the law covers your kill fee is their call or a lawyer's, not ours.
5. Going forward, get the kill fee in writing before you start, tied to the stage of the work (higher once the draft is filed).

6. If one outlet kills pieces often, count that against its rate when you decide whether to keep working for it.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

A) KILL-FEE INVOICE (piece killed, fee not yet paid):
Hi [EDITOR NAME],

On [DATE] you let me know [STORY] would not run. Under our agreement of [DATE], the kill fee is [KILL FEE / PERCENT]. I filed the full draft on [DATE]. Attached is invoice [INVOICE #] for [AMOUNT], due [DATE]. Please confirm when it will be paid.

Thanks,
[YOUR NAME]

B) terms before starting (reply to a new assignment):
Happy to take [STORY] at [RATE]. Before I start, can we confirm in writing: the kill fee is [YOUR %] if killed before I file, and the full fee once the draft is filed and accepted; expenses at cost; payment within [NUMBER] days of filing. Thanks - [YOUR NAME]

Fix 3 — Done for you. **LeakReceipts · Contract Check**

WE DO: keep a log of every commissioned piece, its agreed fee and kill-fee terms, flag kills where the paid amount doesn't match the agreement, and draft the invoice or the terms email. YOU DO: read the draft, send it, and decide which outlets to keep.

Keep it closed. No assignment starts without the kill fee and the payment date in writing. Log every kill so you can see each outlet's kill rate.

What this fix can't decide for you. Whether a full fee is owed after acceptance depends on his own agreement; we do not interpret the contract for him. Whether the NY or IL freelance law reaches a kill fee is for the agency or a lawyer. NY and IL verified through practitioner/press summaries (Freelancers Union, SHRM), not the statute text or the agencies' own pages.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed − paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 6.

The full Field Guide for Broadcasting walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/broadcasting

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7