

In-Motion Talent Ltd.

Background Performer Information Package

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Welcome to In-Motion Talent Ltd. And to the exciting world of being a "Movie Extra!" also known as the "Background Performer".

In-Motion Talent was founded in 1995 and is dedicated to providing only the very best people to fill roles required by the movie industry for background performers.

Before you get started it is important that you read this information package as it contains important information about what you can expect and what is expected of you on and off the movie set ... so lets get started!

What is a Background Performer?

Background Performers are the people who provide the ambiance or atmosphere, which also provides realism for the Actors to bring the scene to life. In other words, they are the people who move in behind the Actors to make the scene look real.

For example, the scene could be a Police Station where two Cops are bringing someone in for booking that has been arrested. It would look pretty silly if the police station was empty with no in there but the actors playing the cops and the bad guy. That's where you come in. Now imagine the Police Station filled with Background Performers portraying police, secretaries, drug addicts, prostitutes, low-lives, and every day folks coming in to pay for a parking ticket; now the scene looks much more realistic. So as you can see Background Performers are a very important part of any film. Keeping in mind one extremely important fact ... the best Background Performers are the one's who are **NOT NOTICED**.

As a Background Performer, your job is to blend in with the rest of the crowd. I'll give you one more example. It's in the movie Kramer vs. Kramer, and the scene is the one in the restaurant where Mrs. Kramer tells Mr. Kramer that she wants her son back. This is a highly emotional scene. Now if you could imagine two Background Performers at the table next to them waving, laughing, looking directly into the camera, throwing food trying to be noticed, it's going to ruin the scene. Never let this happen, as it is a very good way to never be asked back again.

Getting Booked as a Background Performer

Once your picture and profile have been completed you will be placed on file ready for booking.

Three major factors fall into play when making a decision to book someone as a Background Performer.

1. Do they have the right look for the scene?
2. Do they have the right wardrobe for the scene?
3. Are they available?

Each time we are called in to book people for a scene in a movie, it is important for us to send the right person. For example, we would not send a Grandmother for a rave party scene!

Once you have been selected we will give you a call at the number or numbers you have provided in the interview. Don't worry that you may not be home provided you have an answering machine or voice mail. If you don't it is a good idea to get one. If we do leave a message, we will also leave a time frame of when we would like to hear from you by. If we have not heard from you in that time frame we will move on to the next person, so it's a good idea to check your answering machine a few times a day to see if we have called. You may also want to get a pager.

Once you have been contacted and you are available for the day, your name will be called into the Background Performer casting director for booking. You have made a commitment to the production so make sure that your entire day is open and you have nothing else you have to do that day or evening as filming can run as long as 14 hours. Canceling or changing your mind after you have been confirmed makes it very difficult for all involved as it simply creates more work for you Agent and Background Performers Casting Director if we have to replace you.

On the initial call we will tell you what productions you are being booked on and the date that you are needed. The balance of the details such as where you are to go and what time you are supposed to be there will be given to you the night before. You will also receive your wardrobe specifications and the name of whom you are to check in with when you arrive on set.

Wardrobe:

Let's start with things not to wear. Many Background Performers seem to have a problem choosing appropriate clothing. Choosing what wardrobe to take to the set is actually quite easy. Keep in mind the instructions that have been given to you via your agent from the wardrobe person.

- Do not choose any garment bearing a logo of any kind
- Do not wear any red, black or white
- Avoid geometric designs and stripes (these cause the image to "jump around" as the camera cannot focus on these types of images properly)

Of course, if you have been specifically told to wear a stripe or one of the above "nots", do not argue with the wardrobe person, just supply them with what they have requested. A good reputation can be built on being able to please the wardrobe person.

Generally speaking, every time you go to set, three complete outfits are required. In other words say to yourself " I am going away for three days, I am going to see the same people everyday, and I want to look different every time I see them." Then select three complete outfits. Keep in mind the wardrobe instructions given and avoid the danger patterns and colours.

Always make sure that the wardrobe you bring to the set is clean and well pressed before going. It is unfair to expect that the wardrobe people will have time to press your clothing. You will help yourself build a good reputation by arriving well organized, and with your clothing ready to wear. (This includes accessories such as socks, belts, ties, earrings, pantyhose, shoes, etc) It should also be noted that you should arrive wearing what you feel is your best outfit so that you only have to bring two more with you.

As a general rule, ladies should always arrive with hair and make-up done. The hair and make-up people will check you prior to going to set and will make any adjustments at that time.

You will hear the term "Camera Ready", which means wearing your first choice of wardrobe with hair and make-up done.

Transportation:

Often the location of a shoot is in the downtown area. This is convenient if you happen to live downtown and do not need to drive the location. However, when you do need to drive to a location, you

should know that the parking is not usually provided for Background Performers. If you are planning to drive, make sure you leave yourself enough time to look for parking (and pay for it) so you are not late to set.

If you travel by bus, be sure to make arrangements to get yourself home as there are times you may get off work when the buses are no longer running.

Please also make sure you always have a map with you while traveling to the location and give yourself lots of time incase there are any unforeseen delays.

Check In:

When you arrive at the general location of the shoot, look for signs posted that direct you to the "**Extras Holding**". As you get close to the set location you will see abbreviated titles on signs that represent the production you are working on. Once you located the Extras Holding, check in with Extras Wrangler or A.D. (Assistant Director) that is taking care of the Background Performers that day. You will be given a form to fill out for payment of your services as a Background Performer, make sure you know or have your SIN with you as you will not be paid if you do not write it on the form. If you are under the age of 15, and do not have a SIN yet, simply put "Child" and your date of birth where the SIN should go. Also where it asks for you Agency name put **In-Motion Talent** and your address.

Get Organized:

After signing in, get yourself organized. Start unpacking your wardrobe so that when the wardrobe person comes to select your outfit, your choices are laid out and ready for them to review. Remember, there is a lot of work to be done and no one wants to waste any time. The faster everybody is dressed and ready to go on the set, the better it makes all the Background Performers look (not to mention that it makes the wardrobe person look efficient, and this will make you a popular choice to be a Background Performer). Bring along a book or a deck of cards as there will be times when you will be sitting around for hours at a stretch.

Being organized may not sound important in some people, but trust me, it makes everything work a lot easier. Any assistance you give which indirectly helps things run smoothly, helps to build a good reputation for you.

On-Set:

When you are led to the set, (this being where the actual filming takes place), just follow directions and all will be okay. Remember, even though the crew is talking, they are working, so be as quiet as possible so they can do their job.

When you get to the set, a person known as the Assistant Director (which could be the 2nd, 3rd, or trainee), will tell you what to do. You are not expected to naturally know what to do, the A.D. is there to guide you. Once again, your success relies on your ability to follow directions, not argue about what you are told to do, and to do as you are told, pleasantly and accurately. By following the directions of the A.D. as requested you will assist the entire production in meeting its deadline, and this once again reflects on you personally.

Set Language:

- “Rolling”** Be quiet, the cameras and sound are rolling
- “Background”** Command to Background Performers to start acting
- “Action”** Command to the rest of the cast to start acting
- “Cut”** Command to stop acting
- “First Marks”** or **“Back to ones”** Command to Background Performers to go back to original starting positions as assigned.
- “Honey Wagon”** Toilet Truck!!

Craft Services:

There are two food tables, one table for Background Performers, one for the Crew. The table that you will be permitted to eat off will be set up in the Extras Holding area.

Closet to the set you will see a different table set up for the actors and crew. Stay away from this one. You cannot miss it – it’s the one with “Extras –keep away” signs all over it. (Just Kidding!) Don’t be fooling enough to think you can “go for it”. Remember the fool may think he’s cool, but it is this sort of behavior that gives the background actor a bad name in the business.

When lunch is called, the Background Performer are often given bag lunches. If however the number of Background performers is small, you may eat off the catering truck. A lot of Background Performers tend to complain about eating bagged lunches but before you complain too loudly, ask yourself this: when was the last time your job came with lunch and dinner as part of the job? Never bring food from Extras Holding to the shooting set.

It is also recommended that if you have an early morning call, stop on the way and pick up some breakfast or coffee for yourself as the Background Performers are usually the last to have their Extras Holding table set up.

Set Etiquette:

As Background Actors, you have the opportunity to see the business from behind the scenes. If you are a film buff, it is the perfect chance to see your favorite actors at work. Always remember, they are working!! **CAMERAS AND REQUESTS FOR AUTOGRAPHS ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.** The actors are there to work and it is not P.R. time for them, so be professional and do what you were hired to do. The fastest way to never be called back as a Background Performer is to bother the main actors on the set.

Just sit back and enjoy your day on set. You may only be a Background Performer in other peoples' minds, but you have the best seat in the house. So take advantage of it and enjoy.

Pay Rates & Payroll:

Generally speaking Background Performers are paid not much more than **Minimum Wage**. Depending on the production pay rates range between \$9.50 - \$10.00 per hour. So if you're doing this to increase your net worth, you're doing it for the wrong reason.

It will take approximately three (3) weeks from the date that you worked until we receive payment from the production company. Always keep track of what productions you have worked on and the dates. It's a good idea to call the Hotline on Tuesdays and Thursdays to see if your cheque has arrived and are ready to be picked up.

It is your responsibility to pick up your cheques from the Agency, we do not mail out cheques. If you wish to have your cheques mailed, then please supply us with self-addressed stamped envelopes.

As the Agency is very busy working to get you more work, our payroll hours are set for Tuesdays and Thursdays only between 12:00 pm and 4:00 pm.

Availability:

To ensure the agents know when you are available it is very important to call in your availability whenever your schedule changes. Go to our website at www.inmotiontalent.com and log on to your calendar in the Members Area. Alternatively, call our office after 6 pm and leave your full name, phone number and the days you are available in our general mailbox.

How Much Work Will I Get?

How much work you will get depends on basically how many productions are filming in the city. As a general rule, once you have worked on a production you will not be able to go back as they need new people for each new scene. There are times when you will be asked back for continuity reasons, in the case when they are filming one or two scenes that you have been involved in over a few days. It also depends on what type of productions are filming and whether you would be right for any of the scenes.

It is important that you remember that this is Background Performers work and not something you can rely on to pay the bills!!

So now you have read this information you are ready to go!! If you have any other questions, please feel free to call the Agency at any time and we would be glad to answer them for you.

And the most important thing to remember is HAVE FUN!! That's what this is all about.