

# MILES MODELS, LLC

## Modeling Expenses and Start up Costs for New Models

One of the areas that can create the most confusion for new models is the area of fees, expenses, and start-up costs. There is a lot of hype and misinformation, particularly online and in modeling forums, surrounding modeling expenses and what a model should and shouldn't pay for, which can bewilder a new model to the point of giving up and never pursuing their dream. Don't let that happen to you.

When you first start out on your journey to become a model, there are two very simple things you'll need.

### Basic Snapshots

- Have a friend take some basic digital snapshots of you wearing simple clothing and very little makeup.

### Get Exposure Modeling Agents and Scouts

You need to get your snapshots seen by as many agents and scouts as possible to get signed to a modeling agency. You can print out your photos and mail them to all the agencies (but this would be the slowest and most costly way); you can email them to all the agencies (not always the most effective way); or you can post your photos on model scouting websites where you know the agents and scouts are actively searching for models. That's it! Pretty simple and affordable.

### Once an Agency Wants to Sign You

Now that an agency has expressed an interest in representing you, you will likely be told that you need to hire a photographer, makeup artists, and stylists, make prints of your photos, create composite cards, post your photos on the agency website and so on. Some may even tell you that you need [modeling classes/workshops](#) to improve your skills. It is the time where you need to take a breath and figure out the best path for you.

Many new models have heard "if you have to pay anything it's a scam" or "if an agency likes me they will pay for everything." It is not always the case, and it's never as cut and dry as people would like to think. Please don't give up on yourself or an agency when the topic of [expenses](#) comes up. You need to think about what's best for your career and what they are asking you to do.

### A few things to keep in mind are:

What is the reputation of the agency? Is the agency known for developing new models and getting them bookings? Do they have connections to larger agencies in bigger modeling markets? What is their plan for how to market you?

If you need new photos, ask the agency for a list of different photographers they would recommend. If they insist that you use their in-house photographer, this should be a warning sign that they probably earn more selling photo shoots than getting you bookings. An agency should not earn income from your photo shoots.

Is the agency part of a modeling school? Modeling classes can be beneficial to some models but are never a requirement for you to get signed to an agency.

Are you in a large market like New York, Los Angeles, Milan, Paris or a smaller local market? Most models do not start at the top in big New York or Paris agencies, rather they learn the business, develop their look, and build their books in the smaller market agencies. While a big agency in New York may offer to advance your expenses, agencies in smaller markets don't have the resources to finance new models. If you have the opportunity to work with an agency in a smaller market don't pass it up, they can be a valuable asset to your career.

### **Agencies May Advance Expenses but Never Finance**

When you are signed to an agency, you are considered an independent contractor. You are not an employee of the agency, but rather your services as a model are contracted by the agency. Essentially, you are a sole proprietor of your own business. Therefore, all the expenses incurred will be your responsibility. Having said that, there are instances where an agency may be willing to advance some of these expenses to get you started. Once you start booking jobs, the agency will deduct what is owed to them from your account.

Even after you start working and booking lots of jobs you, just like all the other supermodels, will have ongoing expenses such as ***new photo shoots, prints for your book, couriers, agency website fees, agency commissions, travel expenses, long-distance telephone charges, etc.*** But, it's likely these will be small expenses in regards to the income you will earn, plus your business expenses will be tax deductible.

### **Every Model and Every Agency Is Different**

When it comes to modeling start-up fees and expenses, it's important to keep in mind that every model and every agency is different. If you asked 100 successful models how they got started, you'd likely get 100 different stories. Some may have had certain advantages, but most of them probably did not, and they worked very hard to get where they are.

Keep in mind that models are considered to be self-employed contractors rather than employees of the agency. This means that it's perfectly normal for models to invest in their own start-up costs that have nothing to do with the agency, such as model ***scouting services, website profiles, comp cards, portfolio book, photoshoots, etc.***

***Do not expect your agent to do all the work for you. It's a mutual relationship. If you cannot invest in any of the above start up costs then you are in the wrong business. Yourself is your brand, your image. Effort is needed! You have to start somewhere.***