

2026 Professional Casting Call Template & Checklist

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This template is designed for the modern independent filmmaker. It balances professional union-standard clarity with the agility required for indie productions.

1. The Electronic Breakdown (Master Template)

Copy and paste this structure into Casting Networks, Backstage, or your casting portal of choice.

| Field | Requirement / Content |
|----------------------------|---|
| Project Title | [Project Name] |
| Project Type | [Feature / Short / Commercial / New Media] |
| Union Status | [e.g., SAG-AFTRA, Non-Union, or Open] |
| Rate / Compensation | [Be transparent: e.g., \$XXX/day, Copy/Credit/Meals, or Deferred] |
| Dates | [Shoot Dates, Callback Dates, and Location] |

Role Breakdown: [Character Name]

- **Role Type:** [Lead / Supporting / Day Player] [cite: 1]
- **Age Range:** [e.g., 25-35] [cite: 1]
- **Psychological Profile:** [What does this character want? What are they afraid of?] [cite: 1]
- **Scene Demands:** [List specific emotional range, physical requirements, or technical skills like "must play guitar"] [cite: 1]
- **DEI Statement:** [Specify "Open to all ethnicities" only if the script and story genuinely support it.] [cite: 1]

2. The Self-Tape Instruction Sheet

Clear instructions reduce actor anxiety and ensure you get usable footage.

Framing & Technicals:

- **Orientation:** Horizontal (Landscape) only. [cite: 1]
- **Framing:** Medium shot (chest up). Ensure eyes are clearly visible. [cite: 1]
- **Lighting:** Natural light or a basic three-point setup. Avoid heavy backlighting. [cite: 1]
- **Audio:** Minimize background noise. Use an external mic if available. [cite: 1]

The Slate:

- Please state your name, height, location, and union status.

3. Pre-Production Checklist (The "Doorman" Protocol)

As learned from years at a four-star property: handle the awkward details early to prevent catastrophe later. [cite: 1]

1. **Digital Release Form:** Ready for signatures before any footage is recorded. [cite: 1]
2. **AI Protection Clause:** Ensure language is included stating footage is for casting evaluation only and will not be used for AI training.
3. **Scheduling Tool:** Link your Calendly or similar tool to avoid double-booking errors. [cite: 1]
4. **Virtual Waiting Room:** Enable this in Zoom/Google Meet to prevent session overlaps. [cite: 1]

4. The "No-Ghosting" Rejection Templates

Reputation travels faster than your reel. Send these. [cite: 1]

Template A: Post-Submission (General)

"Thank you for submitting for [Project Name]. We appreciate the time you took to share your work. While we aren't moving forward with your submission for this specific project, we will keep your materials on file for future casting."

Template B: Post-Callback (Personalized)

"Thank you for joining us for callbacks on [Date]. We truly enjoyed your take on [Character Name]. We have decided to go in a different direction for this role, but your [Specific Skill/Energy] left a strong impression. We look forward to seeing your work again."

Notes from Trent: *Remember, the way you run your audition is an audition of YOU as a director. Stay organized, stay kind, and read the room. [cite: 1]*