Independent Workforce Engagement FAQs for Salesforce Managers

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Salesforce engages independent professionals—commonly known as contractors, consultants, freelancers, small services providers, and non-employee workers—to deliver specialized services. These independents provide Salesforce with workforce flexibility and subject matter expertise that can augment the abilities of its full-time staff.

In short, independent professionals help Salesforce compete in the ever-escalating war for talent—and it is critical that Salesforce engages them safely and efficiently.

Why does Salesforce use a program for engaging independent workers?

A consistent independent workforce engagement program promotes enterprise-wide process consistency, improves productivity, controls costs, increases visibility into provider relationships and spend, and mitigates the risks associated with using independents—most notably, independent contractor reclassification.

Reclassification can occur when the IRS or state tax authorities determine that independents working for a client do not meet the necessary criteria to engage as qualified vendors (or "independent contractors") and be paid on a "1099" basis. These authorities may then **reclassify** them as employees, which frequently results in significant penalties and back-tax payments for the client. Reclassified workers may also try to recoup back-benefits through class-action lawsuits, which could prove very damaging to Salesforce and its reputation, brand, and bottom line.

How will this program remove these risks?

The program ensures that only independent professionals who meet all appropriate qualification requirements may engage as vendors. All others must either work with MBO to establish a qualified business or engage as reclassification-safe payrolled employees of MBO Partners.

This eliminates Salesforce's reclassification risk entirely and minimizes other risks, such as class-action lawsuits and business liability risk.

Which independents are appropriate for this program?

All internally identified independent professionals and one-person businesses (i.e., those not recruited or sourced through a staffing vendor) must engage through this program.

Important: Incorporated entities and former employees are **not exempt** from this program. If you have questions concerning whether a worker you wish to engage is appropriate for this program, please contact Salesforce's Chris Farmer at cfarmer@salesforce.com.

MBO PARTNERS AND ITS SERVICES

Why MBO Partners?

Since 1996, MBO Partners has delivered solutions that make it safer and easier for enterprise organizations and top independent professionals to work together. MBO strengthens relationships, minimizes risk, and maximizes value for businesses like Salesforce. Our unmatched experience and industry leadership enable us to operate on the forefront of the independent economy and consistently advance the next way of working.

What services does MBO offer for engaging independent workers?

MBO features three engagement services which together ensure that all independents engage through a compliant program suited to their needs, expectations, and eligibility to operate as independent vendors.

- **Vendor Services**. A business-to-business engagement service for professionals who qualify to engage with Salesforce as independent vendors. Workers interested in engaging through Vendor Services must undergo qualification evaluation during the Salesforce / MBO onboarding process to ensure they meet these criteria.
- **Business Services**. A unique engagement alternative for Sole Proprietors and other independent professionals who wish to work as compliant independent business owners (LLCs or corporations) but need assistance meeting and maintaining the appropriate credentials to do so. These workers enjoy the freedom and flexibility of operating an independent business at less cost and with less administration than doing it alone.
- **Payroll Services**. A conventional W-2 payrolling solution for engaging workers who are ineligible for Vendor Services or Business Services due to their requirements, expectations, or status as an independent business.

The table that follows compares these three services side-by-side, or you can click here to see more detailed descriptions.

	MORE LIKE A BUSINESS		MORE LIKE AN EMPLOYEE
	Vendor Services	**Business Services**	**Payroll Services**
Snapshot	Agent-of-record service for qualified vendors; MBO indemnifies Salesforce for tax-related penalties of reclassified	Business set-up and management for professionals who need help meeting and maintaining vendor credentials	Traditional payrolling; FLSA applies, including overtime and double-time as per state laws
Who is appropriate?	Professionals who operate as independent businesses and meet vendor requirements	Professionals who see themselves as independent businesses but do not currently qualify as vendors	Workers who do not see themselves or operate as true independent businesses
Vendor-qualified?	Yes	No	No (not evaluated)
Tax status	Independent vendor (1099)	1099 or W-2 of own corporation	W-2 of MBO Partners
Business insurances	Must carry insurances at Salesforce-required levels	Covered under MBO's General Liability and Errors & Omissions*	Covered under MBO's General Liability and Errors & Omissions
Rate negotiation	Negotiate a bill rate that already factors in statutory taxes	Negotiate a bill rate that already factors in statutory taxes	Negotiate pay rate that does not factor in statutory taxes
When is the worker paid?	Upon receipt of Salesforce's payment based on Net 14 terms	Upon receipt of Salesforce's payment based on Net 14 terms	Two weeks after a given work week (or sooner if required by state law)

* Independents may be required to purchase their own GL or E&O insurance to show an investment in their business for compliance purposes.

How does MBO decide which service is best for each worker?

All Salesforce-referred independents complete a brief online survey that explores their independent experience, business structure and characteristics, expectations, and vendor qualification status. We also conduct a one-on-one consultation with the worker if necessary. We then have the information we need to select the engagement service that best fits the worker's unique situation.

Please note that we factor workers' wishes into our service determination, but we always ensure that they meet applicable eligibility requirements before onboarding them into the appropriate service. For example, independents wishing to engage through Vendor Services must meet Salesforce's qualification criteria and pass a thorough compliance evaluation to qualify.

What is the value of Business Services?

Traditional providers offer a 1099 / agent-of-record service for qualified vendors—and then force everyone else into a conventional W-2 payrolling service. But this solution poorly serves to the large percentage of independent workers who resist W-2 payrolling yet do not qualify as vendors:

- If the provider engages them through an agent-of-record service, their client's risk and regulatory scrutiny increase dramatically.

- If the provider forces them into payrolling, it will likely lead to discontent, talent loss, and unnecessarily high costs.

Business Services is the only solution for independent business owners who do not meet eligibility requirements for engaging as independent vendors, yet are likely to reject the limitations of traditional payrolling. It lets Salesforce better serve—and compliantly engage—the most common types of independent businesses, including corporations (C corps and S corps), LLCs, and Partnerships. Through Business Services, MBO even walks independents through the complexities of setting up their own compliant businesses

Business Services does more than reduce risk and create a better experience for your independents—it also helps control costs. With a mark-up that's up to 70% lower than traditional payroll providers, Business Services can help Salesforce **cut overall engagement costs by up to 20%**.

How do I contact MBO Partners?

Salesforce managers can contact salesforce@mbopartners.com.

PROGRAM COSTS

Is there a cost for this program?

MBO applies a fee to the rate you negotiate with the worker. As indicated below, the fee varies based on the service through which each independent professional engages. You may wish to take this fee into consideration when negotiating rates with the independents you engage.

- **Vendor Services**. MBO collects 2.5% of the worker's billings.
- **Business Services**. MBO collects 4.5% of the worker's billings.
- **Payroll Services**. MBO applies a 21.07% mark-up to the worker's pay rate. (**NOTE**: For individuals working in San Francisco, Ca., the mark-up is 26.43%.)

Why are the Vendor Services and Business Services fees so much lower?

Vendor Services and Business Services are intended for professional independents who understand the tax obligations of working independently and factor statutory costs (such as Social Security, Medicare, and other obligations) into the rate they negotiate with you. MBO therefore uses an innovative and cost-saving pricing model for these services.

While most providers apply the same mark-up—which includes statutory taxes—even if these taxes are already factored into their negotiated rate, only MBO ensures that Salesforce never double-pays these taxes. As introduced above, this results in **cost savings of up to 20%** compared to traditional payroll providers when workers engage through one of these services.

Payroll Services works differently. Most commonly, individuals in Payroll Services are hourly workers who do not factor in these taxes when setting their rate. As such, our Payroll Services mark-up includes appropriate statutory costs.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Once I identify new independent workers, how do I refer them to MBO?

When you identify a new in-scope independent professional for a project, complete this Referral Form.

How long does it take to onboard workers after I refer them to MBO?

While MBO can fully onboard most workers in as little as five days (to accommodate for the background screening), Salesforce recommends referring the worker to MBO 10 business days before the expected start date. Workers who go on to engage through Business Services may require additional time to complete their business set-up (if necessary).

Note that onboarding timing strongly depends on the worker's responsiveness. MBO provides clear instructions and works closely with each worker to improve responsiveness and accelerate the process as much as possible.

As the manager, you have a part to play as well. We recommend that you stress the importance of completing the steps quickly when you're communicating with a worker you intend to engage.

This Engagement Lifecycle Process Summary includes a closer look at the Salesforce / MBO onboarding process.

Are background checks required?

Yes. All new independents must undergo a background check. MBO coordinates these screenings as part of our onboarding process. It is Salesforce policy not to allow workers to begin work until the screenings is complete.

How do I approve time and expense entries?

You'll receive an email notification each time a worker engaged on your projects submits time, milestones, deliverables, and/or expenses. Follow the instructions in the email to execute the approval.

Please be sure to approve all submissions by noon ET at each Tuesday. Failure to meet this deadline may delay payments.

How long does it take for workers to receive their payments?

Payment timing varies by the worker's MBO engagement service.

- **Vendor Services** and **Business Services**

  MBO invoices Salesforce for all workers' approved time and expense submissions each week, and Salesforce pays MBO based on Net 14 terms. We then pay workers in the next weekly payroll cycle. As such, independents in these services receive their payments three weeks after a given work week. See the Salesforce Payment Calendar for details.

- **Payroll Services**

  MBO pays Payroll Services workers on Fridays, two weeks after a given work week (or sooner if required by state law).

Again, it is very important that you approve your independents' time and expense submissions before the noon ET Tuesday deadline each week.

Can I engage independent workers outside the U.S through MBO?

Yes. MBO is headquartered in the U.S. and has offices in the UK and Ireland. Through these offices and an extensive international partnership network, we can compliantly engage talent in most countries.