

Is it customary when an agent represents an author to obtain the author's social security number so that a separate bank account can be set up for the author?

Q: Is it customary when an agent represents an author to obtain the author's social security number so that a separate bank account can be set up for the author? If so, how soon would the agent need this info from the author before he's negotiated a deal with a publisher?

Elizabeth Harding, Vice President at the Curtis Brown literary and media agency said, "At Curtis Brown, Ltd. we have a general, yet separate, 'Author Account' which we use for all author deposits and payments. We use our clients' social security numbers for reporting of 1099 forms, as we receive monies from publishers and the like on behalf of our clients. The Association of Authors' Representatives (AAR) Canon of Ethics requires that, "Members shall take responsible measures to protect the security and integrity of clients' funds. Members must maintain separate bank accounts for money due their clients so that there is no commingling of clients' and members' funds. " Authors and illustrators should check with their agent to confirm policy. For information on the AAR Canon of Ethics, see www.aar-online.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=10337 1:2/06