

*Effective April 1, 2022*

# CC Employee Handbook

Welcome to Creative Commons! We are pleased you have joined the CC team. This handbook will familiarize you with our policies and procedures. It also summarizes our employee benefits. Please read it immediately, as compliance with its policies is a condition of your employment.

The policies stated in this handbook may be subject to change from time to time at the sole discretion of CC. You will receive updated information concerning changes in policy, and your continued employment constitutes acceptance of such changes. If you have any questions, contact your manager or [hr@creativecommons.org](mailto:hr@creativecommons.org).

---

[Work Schedules](#)

[Team Communication](#)

[CC Equipment](#)

[Business Expenses](#)

[Paid Time Off](#)

[Leaves of Absence](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[Conflicts of Interest](#)

[Harassment Prevention Policy](#)

[Whistleblower Policy](#)

[Blogs & Social Media](#)

[Performance Review Policy](#)

## Work Schedules

As a distributed organization with a global reach, we all need to be considerate of time zones and varied work schedules. We also need to be comfortable with a large amount of asynchronous work.

However, as a small collaborative team, we also need and want **some time to work together**, side by virtual side. We also need and want **some predictability** about when we can reach each other or plan work sessions.

To hit this balance, we ask that all employees work with their managers to set a **consistent standing work schedule**. When establishing your schedule, consider the following:

- Your schedule must be limited to Monday through Friday; we want our entire team to reserve weekends for non-CC time.
- For full-time staff, the working hours should be spread fairly consistently over the course of the week.
- The period of each workday with the most overlapping work time for the team is:
  - 17:30 to 22:30 Mumbai (UTC+5:30)
  - 15:00 to 20:00 PM Nairobi (UTC+3)
  - **12:00 to 17:00 UTC+0**
  - 09:00 to 14:00 Rio de Janeiro (UTC-3)
  - 05:00 to 10:00 Los Angeles (UTC-7)



Once you set your standing schedule with your manager, please mark your working hours in your calendar to let your colleagues know.

**All-Staff Meetings:** Regardless of what personal work schedule you set, you are expected to be available for 2-3 all-staff meetings each week so we can connect as an entire team. As much as possible, those meetings will be scheduled sometime between 15:00-19:00 UTC.

**Flexibility:** Our consistent work schedules are intended to make it easier to work together as a team, but they are not intended to be rigid. If you need to be away from your desk during your regular working hours for an appointment or otherwise, you can shift your hours that day. Please use your judgment; if you need to be away from your desk for a significant period of time during your regular working hours, we encourage you to use your paid time off.

**Overtime & Recording Time:** Due to their employment status, certain employees may be required to keep track of their time and adhere to particular work schedules. Your manager

**Effective April 1, 2022**

and the HR department will let you know if this applies to you, and will work with you to set up a routine and system that works for you.

## Team Communication

Even more than in a physical office, remote work environments require deliberate and consistent communication to make sure we all have the same understanding of tasks and goals, and to ensure we get to know one another and stay connected.

To that end, we have the following **day-to-day communication practices** that we ask everyone to follow:

- **Slack:** We use Slack as our digital office space. There are several staff Slack channels for various purposes, but the #general channel in our internal CC Slack is our primary digital space for all-staff communication.
  - If you are so inclined, **greet your coworkers** in the #general channel on the internal CC Slack workspace when you start your day. Please keep that channel open during your working hours.
  - When you need to step away from your workspace or need uninterrupted time to focus, just **update your Slack status** (or your calendar if you need to close Slack) so your coworkers know you are unavailable.
- **Google Calendars:** We use shared calendars to make it easier to schedule meetings and coordinate as a team.
  - Please make your **Google Calendar visible** to everyone on staff, and mark your regular working hours on your calendar.
- **Work calls & meetings:** To help us stay connected as humans, we use video conferencing as much as possible for our work calls and meetings.
  - Because it can help us get to know each other, **consider turning on your video** for work calls and meetings. (There are also times where each one of us chooses to face mute. Just use your discretion.)
  - **Consider not muting** your audio as a default, depending on the size and format of the call. (We have found that staying off mute helps make discussion flow more naturally and better simulates in-person meetings, but use your best judgment depending on the circumstances.)
  - Make sure you have **adequate internet bandwidth and low background noise** to make those calls as hassle-free as possible. (If this is a regular challenge for you, please talk to your manager about obtaining better equipment.)

**Effective April 1, 2022**

## CC Equipment

CC will purchase equipment for you to do your work. CC equipment may include a laptop, peripherals, software, etc. CC equipment is property of Creative Commons and you should use and maintain it with reasonable care. When possible, please save the box your CC equipment was delivered in. Equipment boxes often have information essential to troubleshooting and specifically constructed to protect their contents in case it needs to be shipped.

While incidental personal use is permitted, it should never result in any added expense for Creative Commons, and it should never impede your job productivity or that of other employees.

Staff members are eligible to get a new computer under certain conditions:

- your warranty is about to expire
- your computer is not reliable
- an upgrade will significantly improve how you to do your work
- other circumstances as approved by your manager

If you wish to request new hardware, please email your manager with the Core Systems Manager copied.

Please remember, employees should not have an expectation of privacy with regard to any information, data, or documents created or stored on CC equipment. While rarely enforced, CC does have the right to inspect and/or reclaim any CC equipment (including software services like email) at any time without employee notice.

If any CC equipment is lost or damaged, please notify your manager immediately.

When your employment with CC ends, you have the option of buying the equipment, please consult the wiki for information on this. Otherwise, you must return all CC equipment in good repair. CC reserves the right to take any lawful action to recover or protect our property.

## Business Expenses

In order to ensure employees can do their work effectively, CC will pay for certain costs associated with working remotely, travel, and other specified business expenses. You should submit your reimbursements (with receipts) on a monthly basis [using the Expensify system](#).

Unless otherwise specified in this policy, you must get approval from your manager *before* incurring an expense on behalf of Creative Commons.

**Internet & Mobile Phone:** CC will reimburse costs of your internet service, up to a maximum of the equivalent of USD \$50 per month. CC will reimburse costs of your mobile phone, up to a maximum of the equivalent of USD \$50 per month.

## ***Effective April 1, 2022***

**Home office expenses:** CC will pay for necessary office equipment, including a laptop, keyboard, and external monitor. However, please work with Operations to arrange for the purchase of these items so we can ensure consistency across staff.

**Travel:** CC will pay all reasonable costs for pre-approved business travel, including transportation and meals (excluding alcohol). CC will pay for meals over the course of your travel. Public transportation is preferred. Taxis should be kept to a minimum; please travel in groups when possible. Airfare should be booked in economy class on the most affordable nonstop (where feasible) flight. If you drive your personal vehicle, CC reimburses mileage according to the [US Federal government rate](#).

**Other:** Meals with a defined business purpose will be reimbursed.

In all cases, please keep in mind that CC is a nonprofit, so we ask that employees be frugal when incurring expenses.

## **Paid Time Off**

As part of our effort to support employee wellbeing, Creative Commons (CC) provides a generous amount of paid time off (PTO) to all regular full-time and regular part-time employees. We believe that time away from work is important, and we strongly encourage you to regularly use your vacation time throughout your employment at CC.

Many countries have laws governing paid time off requirements, so employees outside of the U.S. and Canada have different PTO schedules written into their employment agreements. In spite of these variations based on differing employment laws and customs, we do our best to make the PTO offerings as fair and consistent as possible across staff. **You can see more information about how PTO is handled for different jurisdictions on [the internal wiki](#).**

- **Holidays:**
  - Creative Commons treats all normal work days from Christmas Day through New Year's Eve as paid holidays. We also have Wellbeing Days on the last Friday of every month, which are treated as paid holidays for all employees.
  - **Other observed holidays vary for employees depending on where they live.**
  - The holiday schedule may vary slightly from one year to the next. CC will update the holiday schedule [on the internal wiki](#) before the start of each calendar year.
  - Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for paid holidays immediately upon hire. Regular part-time employees are eligible for holiday pay in proportion to the number of hours they normally are scheduled to work.
  - Holidays are not an accrued benefit and are not payable upon termination.
  
- **Vacation:**

## ***Effective April 1, 2022***

- Full-time employees earn 1.5 days of paid vacation for each full month of employment (which equates to **18 days** or 144 hours annually). After the completion of an employee's fourth year of employment, the rate will increase to 2 days of paid vacation for each full month of employment (which equates to **24 days** or 192 hours annually).
  - Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to earn vacation beginning in the employee's first full month of employment. Part-time employees will earn vacation on a prorated basis based on the number of hours worked.
  - Reasonable efforts should be made to schedule vacations at a time and for a duration mutually acceptable by you and your manager.
  - Your **vacation accrual may not exceed 28.5 days** or 228 hours. Once this maximum cap is reached, all further accruals will cease until you have used enough vacation time to bring the accrual below the cap.
  - Upon termination from CC, employees will be paid for all accrued, unused vacation time.
- **Sick Time:** CC provides paid time off for illness or injury (including illness or injury of spouse, domestic partner, children, or parents) beginning in the first full month of employment.
    - Full-time employees will accrue sick time at a rate of 1 day per month (which equates to **12 days per year**). Part-time employees will accrue sick time on a prorated basis based on the number of hours worked.
    - Unused sick time may be carried forward each year to a **maximum accrual of 12 working days** (which equates to 96 hours).
    - Please alert your manager right away if you need to take a sick day. CC reserves the right to request a doctor's note to support the employee's absence from work for an illness.
    - We strongly encourage employees to **completely step away from work while sick**, in order to take time to rest and recover. If you are sick for more than five consecutive days, HR will be in touch to see if there is any way we can help you.
    - Upon termination from CC, employees will not be paid for any accrued, unused sick time.

## **Leaves of Absence**

CC grants leaves of absence in accordance with the requirements of applicable laws, which vary depending on the jurisdiction where the employee lives. In addition to what is legally required, CC grants employees certain additional leave benefits as specified below.

Employees continue to receive existing health and other benefits during all approved leaves of absence up to 3 months (except when a longer period is mandated by law). This includes dependent benefit coverage as long as the employee continues to pay her/his portion of the premium for such coverage.

***Effective April 1, 2022***

**\*Family Leave**

In conjunction with any paid family leave provided by the employee's jurisdiction of residence, CC offers Family Leave for the following reasons:

- to bond with the employee's new child; or
- to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, parent, or partner.

Creative Commons will supplement the paid family leave benefits provided by the employee's local government so that an employee on approved Family Leave should receive 100% of their regular salary in accordance with the following:

- Employees who have served between 3 and 12 consecutive months of employment may be granted a paid leave of absence for up to 4 consecutive weeks.
- Employees who have served at least 12 consecutive months of employment may be granted a paid leave of absence for up to 6 consecutive weeks.

Employees must give written notice of their intent to take Family Leave and their anticipated date of return as soon as reasonably practicable. Employees must send this request to their manager and copy [hr@creativecommons.org](mailto:hr@creativecommons.org). In the case of child bonding, Family Leave must begin within three months of the birth of a child and/or placement of a child for adoption or foster care. During Family Leave, employees do not accrue vacation or sick time and are not entitled to receive holiday pay. Family Leave is not an accrued benefit and is not subject to payment upon termination. As Family Leave at CC is not legally required, CC does not guarantee a right to leave, job protection, or return to work upon completing leave.

**\*Bereavement Leave**

Bereavement Leave is a paid leave of absence in the event of a death in the immediate family. Bereavement Leave may be approved for up to 5 days.

**\*Jury Duty and Witness Appearance**

Civic duty is important, and you will be granted leave if you are called as a juror or witness in a legal proceeding. Inform your manager as soon as possible upon learning that you have been called for jury duty or to appear as a witness, and keep your manager informed as to the likely duration of your service.

You may take whatever time is required to complete your service without jeopardizing your position at CC. You will be paid for work time missed for up to 3 days; after that, the leave will be unpaid unless otherwise required by applicable law. During any portions of the day that court attendance is not required, you are expected to meet your regular job responsibilities.

**Effective April 1, 2022**

## Confidentiality

Creative Commons is committed to being a transparent organization. Nonetheless, CC does deal with certain categories of information that are confidential. If you have access to confidential CC information, for example information about donors to CC or private personnel information, it is vital that you not disclose it to anyone outside CC either during or after your employment. Upon termination, you must promptly return any such information to CC and must not keep copies, whether in document or electronic form, and must delete CC confidential information from your personal electronic devices.

## Conflicts of Interest

CC employees must take care to avoid conduct that would compromise public confidence in CC and its mission. You should seek to avoid situations where your personal activities and relationships conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interests of CC. You must disclose to your manager any interest that you have that may, or may appear to, conflict with the interests of CC.

For example:

**Financial interests in other companies:** If you have a material financial interest in a transaction between CC and a third party, you must disclose that interest, and that transaction must be approved by the Board of Directors.

**Outside employment:** You may not engage in consulting or other outside work if doing so would negatively affect your performance at CC or make it difficult for you to do your work at CC objectively and effectively.

Each year, CC requires all employees to disclose outside financial interests. The list of companies and organizations is maintained on [CC's internal wiki](#), and CC must get pre-approval by the Board of Directors before engaging in transactions with any of those entities.

## Harassment Prevention Policy

CC is committed to providing a work environment free from harassment or discrimination, which includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment or harassment on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, gender identity, physical or mental disability, marital status, family status, age, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Within your first 3 months as an employee of Creative Commons, you will be required to successfully complete a training course about how to prevent harassment and discrimination. You will be required to renew the training annually. CC will set this up for you.

If you believe you have been subject to any form of harassment or discrimination, you should report it immediately to the General Counsel or [hr@creativecommons.org](mailto:hr@creativecommons.org).

**Effective April 1, 2022**

## **Whistleblower Policy**

Creative Commons expects employees to observe high ethical standards in carrying out their responsibilities and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

### **Open Door Policy**

If any employee has complaints, concerns, or questions as to the ethics or legality of a particular action taken by a director, officer, employee, or volunteer, they are encouraged to raise their complaints, concerns or questions with their manager or any director or officer, including the CEO, General Counsel, Secretary, Board Chair, Vice Chair, or any other director on the Board of Directors.

In the event a director, officer, employee, or volunteer believes that there may have been a legal transgression and that it is not reasonable to raise the issue with an officer, director, or employee, such person should contact an outside attorney or authority.

### **Requirement of Investigation**

Within a reasonable time of receiving a complaint, concern or question regarding compliance with a law, regulation or ethics requirement, the CEO, General Counsel, Secretary, and/or any other director or officer must report the matter to the Governance & Nominations Committee of the Board of Directors, which will open an investigation into the matter and pursue it to resolution. Should the Governance & Nominations Committee find that a law, regulation or ethics requirement has been violated, appropriate action should be taken.

### **Confidentiality**

To the degree possible, the names of the individuals reporting under this Whistleblower Policy shall be kept confidential.

### **Protection from Retaliatory Action**

Neither the organization nor its managers may take any negative employment or other retaliatory action against any director, officer, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports a violation of a law or regulatory requirement. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline including, but not limited to, termination of employment.

## **Blogs & Social Media**

Creative Commons supports the appropriate use of social media, both personally and, on behalf of the company. If you engage in social media, you are expected to protect CC's brand and adhere to the principles of being responsible, and respectful. You must protect against any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information belonging to CC, our community, or any third

***Effective April 1, 2022***

parties with whom we do business. All social media and social networking accounts created by CC employees that leverage CC brands or trademarks, or that are created using a CC business email address, are considered the property of CC. You must be authorized by CC before you create or manage these CC-owned properties.

## **Performance Review Policy**

Your performance, professional development, and growth is important. CC runs an annual performance review process which includes both peer and manager reviews. CC is always improving how we give feedback to one another and is committed to your professional growth.

All employees also have the option and/or right to inspect their own personnel files upon advance request.