**GNU General Public License v2.0**

GNU GPL is the most widely used free software license and has a strong copyleft requirement. When distributing derived works, the source code of the work must be made available under the same license. There are multiple variants of the GNU GPL, each with different requirements.

A strong copyleft requirement is a license that requires anyone who distributes a work derived from licensed code to make the work and its source code available under the same license. This requirement applies to the entire software program, including linked libraries and other components.

Everyone is permitted to copy and distribute verbatim copies of this license document, but changing it is not allowed. GNU General Public

License is intended to guarantee your freedom to share and change free software--to make sure the software is free for all its users. It is designed to make sure that you have the freedom to distribute copies of free software. We protect your rights with two steps: (1) copyright the software, and (2) offer you this license which gives you legal permission to copy, distribute and/or modify the software .If the software is modified by someone else and passed on, we want its recipients to know that what they have is not the original, so that any problems introduced by others will not reflect on the original authors' reputations. When distributing object code or executables, you must:

Include the corresponding source code.

Share the information you received about the source code offer if distributing non commercially.

**You cannot:**

Modify, sublicense, or distribute the Program except as outlined in the GPL. Doing so voids your license. Impose additional restrictions on recipients beyond those specified in the GPL.

**Features:**

**Acceptance:** You are not required to sign the GPL, but by distributing or modifying the Program, you accept the license's terms.

**Distribution of Rights:** When redistributing the Program, recipients automatically receive the same rights you were granted. You cannot restrict these rights further.

**Conflicts with Other Obligations:** If legal or contractual obligations conflict with the GPL

**Patent Protection**: The GPL includes clauses to prevent contributors from using patents to make the software proprietary. If a contributor holds a patent that applies to the software, they must license it freely for use with the GPL software or avoid participating.

**To license your program under the GPL:**

Attach a notice to each source file, including:

Copyright statement.

A reference to the GPL.

A disclaimer of warranty.

Provide the full text of the GPL along with the program.

If the program is interactive, display licensing information when it starts.

### **Impact on the Software Industry**

* The GPL has become a cornerstone for many open-source projects, especially in operating systems (e.g., Linux) and development tools (e.g., GCC, the GNU Compiler Collection). Its copyleft requirement has fueled a “viral” effect, where more and more code is developed and shared freely, benefiting individual developers, companies, and the public alike.

 Linux **Kernel**: Licensed under GPL v2, this is one of the most prominent examples, maintaining the open-source nature of any derivative kernels.

 WordPress: Licensed under GPL, it extends copyleft requirements to plugins and themes, pushing the WordPress ecosystem toward open-source.