# Policy Manual

Last Updated: April 28, 2015

## Our Mission

We open up laws, legislation, and the lawmaking process online so that as many people as possible can see, understand, and shape the policies that affect their lives.

## Vision

We are former and current government workers, designers, technologists, and concerned citizens who believe in building with, not for, and in partnering directly with users both in and outside of government to find solutions that help bridge the gap between the two. We're focused on long-term solutions, building tools and processes that change the culture of how governments operate.

Everything we create is open source, free for anyone to take and use.

We're building a national network of people like us and the Free Law Founders— to share resources and expertise around solving shared challenges in modernizing the lawmaking process.

## Culture & Compliance

### Equal Employment Opportunity Disclosure & Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The OpenGov Foundation is committed to equal employment opportunity. We will not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on any legally recognized basis including, but not limited to race, religion, color, sex (with or without sexual conduct and including pregnancy and sexual orientation involving transgender status/gender identity, and sex-stereotyping), national origin, age, disability (physical or mental), genetic information, sexual orientation, or any other protected class under federal, state or local law, *as well as* gender identity, parental status, marital status, political affiliation, gender expression, mental illness, socioeconomic status or background, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, or clothing. We are committed to providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities. This may include providing reasonable accommodation where appropriate in order for an otherwise qualified individual to perform the essential functions of the job.

**Harassment, Bullying, Violence in the Workplace Policy**

We prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee, supervisor or third party for any reason. Harassment of third parties by our employees is also prohibited. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the personal morality of employees. It is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee harasses another for any reason or in any manner. Any type of sexual harassment is against company policy and may be unlawful.

Create boundaries to your own behavior and consider how you can create safe space that helps prevent unacceptable behavior by others. We do not seek to list all cases of unacceptable behavior, but provide examples to help guide our community in thinking through how to respond when we experience these types of behavior, whether directed at ourselves or others.

If you are unsure if something is appropriate behavior, it probably isn't. Each person you interact with can define where that line is for them. *Impact matters more than intent.* Ensuring that your behavior does not have a negative impact is your responsibility. Problems happen when we assume that our way of thinking or behaving is the norm or ok with everyone. This is particularly problematic when we are in a position of power or privilege.

Here are a few examples of unacceptable behavior:

- Negative or offensive remarks based on the protected classes as listed in the GSA Anti-harassment Policy of race, religion, color, sex (with or without sexual conduct and including pregnancy and sexual orientation involving transgender status/gender identity, and sex-stereotyping), national origin, age, disability (physical or mental), genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, parental status, marital status, and political affiliation **as well as** gender expression, mental illness, socioeconomic status or background, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, or clothing. **Consider that calling attention to differences can feel alienating.**

- Touching people without their affirmative consent.

- Sustained and negative disruption of meetings or talks.

- Patronizing language or behavior.

- Aggressive and micro-aggressive behavior, such as unconstructive criticism, providing corrections that do not improve the conversation (sometimes referred to as "well actually"s), repeatedly interrupting or talking over someone else, feigning surprise at someone's lack of knowledge or awareness about a topic, or subtle prejudice (for example, comments like "That's so easy my grandmother could do it.").

- Referring to people in a way that misidentifies their gender and/or rejects the validity of their gender identity; for instance by using incorrect pronouns or forms of address (misgendering).

- Retaliating against anyone who files a formal complaint that someone has violated these codes or laws.

**Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace Statement**

The unlawful or improper presence or use of controlled substances or alcohol in the workplace presents a danger to all employees. Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working while using illegal or unauthorized substances.

**Conflict of Interest**

A company's reputation for integrity is its most valuable asset and is directly related to the conduct of its employees. Therefore, employees must never use their positions with the company for private gain, to advance personal interests or to obtain favors or benefits for themselves, member of their families or any other individuals, corporations of business entities.

**Professional Conduct**

The company adheres to the highest legal and ethical standards applicable in our business. The company's business is conducted in strict observance of both the letter and spirit of all applicable laws and the integrity of each employee is of utmost importance.

**Contact with the Media**

All media inquiries regarding the company and its operations must be referred to the Executive Director. Only the Executive Director or Chairman of the Board is authorized to make or approve public statements on behalf of the company.

## Staff & Boards

### Staff

- Seamus Kraft, Co-Founder and Executive Director
- Chris Birk, Lead Developer
- Bill Hunt, Senior Developer
- Leili Slutz, Operations Architect
- Aaron Bartnick, Chief of Operations

**Board of Directors**

- Congressman Darrell Issa, Chairman
- Seamus Kraft, Vice-Chairman
- Rich Hirshberg, Treasurer
- James Lacy, Counsel
- Chris Birk, Member
- Tom Davis, Member
- Abhi Nemani, Member
- Lanham Napier, Member

**Board of Advisers**

- Scout Addis, Design
- Jen Yu, Design
- Joe Trippi, Political Campaigns
- Karien Bezuidenhout, Shuttleworth Foundation
- Maggie McKinely, Harvard University

## Benefits & Compensation

**Payroll**

Administered twice monthly, on the 15th and last day of each month, via direct deposit. The organization's treasurer is available to help with any payroll or benefits questions.

**Medical, Dental and Vision Coverage**

We receive health and dental coverage and pharmacy benefits through a Company sponsored Healthcare plan. The company pays 80% of the premium cost of the plan. The employee pays 20% through payroll deduction. Enrollment in the benefit plans is optional.

The current plan is a United Healthcare PPO Plan, including dental and vision coverage. Physician network and other services can be found at www.myuhc.com

**Annual Team Member Performance Review, Raises, and Bonuses**

Each employee will participate in an annual review of their performance, conducted by the employee's direct supervisor. Raises and bonuses will be considered by the Board of Directors at that time based on the individual employee's performance and recommendation from the Executive Director.

Annual cost of living increases will be combined with any merit increases described above. These will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on an annual basis.

Additional raises and bonuses may be considered at other times to account for special circumstances, such as extraordinary performance, a change in position and/or an increase in responsibilities.

## Covered Expenses & Reimbursements

### Covered Expenses

The organization will reimburse pre-approved, work-related expenses. Any expenditure totalling more than $1,000—including cumulative expenses like software subscriptions—must be pre-approved by the Board of Directors and Executive Director. Sub-$1,000 reimbursable expenses which do not require BOD approval include but are not limited to:

- Travel between work meetings and the office.
- Travel to, from, and during conferences and events.
- Housing and food during conferences and events.
- Business-meeting meals and drinks.
- Office supplies.
- Organization-specific subscriptions and/or software.
- Expenses stemming from events organized by the organization

Employees are expected to travel coach class when traveling by air, book reasonably-priced hotels and not spend excessively on meals and other travel expenses.

### Reimbursements

You are strongly encouraged to file reimbursement requests as soon as you incur the expenses, for example, within the week following a business trip or conference. Expenses are usually reimbursed within a week of approval and submission. Each reimbursement request must be sent to the Executive Director, who will review, approve, then submit for payment to the Chairman of the Board of Directors and our bookkeeper. Each reimbursement request must include these three things:

1. A complete and accurate spreadsheet expense report totaling and classifying your expenditures.
2. A complete and accurate cover letter to the Chairman of the Board of Directors requesting reimbursement.
3. A PDF document that is less than 10MB in size containing receipts for each of the expenses for which you are seeking reimbursement.

### Professional Development

We strongly encourage employees to explore professional development options. The organization will cover one half of pre-approved costs associated with professional development expenditures. All professional development expenses require both Executive Director and Board of Directors approval.

Potential professional development opportunities include, but are not limited to: * Attending relevant professional conferences. * Tuition for relevant classes. * Books on relevant topics.

To seek approval for a professional development opportunity, please submit the following items to your supervisor, who will review and discuss them with you, and share them with the Board of Directors. * A short memo outlining the professional development opportunity you are seeking, how it would support your growth, how it would benefit the organization. * The total cost of the opportunity, and any relevant payment dates and methods. * The time the opportunity would require (dates, times, including travel) as well as the location.

## Schedule, Hours & Vacation

### Office Hours, Daily Schedule & Absences

Employees are expected to work a minimum of 40 hours per week, but we are flexible on where and when that work gets done.

Employees should check in on Teamwork by 11 AM Eastern Time each week day with an update of their work plan for the day. Communication is vital to the success of our team; therefore, team members are expected to be reasonably accessible by phone, Slack, and email between the hours of 11 AM–4 PM.

Employees are able to work from home and/or remotely, as long as they are able to participate in all necessary meetings.

Any time that you won't be available during usual office hours (9 PM–5 PM)—for appointments, sick time, vacation, etc.—should be put on the calendar, and an email must be sent to the employee's supervisor. For non-emergency medical absences, please notify your supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

We track time using Harvest. Hours worked must be recorded in Harvest by the end of each week (Sunday evening).

### Vacation & Leave Policy

We are closed on all Federal holidays and during the week between Christmas and the New Year. We also have a few additional days off, please see the attached holidays list.

We expect everyone to be able to get their work done in a timely fashion, and to not have to work on personal time. Rested and refreshed people are better team members, and we strongly encourage enjoying life outside of the office. Employees should take a *minimum* of two weeks of paid vacation per year, totaling 10 business days.

To schedule time off, permission must be granted by your supervisor no less than 5 business days in advance, the dates and location of your travel must be put onto the team calendar, and the team should be notified via email. To track time off, please track the vacation time in Harvest.

For personal, medical, or family leave, each employee is encouraged to take the current Family and Medical Leave Act maximum.

For maternity and paternity leave, employees are encouraged to take up to 16 weeks of leave.

Employees must inform your supervisor in writing as far in advance as is reasonable for staff and project planning purposes. All extended periods of leave must be discussed with the Executive Director.

### Sick Days

Please notify the team if you are sick and need to take the day off. Even if you are feeling well enough to work, please work from home until you are completely recovered, to avoid spreading illness through our small office.

## How We Work

### Email Accounts, Document Sharing & Password Sharing

We will set you up with an organization Gmail account. This will provide you access to our email, calendar, and Google+ accounts. Please use this for all work-related correspondence, scheduling, etc. Personal accounts should not be used for work-related activities.

You will be granted access to our shared passwords in Passpack. All passwords that need to be shared with the organization must be shared using Passpack, you must not share them via email or other insecure methods.

### Calendars

Please keep your availability updated on your Google calendar account associated with the organization - please don't use your personal account. Please record any meetings, vacation time, appointments, and anything else that your teammates

might need to schedule around. Feel free to schedule meetings with other coworkers on the Google calendar.

To help prevent resource conflicts, if you are using the UberConference number or the appear.in video chat, please add your call to the appropriate calendar (Phone Conference, Video Conference, etc), which we will share with your work account.

**Regular Meetings**

**Weekly Priorities-Setting Meeting**   We meet once a week to go over our priorities for the week. We do our best to meet in person. If you cannot attend in person, please notify the group and call in via appear.in. This is a good time to ask for help from the group and to make sure that we are all using our time wisely.

**Weekly Team Lunch**

- We have lunch together once a week, just for fun and to catch up.

**Tech Breakfasts**   Every week we hold a question-and-answer session where non-technical members of the team can ask our developers whatever tech-related questions they want. This is a great way to make sure everyone's on the same page regarding what we're building & but questions don't have to be about our work.

**Book Club**   We're a small team in an emerging field. Professional development and continuing education is an important part of all of our jobs. We foster team growth by holding a book club once a month. Anyone is welcome to suggest reading material; it's helpful for that person to facilitate discussion by bringing a few questions or observations from the reading to the discussion.

**Tools & Services We Use**

**Teamwork**   For daily status updates, project planning, and task management. If you need another team member to do something, please assign them a task on Teamwork. Tech support issues on America Decoded sites should be logged as tasks under the "State Decoded" project.

**Slack**   For team chat.

**UberConference**   For group calls. Please enter calls on the Phone Conference calendar to avoid double-booking the line.

**Appear.in, Skype**   For group video chats. Please enter appear.in calls on the Video Conference calendar to avoid double-booking the service.

**Google Calendar**   Please keep your availability updated on your Google Calendar for the organization.

**Google Docs**   For group collaboration on written materials, call agendas, our budget tracking document, etc. etc.

**Hackpad**   Alternative to above. Has a handy checklist feature. We also use this for hackathon coordination.

**GitHub**   All of our work is open source and up on GitHub. Most projects should have an Apache 2, MIT, or LGPL 3 license; most resources should be released as CC-0.

**Disqus**   Used for comments on America Decoded sites. We try to respond to non-spam comments within 24 hours.

**Uservoice**   For technical issues from Madison and State Decoded sites. We try to respond to questions and tech support issues within 24 hours.

**Passpack**   For password storage. Please create your own Passpack account and connect with the main organization account. Any time you create an account relevant to our work, please share the password with the organization on Passpack.

## Recommended Reading

- Remote: Office Not Required ( specific chapters )
- How to Collaborate Remotely
- Beware the Dragons
- Managing Remote Workers
- Life as a Remote Worker
- Dealing with Excuses
- The Lean Startup

- Don't Make Me Think

Also see Bill's big list of books.