

From the Copyright Office

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Dear Readers,

While I know New Year's Day still feels far off, January 1, 2021, is only six weeks away. The New Year is traditionally seen as a fresh start, and this year, it is especially true for songwriters and music publishers, as it is the date the new blanket licensing system established by the [Music Modernization Act](#) (MMA) will become available.

Although the pandemic has forced us to reimagine much of our outreach at the Copyright Office, we've remained busy as ever, making sure everyone is prepared for the big changes coming this winter. Below are just a few of the initiatives we've been working on. But our outreach is only useful if it makes it to the ears of those that need the information the most. To that end, I hope you'll take a moment to share this newsletter, and the updates below, with your local music community. After all, nobody knows how to really get something stuck in your head like musicians!

With care,

Regan Smith
General Counsel and Associate Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office

[Copyright Office Announces Panel Proposal for SXSW 2021 \(Online\)](#)

As any successful musician will tell you, there's a lot more to making a living from your music than meets the eye, or in this case, ear, especially in a digital environment. The Copyright Office's SXSW panel proposal, "[Press Play: Copyright for Musicians](#)," will break down the ways artists can get paid and discuss copyright considerations, revenue streams, the role of performing rights organizations (PROs), and updates on the Music Modernization Act. If this sounds like something you'd like to hear more about, be sure to vote for the Office's panel! Voting ends 11/20.

[Copyright Office Joins MLC Week Kick-Off Panel](#)

On October 26, the Copyright Office's Regan Smith spoke on a panel hosted by The MLC titled "Join Us in Supporting The MLC." The panel was moderated by Billboard's Robert Levine and also featured ABKCO Music & Records, Inc. Chief Operating Officer and The MLC Board Chair Alisa Coleman, Nashville Songwriters Association International Executive Director Bart Herbison, National Music Publishers' Association EVP and General Counsel Danielle Aguirre, Digital Media Association President and CEO (and representative for the Digital Licensee Coordinator) Garrett Levin, and The MLC CEO Kris Ahrend. You can view a recording of the panel [here](#).

[Open Comment Period](#)

Pursuant to the MMA, the U.S. Copyright Office is proposing to update its regulations regarding the royalties and information digital music providers are required to submit to The MLC to qualify for an optional statutory limitation on liability for certain unlicensed uses of musical works prior to January 1, 2021. Following an initial notice of public rulemaking and public feedback, the Office [published](#) a potential alternate approach to these requirements, which, among other things, includes a proposed estimate and adjustment provision with respect to the transfer of accrued unclaimed royalties to The MLC. The Copyright Office has published the notice so that the public process can consider supplemental, alternative regulatory language, to ensure that further stakeholder views can be duly considered as these important issues are evaluated. [Written comments](#) must be received no later than November 25, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. eastern time.