

# Macalester College Apparel Purchasing Code of Conduct

## Introduction

Consistent with Macalester College's Statement of Purpose and Beliefs, the College's apparel purchasing and licensing decisions<sup>1</sup> will be guided not only by prudent price-value considerations, but also by the principles of promoting social well-being and preserving the environment. When it is determined that significant Social Injury is being caused by an Apparel Company, the College will take this into account in making its apparel purchasing and licensing decisions.

## Definitions

1. **Social Injury** means the injurious impact which the activities of an Apparel Company are found to have on consumers, employees, or other persons, particularly including activities which violate, or frustrate the enforcement of, rules of domestic or international law intended to protect individuals against deprivation of health, safety, or basic freedoms.

Examples of such injury may include, but are not limited to:° forced labor; the use of child labor; harassment or abuse; egregious discrimination; infringements on women's rights; an unsafe or unhealthy work environment; participation in the conscious corruption of local laws and governments; prevention of free association and collective bargaining; failure to meet reasonable local standards for work hours, wages and benefits; wanton destruction of the environment and depletion of resources necessary for long-term sustenance; improper disposal of factory waste and release of harmful toxins into the environment.

2. **Apparel Company** means a company whose apparel products are being purchased or considered for purchase by the College or its licensees, and specifically includes such company's subcontractors, independent contractors, vendors, manufacturers or other entities involved in the production of such company's apparel products.

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<sup>1</sup> While apparel is the specific focus of this Code of Conduct, members of the College community are encouraged to be mindful of the spirit of this Code as they make other purchases for the College.

## Standards of Behavior

The College is conscious of the diverse, dynamic nature of the world around us. As such, it seems inappropriate to force upon others the conditions and expectations that come from our privileged position in the world community. Therefore, in making its apparel purchasing and licensing decisions, the College may take into account the cultural and social context in which the Apparel Company in question operates.

Nevertheless, certain standards of behavior would seem to cut across cultural and social lines and, thus, it seems appropriate to use the following guidelines in determining whether an Apparel Company may be causing significant Social Injury:

1. **Legal compliance:** The Apparel Company shall comply with all applicable legal requirements — including national, regional or local laws of the place of manufacture and business — in conducting business related to or involving the production and/or sale of apparel to the College or its licensees. Where this Code of Conduct and the applicable laws of the country of manufacture conflict, the College will consider both standards, and the extent of the variance between the two, in making judgments about the conduct of the Apparel Company in question.

2. **Employment standards:**

- a. **Wages/benefits:** Wages should match or exceed prevailing local wages for comparable work in the relevant labor market and comply with the laws of the place of manufacture.
- b. **Working hours:** Employees should not be forced to work an inordinate or unreasonable number of hours per week, and should receive just compensation for all hours worked.
- c. **Women s rights:** Employees should not be forced to take pregnancy tests or use contraceptives, and should be allowed reasonable maternity leave.
- d. **Freedom of association/collective bargaining:** Employees should not be prevented from freely associating and bargaining collectively.

3. **Human rights:**

- a. **Child labor:** Anyone under the age of 12, or the age stated by law in the country of manufacture if higher, should not be employed.
- b. **Harassment or abuse:** Bodily punishment and physical, verbal or psychological harassment should not be used or tolerated in the workplace.
- c. **Forced labor:** Involuntary workers or indentured/bonded labor should not be used.
- d. **Health and safety:** Working facilities should be clean and safe, and employees should be allowed to be absent from work for medical reasons without being penalized.

**Implementation**

In order to meet the goals of this Code, the College will endeavor to obtain current and valid information about an Apparel Company's adherence to the principles set forth in this Code before purchasing its products. The College also will cooperate in organized efforts to obtain the information needed to make purchasing decisions and to influence Apparel Companies to meet these standards.

1. When entering into purchase orders for apparel products, the College will provide the seller with a copy of this Code and state its expectation that the Apparel Companies involved will comply with this Code. When entering into license agreements whereby the licensee is authorized to purchase and resell apparel bearing the College's emblematics, the College will include this Code as part of the agreement.

2. The Social Responsibility Committee (the Committee) is charged by the Board of Trustees and the President with the responsibility of reviewing information that comes to the Committee's attention from any authoritative source that brings into question the practices of an Apparel Company. Sources may include the public media, monitoring or watch-type organizations (e.g., the Workers Rights Consortium, the Fair Labor Association, and others), and members of the campus community. The Committee then will provide the Apparel Company with a copy of this Code, describe the information that has caused concern about its compliance with the Code and request a response. The Committee will consider the Apparel Company's response, along with other available information, and determine what, if any, further steps should be taken. The Committee, in consultation with the President, shall direct its efforts to the principal goal of this Code, namely, to obtain compliance with the Code by the Apparel Company.

If those efforts fail, the College may elect to stop purchasing the products of the Apparel Company in question, continue to press for compliance, or take other appropriate steps.

3. The Committee periodically will review information on the conduct of Apparel Companies whose products the College and its licensees are purchasing. The Committee then may take any action deemed appropriate based upon the information obtained, including proceeding as described in the foregoing paragraph.

4. The Committee annually will evaluate the scope, application and implementation of this Code of Conduct and recommend appropriate revisions if necessary to meet the overall College goal of encouraging its suppliers of goods and services to act in a socially responsible manner.