



UPHOLDING HUMAN RIGHTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, VF Corporation (VF), The VF Foundation, and the VF family of brands have used a people-first approach to making critical decisions about how best to support people, including our associates, suppliers and consumers, and the planet in these extraordinary times. Our actions have been driven by our purpose: *We power movements of sustainable and active lifestyles for the betterment of people and our planet.*

As articulated in our Human Rights Commitment, we uphold and respect human rights aligned with the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We commit to avoiding adverse human rights impacts through our own actions and strive to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to our operations or products. This Commitment covers our 50,000 employees and the more than six million workers in our extended global supply chain. Our Commitment to supporting and advancing human rights within our direct operations and extended supply chain remains true as the world faces the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, which on its own creates many human rights challenges.

We understand that many of the people most severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis are some of the world's most vulnerable. According to the UN's COVID-19 and Human Rights report:

"...the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the vulnerability for the least protected in society. Women, men, children, youth and older persons, refugees and migrants, the poor, people with disabilities, persons in detention, minorities, LGBTI people, among others are being affected differently."

COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENTS & VULNERABLE WORKERS

We periodically conduct corporate-wide human rights assessments to identify the salient human rights touchpoints throughout our value chain, including within our direct operations and across our extended supply chain. The findings inform our efforts to prevent, mitigate and remediate potential adverse human rights impacts throughout our value chain.

In order to identify and assess negative human rights impacts of COVID-19 on workers throughout our supply chain, VF conducted a risk assessment in April 2020 for our tier-1 sourcing countries. The assessment considered the following factors:

- The labor environment before the pandemic;
- Country policies surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Government assistance available for workers;
- The country's overall economic and health policy climate;
- Garment-sector specific aid from government and non-governmental organizations;
- Tripartite discussions with worker groups, governments and employers.

Each country was scored as having an either an Elevated, Medium, or High risk for potential human rights impacts against workers. The country-specific data used to evaluate human rights risks included data from VF's internal labor assessments of our tier-1 sourcing countries, the [Fair Wear COVID-19: Country-Specific Guidance](#), the [Fair Labor Association's Country Specific Updates on Provisions for Workers in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), and local and international news sources.



Additionally, we engaged directly with factory management to understand COVID-19 impacts on suppliers and potential risks to workers. We monitored country-level statistics, including national virus statistics, active cases, total deaths as well as additional measures taken by government organizations. Following these assessments, we deployed a COVID-19 Preparedness Survey, guided by best practices from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to capture the percentage of factories implementing general awareness campaigns, preventive and precautionary measures, and factory-specific emergency response plans.

Over the course of approximately two weeks, we conducted best practice COVID-19 preparedness training webinars with our suppliers across the globe in a multitude of languages, including: Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, English, Khmer, Vietnamese, Turkish, and others. The content of the webinars and training sessions were informed by global best practices and tailored to meet local needs of the audience based on applicable regulations and the current country COVID-19 status. In certain countries, where small group trainings took place, we also invited our suppliers to share the best practices they were implementing within their factory and the challenges they were facing related to COVID-19. Based on the outcomes of the webinars and training sessions, we were then able to track factory performance and identify where additional capacity building was needed to enhance human rights protections for workers.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Survey was also used to inquire about potential COVID-19 related impacts to migrant workers. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), approximately 164 million migrant workersⁱⁱ across the globe are among those most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. After engaging both the IOM and the Mekong Club, a global organization dedicated to eradicating modern slavery, we embedded specific questions into our COVID-19 Preparedness Survey to better assess and monitor risks to migrant workers, including the potential inability for them to return to their country of origin, challenges related to expired work visas, and the difficulty of quarantining in shared dormitories. This insight guided the development of effective measures VF and suppliers implemented to mitigate such impacts. For example, through the survey we were able to identify migrant workers across seven factories whose work permits were expiring or already expired. Additionally, we confirmed that factories with migrant workers would continue to provide living accommodations if migrant workers were unable to return to their home country and that factories would pay for migrant worker travel to their home country. Furthermore, we continue to closely monitor factories with migrant workers in our tier-2 fabric mills to ensure factories continue to operate in accordance with all applicable legal requirements, including paying for required health insurance and sick-leave, and other local laws and regulations for migrant workers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR ALL WORKERS

We are committed to supporting our associates, vendors, and factory workers during this unprecedented time. After discussions with labor and worker rights organizations, we incorporated recommendations from the Worker Rights Consortium, Maquiladora Health and Safety Support Network, International Labour Organization and the WHO into our standard operating procedures for our internal manufacturing factories throughout Latin America.

In May 2020, we publicly released a 41-page [COVID-19 Prevention Reference](#) document. The reference document, developed by the VF Global Health & Safety team, has served as a



comprehensive guide for VF to uphold employee and consumer safety. All VF retail stores, offices, and internal manufacturing and distribution facilities follow local and national safety regulations related to COVID-19 safe operating procedures, in addition to VF's COVID-19 Prevention Reference, which specifies operating procedures that exceed local requirements, further enhancing the health and safety of employees and consumers alike. The prevention guidelines provide best practices for facility cleaning, proper hygiene, face mask usage, and social distancing procedures. Furthermore, it offers protocols for handling confirmed cases of COVID-19, a checklist for disinfecting spaces, and steps for contact tracing.

According to the U.S. CDC, the pandemic is creating a significant increase in mental health concerns. A new CDC surveyⁱⁱⁱ found elevated levels of anxiety symptoms, depressive disorders, and substance abuse in U.S. adults and identified populations at increased risks, including young people, racial and ethnic minorities, essential workers and caregivers of adults. To assist with the emotional health of VF employees, we launched a series of emotional well-being webcasts that are led by behavioral health professionals and are held twice per month for all employees to access.

The health and safety of the people who make VF products is one of our highest priorities. In line with requests made by the Global Labor Justice-International Labor Rights Forum, we communicated to our vendors in the U.S. our expectations that all suppliers must follow federal, state and local-level requirements and guidelines applicable to manufacturing facilities during COVID-19. At a minimum, manufacturers operating during the COVID-19 pandemic are required to abide by the U.S. CDC's Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), published May 2020, in combination with adherence to public health orders. This includes guidance to factories on developing a response plan, actively encouraging sick employees to stay home, practicing social distancing and avoiding large gatherings, providing face masks, and training employees on hand hygiene, cleaning high-touch surfaces, and additional recommendations.

COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORTS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, frontline healthcare workers urgently needed more supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep themselves and their patients safe. VF converted manufacturing facilities in Mexico and Honduras to produce FDA-compliant medical isolation gowns. Our goal is to deliver up to 3.4 million gowns by the fall of 2020.

VF, the VF Foundation, and the VF family brands donated more than \$10.3 million in funds, products, and services worldwide to assist with urgent medical needs and offer help to those struggling in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We provided funds to directly support emergency responders, provide testing kits, deliver medical supplies and help the financially vulnerable access food and social services.

The VF Foundation is partnering with Care International to support and work with local authorities to raise awareness for COVID-19 prevention in the communities where factory workers live in Cambodia. The VF Foundation's financial contributions also support local health and gender-based violence service providers in communities supporting our supplier workforce. In addition, the VF Foundation's donations specifically support female workers by providing access to hygiene and sanitation materials during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Bangladesh is key sourcing country for VF and has been widely impacted by COVID-19. Through our Worker and Community Development Program, we have reprogrammed funding to support COVID-19 interventions in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Through our partnerships we are supporting Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) programming to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by installing handwashing stations, distributing soap, and providing hygiene education to approximately 30,000 individuals. Furthermore, these efforts support child protection programs to prevent violence against children, which has increased due to the pandemic. Support from VF includes providing parenting resources, establishing child protection support centers, and providing online adolescent support. In addition, the VF Foundation granted \$100,000 to BRAC, an international development organization, to support more than 5,500 households with a cash stipend to purchase multiple weeks worth of food and other necessities.

The VF Foundation also donated \$50,000 to support COVID-19 relief efforts in India. Together with Good Weave, the VF Foundation is supporting efforts in the Gurgaon region, in the state of Haryana, reaching nearly 7,000 workers and children in high-need communities with food aid and hygiene packs.

At the same time, we are working with our peers across the apparel and footwear industry, as well as with multi-stakeholder organizations, to identify additional opportunities to support factory workers during these uncertain times. VF has joined the ILO, International Organization of Employers, International Trade Union Conference, and others, in the apparel industry call for action to support the rights of garment workers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.^{iv}

GOVERNANCE

As stated in our Human Rights Commitment, VF's Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, along with our full Executive Leadership Team (ELT), is responsible for approving the company's strategies and goals related to Sustainability and Responsibility topics, including human rights.

VF's executive leadership regularly receives progress updates from VF's Vice President of Global Sustainability and Responsibility, who oversees the implementation of our human rights commitments in VF's supply chain. The Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Public Affairs of VF Corporation, a member of the Executive Leadership Team and a direct report of VF Corporation's Chairman, President and CEO, is responsible for human rights issues within the company's direct operations. The VF Board of Directors' Governance and Corporate Responsibility Committee also receives regular updates on our salient human rights issues and approaches to mitigating human rights risks.

OUR COMMITMENT TO ONGOING DUE DILIGENCE

We recognize that human rights risks may change as our business evolves, specifically as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact workers in our value chain. We are committed to continued engagement with a variety of stakeholders, including civil society, human and environmental rights organizations, government officials, consumers, employees, suppliers, and supply chain workers to regularly assess if such changes may inform the evolution of our human rights programs.

ETHICS HELPLINE



Our global Ethics & Compliance program provides VF associates with the tools needed to understand our expectations for ethical business conduct and the courage to speak up and raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Our Ethics Helpline, available in more than 150 languages, can be used by anyone inside or outside our company to confidentially ask questions or raise concerns regarding ethics and compliance issues. VF does not tolerate retaliation against an employee for making a good faith report of a potential violation of our Code of Conduct, a company policy, or the law, or for participating in an investigation.

For questions or concerns about human rights related to our operations or products, please contact our [Ethics Helpline](#), 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have maintained employment, repurposed our internal manufacturing to make isolation gowns and masks, and aided populations disproportionately affected by the pandemic in our sourcing communities. We will continue to take a people-first approach that prioritizes the health and well-being of our associates, those in our extended supply chain, and our consumers around the world.

ⁱ United Nations. April 2020. *COVID-19 and Human Rights: We are all in this together*. Source: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief_on_human_rights_and_covid_23_april_2020.pdf

ⁱⁱ International Labor Organization. 2017. *ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers*. Source: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_652001.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. September 2020. *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*. Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/>

^{iv} VF Corporation. April 30, 2020. *VF Joins Call to Action to Support Garment Workers*. <https://www.vfc.com/sustainability-and-responsibility/news/sustainability-story/70378/vf-joins-call-to-action-to-support-garment-workers>