How We Work to Prevent Forced Labor In Our Supply Chain

Apple has zero tolerance for forced labor. In the more than 50 countries and regions where our suppliers operate, we have teams of experts, including independent third-parties, who monitor our suppliers and put in place industry leading procedures to help ensure that no one is forced to work. Our comprehensive policies start before we even sign a contract with suppliers, and we are consistently raising the bar.

1. We set the highest standards.
Eliminating forced labor begins with setting and maintaining the highest standards. Our standards often go above and beyond legal requirements to protect people from forced labor risks.

2. We engage early.
To address forced labor risks at its roots, we know that our work has to begin before people enter our supply chain.

3. We hold suppliers accountable.
Once we’ve implemented thorough preventative measures, independent, third-party assessments verify that our suppliers are meeting our standards. Looking for evidence of forced labor is part of every supplier assessment. If we find any violations of our Code and Standards, we take swift action to remedy the issue and improve their operations.

4. A close look.
We regularly conduct independent, third-party assessments, including surprise assessments, of our suppliers, in our supply chain, and upon workers’ salaries and other compensation across our standards. This includes an extensive document review to be sure all hiring and personnel records are in place and accurate. In addition to specialized forced labor assessments for all-risk suppliers, we also require many suppliers to participate in facility-wide assessments, such as the Validated Assessment Program, to verify performance across the supplier’s entire business. In the event that we find gaps in a supplier’s compliance or capabilities, we require them to implement a Corrective Action Plan. To date, our assessments have covered 94 percent of our direct manufacturing spend.

5. People and Environment in Our Supply Chain Annual Progress Report
Published annually since 2007 (formally known as the Supplier Responsibility Progress Report), this report contains a detailed accounting of our progress, challenges, and future plans across all areas of our supplier requirements. Read our Annual Progress Report.

6. We track progress and report transparently.
Consistent improvement requires transparency and accountability. Since 2007, we have been publishing reports on our efforts across all of our work to transparently share our progress and challenges.

7. How We Work
Aligning with international frameworks.
Apple policies and our supplier requirements align with international labor and human rights standards, including those of the International Labor Organization, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development.

8. The Apple Human Rights Policy
Our Human Rights Policy outlines how we treat everyone, including our customers, employees, business partners, and the people across every level of our supply chain. Read the Apple Human Rights Policy.

9. The Apple Supplier Code of Conduct and Supplier Responsibility Standards
Our supplier requirements contain both standards for responsible labor recruitment, and apply to all suppliers, protecting workers globally. We go above and beyond legal requirements in many places by strictly prohibiting labor recruitment in regions where we cannot conduct due diligence and by maintaining a zero recruitment fees policy, because we believe no one should pay to secure a job. Read the Apple Supplier Code of Conduct and Supplier Responsibility Standards.

10. Investing in consistent improvement.
Through our new Supplier Employee Training Fund, we’re investing $50M to at least 98 percent of our direct manufacturing spend to improve the rights training experience, worker voice platform, and supplier employee education opportunities.

11. Swift action and steep penalties.
Forced labor in any form is a Core Violation (the most serious violation level) of our requirements. If a Core Violation is discovered, the supplier’s CEO is notified, and the supplier is immediately placed on probation, pending the successful completion of a Corrective Action Plan. Probation can include no new projects, no new business, and termination of existing business. In addition to commercial penalties, if a supplier is unable or unwilling to meet our standards, they risk removal from our supply chain. Since 2009, we’ve directed the removal of 24 manufacturing supplier facilities, and 170 smelters and refiners for failure to meet our requirements.

12. Action this year.
In FY21, across more than 1,100 assessments, we found no instances where anyone was forced to work in our supply chain. We did find two cases where employees of the same supplier in Taiwan paid recruitment fees. Per our requirements, the supplier directly repaid their employees for those fees. To date, our suppliers have directly repaid $33.2M in recruitment fees to 37,322 of their employees.

13. Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery Disclosure
This disclosure is a specialized tool that focuses specifically on our efforts to prevent and address forced labor risks throughout our supply chain, and includes our due diligence process for our entire business, including manufacturing, materials and goods sourcing, and services. This report also demonstrates our alignment with the UNGPs and meets regulatory requirements in the UK, Australia, and California. Read our disclosure.

14. Consistently raising the bar.
We revisit all of our supplier requirements every year, consistently raising the bar that suppliers must meet in order to continue doing business with us, and publish the updates publicly. Read the Apple Supplier Code of Conduct and Supplier Responsibility Standards.

15. Take a closer look.
We publish additional reports that provide a transparent look at our supply chain. Our Conflict Minerals Report describes our work to responsibly source materials. Our Smelter and Refiner List publishes a list of all identified tin, tungsten, tantalum (3TG), cobalt, and lithium smelters and refiners across our global supply chain, and the Apple Supplier List shares the companies and their locations that comprise at least 98 percent of our direct manufacturing spend. Read our disclosures.