

Fortexa®

Fortexa Code of Conduct

FORTEXA'S CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

Working in the international textile industry, Fortexa acknowledges the need to make a defining statement about the ethics, morals and integrity of the company itself and all of its carefully chosen business associates.

The principles of fair trade are something that should be embraced by all international companies, and Fortexa is no exception. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide explicit guidelines which provide a point of reference not only for the companies that Fortexa works in conjunction with, but also for Fortexa customers with an equally strong sense of moral responsibility.

Fortexa believes in open and honest communication, with the intention of using this to ensure that human rights are protected. This Code of Conduct documents the ways in which Fortexa proactively protects its own employees and those of our associates, as well as setting standards for others to follow.

While some suppliers may find these rules challenging to follow, Fortexa feels that this is the minimum that should be expected. Workers should be afforded the same protection no matter where in the world they reside, and this is in keeping with international declarations, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Fortexa expects its associates to carefully follow this Code of Conduct and ensure that their workers are aware of the Code of Conduct and the protection that it offers to them. Associates must keep records to prove their compliance and Fortexa reserves the right to monitor its associates to ensure that they are following this Code of Conduct and should be allowed contact with employees to verify this compliance.

Following are details of Fortexa highlighted points but basically Fortexa accepts, respects and complies with the "The UN Global Compact's ten Principles" and so should any supplier to Fortexa. The 10 principle points are highlighted in the last part of this document.

1) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Fortexa expects all partners to comply with national legislation. In some cases, Fortexa's Code of Conduct may offer greater protection for employees or the environment than the law does, in this situation, Fortexa expects that the rules specified here are followed in addition to national legislation.

SUBCONTRACTORS

In order for Fortexa to guarantee compliance with this Code of Conduct, any company contracted to supply Fortexa with goods or services must not employ a subcontractor without Fortexa's consent. All subcontractors must be able to provide documentation to prove their compliance with this Code of Conduct.

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

Fortexa expects that its associates behave fairly and honestly when conducting business. Direct or indirect bribery or corruption will not be tolerated. The offering of improper benefits whether in monetary or any other form is not acceptable and is considered dishonest.

2) EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Fortexa expects all associates to comply with local health and safety legislation. In addition, Fortexa requires associates to provide the following as a minimum:

- Clean toilets and drinkable water
- Employees must be made aware of emergency procedures, in particular in the case of a medical emergency or a fire evacuation
- Employees must be briefed on safety in the workplace
- Buildings must comply with safety and fire regulations and offer sufficient accessibility
- The workplace must have adequate protection against noise, offer proper ventilation and lighting, as well as meeting with regulations regarding maximum and minimum temperatures in the workplace
- Where relevant, employees should be provided, free of charge, with the necessary protective clothing
- Machinery must be regularly serviced and properly maintained. In cases where employees are provided with on site accommodation, this accommodation must not be located in the working facilities. It must be clean and secure, with separate dormitories and bathroom facilities for men and women, with each employee being given an individual bed.

AGE CONSTRAINTS ON EMPLOYMENT

Fortexa does not condone the employment of those under the statutory age for employment or those who are under the age at which compulsory education is completed. However, Fortexa promotes work experience programmes that educate children about industry, provided that they are short working hours that do not impede the compulsory education of that child.

All associate companies are expected to keep a record of the date of birth of all employees. They are also expected to show a duty of care towards young employees under the age of 18, carefully protecting their health and safety.

HOURS OF WORK

Fortexa expects that associate companies will not allow employees to work for more than 60 hours per week (including overtime). Where local legislation further limits working hours and overtime, the legislation must be adhered to. When overtime is carried out it must be on a voluntary basis and employees must have at least one full day off in every seven-day period.

ENFORCED LABOUR

Workers should never be incarcerated for labour purposes or contractually bound so that they cannot leave after a period of notice. Workers should never be required to leave a deposit of money, or anything else of personal value to them, as proof that they will meet performance standards, unless they freely volunteer to do so. Each associate must have employment records to demonstrate their compliance with this condition.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

All employees should be free to associate with any lawful collective, such as a workers union. If national law offers restricted entitlement to collective association of workers, the associate company should enable free association between its employees and allow them to be represented. Any representative should be allowed access to all members of the association whilst they are in their place of work.

PAYMENT

All associates must pay their employees at least the national minimum wage and any other compulsory benefits outlined in their local legislation. All hours that are worked should be paid for and any overtime should be paid at a higher rate than contracted hours. Where local legislation does not require higher rates of overtime, Fortexa expects that those employees are given at least the same rate that they are given for contracted hours. All payments and benefits need to be clearly outlined for employees to see. Fortexa does not condone the deduction of wages as a method of discipline.

PERSECUTION

Fortexa does not tolerate persecution or discrimination of any kind. Gender, age, disability, race, nationality, religious orientation, sexual orientation, political orientation or union membership should never be used as an influencing factor in hiring, promotion, termination or compensation decisions. The persecution of employees based on any of these factors should result in appropriate disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Fortexa does not condone corporal punishment as a form of disciplinary action. Mental, physical or sexual abuse will not be tolerated.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

BASIC PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

At the very least, Fortexa expects associates to comply with local regulations regarding protection of the environment. However, Fortexa prefers to work with companies that show a positive regard for the environment above and beyond legislative requirements. Recycling is essential, as is the safe handling and disposal of hazardous waste/chemicals. Associates should also aim to reduce waste and emissions wherever possible. It is important for companies to be able to easily provide details of their environmental policies, so that Fortexa can document their compliance.

The ten principles of the UN Global Compact

Principle 1

"Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights."

Principle 2

"Businesses should make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses"

Principle 3

"Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining."

Principle 4

"Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour."

Principle 5

"Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour."

Principle 6

"Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation."

Principle 7

"Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges."

Principle 8

"Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility."

Principle 9

"Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies."

Principle 10

"Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery."

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