

# S.OLIVER GROUP

## Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

The s.Oliver Group will not tolerate any discrimination and harassment within its supply chain under any circumstances and will review and update its policy regularly to ensure compliance with the international standards, national laws and regulations. This policy serves as guidance and precautionary measure to engage in the activities for the prevention of discrimination and harassment against persons who, individually or collectively, are disadvantaged because of their personality or belonging within the s.Oliver Group's supply chain. The s. Oliver Group's commitment is to establish equal, safe, and healthy work environment free from any form of discrimination and harassment.

### Background

The s.Oliver Group recognizes that many workers within the supply chain may be victimized and unfairly treated based on the person's race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status. The ILO [Report on equality at work](#) from 2011 identified that vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers, people with diverse sexual orientation, people with various lifestyles, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS are still being victimized within the supply chain because of discrimination and harassment. Unequal treatment is particularly present in the pandemic situation, leading to widespread discrimination against vulnerable groups.

[The UN Agenda 2030](#) with its sustainable development goal "Reduced Inequalities" (SDG 10) aims to reduce inequalities among and within countries. The s.Oliver Group recognizes its responsibility to take action to strengthen diversity throughout its supply chain and to contribute to the sustainable development goals according to the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), especially to:

- 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.



- 10.3. Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

As identified by the ILO Report on equality at work, following risks are possible in the supply chain:

- People from different regional backgrounds, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities can be discriminated against at workplaces, this may include excessive overtime, being paid less and abusive behavior against them. Legally binding contracts may be ignored during the recruitment.
- Where systemic religious discrimination exists, it usually concerns all aspects of life and is not limited to employment and occupation. Workers with different religions may be discriminated against.
- Discrimination based on political opinion, particularly within trade unions and workers' representatives, where loyalty to the policies of those in power can be a factor in gaining access to benefits.
- Workers may be discriminated against because of their social origin and educational attainment. Such socioeconomic inequalities jeopardize the access to equal job and promotion opportunities.
- Persons with disabilities may have limited access to promotions and certain jobs and may receive less wages in comparison to the rest of the workforce.
- Testing in circumstances that are not truly voluntary or that do not ensure the confidentiality of test results can constitute discrimination against people with HIV and other infectious diseases.
- Young people as well as older workers may have limited access to employment and are therefore discriminated against regarding their age.
- Homosexuality remains criminalized in a number of countries. Lesbian, gay bisexual, and transgender people may experience violence, harassment, workplace discrimination, exclusion, stigmatization, and prejudice when working or looking for a job.

## Terms and Definitions

**Discrimination:** According to Article 1 (1) of the ILO Nr. 111 Convention, the term “discrimination” includes

- any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation;
- such other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation as may be determined by the Member concerned after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organisations, where such exist, and with other appropriate bodies.

**Violence and harassment:** According to Article 1 (1) a of the ILO Nr. 190 Convention, violence and harassment refer to a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, including gender-based violence and harassment.

As defined in the UN Secretary-General's [bulletin](#), harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

### **The s.Oliver Group's Preventive Strategy**

Before onboarding a supplier, the s.Oliver Group checks whether the supplier complies with the international anti-discrimination and anti-harassment standards. Through audit teams, the supplier is verified that all workers are treated with dignity and respect and that anti-harassment policies and committees are in place and functioning effectively. In addition, our audit teams collect data on the migrant workers and analyze workers' compensation based on origin. Particular attention is also paid to overtime, paid vacation and social security. The collection of this data enables the s.Oliver Group to analyze workforce demographics, their positions, pay gaps and access to collective bargaining at the different levels of hierarchy.

In addition, the data collected allows us to assess how purchasing practices contribute to or affect supplier workforce dynamics. We monitor and evaluate the suppliers based on anti-discrimination criteria and, if necessary, make suggestions for improvement.

To combat harassment, violence and discrimination, we conduct training courses and implement projects to raise awareness of workers' rights with our partners. We cooperate with the Fair Wear Foundation and other multi-stakeholder initiatives as well as other brands to prevent discrimination since we recognize that many of the underlying reasons for discrimination are challenging to solve alone as a single stakeholder. We at the s.Oliver Group are in constant dialogue with civil society and local NGOs on the subject of protection of minorities in the supply chain.

We recognize that grievance mechanisms play a crucial role in advancing diversity by offering a systematic method of early detection of negative effects. We acknowledge that discrimination and violence could be a blind spot for the auditing teams and may not be detected by our teams alone. That is why we encourage the adoption of secure, efficient, and victim-sensitive grievance systems. For this reason, we also give workers the opportunity to complain using the Fair Wear Foundation's complaint system.

### **The s.Oliver Group's Remedy Action**

If any form of discrimination or violence is found to be practiced in contravention of our Code of Conduct and above-mentioned measures, the s.Oliver Group will investigate the case and decide on a joint action plan with a timeline for ending and minimising the violation without undue delay.

The s.Oliver Group expects its suppliers to be transparent and have effective remediation procedures in place in the event of finding a case of discrimination or violence. The s.Oliver Group expects its suppliers to act with the overall best interest of the victim in mind, and within the requirements of

relevant laws. To ensure a fair and independent remediation for the concerned victim, if required, a third-party organisation will be included in the remediation process. The suppliers will be responsible for making the remediation case happen. However, they should not undertake any form of remediation without previous discussions with the s.Oliver Group and if required, other local organisation.

When a case of discrimination or violence is found, the general action plan includes but is not limited to:

- It is first necessary to assess how severe the case is. If the victim's life and health are at risk, immediate action should be taken to protect the victim.
- Ensure the victim is safe and protected.
- Documentation of the offender's identity.
- Investigation of the case in consultation local NGOs and Fair Wear Foundation if necessary.
- Consultation with local NGOs and Fair Wear Foundation on remedy action plan.
- Monitor the implementation of the remediation programme, including conducting constant dialogue with the supplier and the victim.

The s.Oliver Group will hold the suppliers responsible to urge, monitor and support their production facilities to conduct and fulfil their obligations for remediation as requested in this policy. If the concerned supplier and factory fails to follow the aforesaid measures within 30 working days of identifying the violation, a warning letter will be issued, giving the business partner an additional 10 days to start the implementation. The s.Oliver Group will put on hold any order with the business partner and their factory until all parties reach an agreement on the remediation plan and until all remediation costs are settled. The s.Oliver Group will terminate the business relationship with the concerned supplier who fails to act in a manner consistent with this policy, and/or when the concerned business partner is unwilling to undertake the measures needed to fulfil any of the obligations set out in and/or inherent to this policy.

Anyone who observes that this policy is violated may contact us in any language using any means of communication, including email to the following email address: [complaints@fairwear.org](mailto:complaints@fairwear.org). Hints can also be submitted via the s.Oliver Group grievance procedure <https://soliver-group.hintbox.eu>.

#### **Legal Notice:**

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