



# **Code of Conduct HB Protective Wear**

Englisch

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Revision B



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**Good means not merely not to do wrong,  
but rather not to desire to do wrong.**

Democritus

## Code of Conduct

At HB Protective Wear, we are aware of our social responsibility. Along with its commitment to outstanding product quality and excellent customer service, HB Protective Wear stands for openness and thus for transparency. We believe that responsible management of our organisation involves maintaining human rights, the acceptance of other cultures, the saving of energy resources, protecting the environment, taking social responsibility and opposing corruption. We are fully committed to achieving these aims.

A fundamental requirement is to preserve the world's ecosystem for future generations, and is something we hope to achieve by making careful use of resources in accordance with applicable environmental regulations.

With every company decision, we will make sure we consider any economic, social, and ecological consequences it may have. Using the resources available to us as an individual company, HB Protective Wear contributes to the welfare of global society and its ability to develop in a sustainable way. We take the same approach to our business relationships within the textile chain. This requires consideration of globally applicable values and principles, especially those designed to ensure human dignity.

Our Code of Conduct is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO Conventions, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and selected agreements of the United Nations. In addition to that, our Code of Conduct is based on relevant, international agreements on the protection of the environment.

### Our Suppliers

The implementation of social responsibility does not end with our employees on site. Rather, we also expect our suppliers to observe the minimum requirements formulated in this Code of Conduct. We expect them to make sure that this Code of Conduct is adhered to by the suppliers themselves as well as by all subcontractors involved in production processes for HB products. In doing so, we wish to support and motivate them not merely to achieve this, but to exceed it.

Our Code of Conduct is by no means a replacement for national legislation – instead, it supplements applicable legal statutes. In the event of discrepancies between legal regulations and our requirements, the more stringent specifications apply in each case.



## Audits and Measures

In order to ensure compliance with this Code, audits are carried out within the value chain at regular intervals. These may take place unannounced and are performed either by employees of HB Protective Wear, or by another, independent, third party. The audits also include the examination of the facilities, office premises and records, which verify compliance with the standards.

Refusing to allow authorised auditors to carry out such inspections or inquiries is tantamount to a clear violation and can lead to an immediate termination of the cooperation.

It is our goal to build long-lasting partnerships with our suppliers, which is why, in the case of minor deviations from our requirements, they also have the chance to put countermeasures in place within a reasonable time frame, in order to prove themselves again. In cases of a violation of our Code of Conduct or if it becomes clear that there is no willingness to make the relevant changes, we reserve the right to terminate our working relationship with the company concerned without notice.

Klaus Berthold  
CEO



## Code of Conduct: Fundamental Principles

### 1. Fundamental understanding of socially responsible corporate management

#### **Compliance with law and regulations**

We adhere to the laws and regulations of the respective countries in which we are economically active. We expect the same from our suppliers, as well. We are careful to adhere to the principles of this Code of Conduct in our own actions (especially in countries with a weakly developed state structure), and encourage our business partners to do the same.

In case the existing national regulations contradict the contents of the Code or the national context renders that impossible, then in order to comply with the responsibility to observe human rights without limitation we shall nevertheless find ways to protect the principles of internationally-recognised human rights and the content of this Code of Conduct.

#### **Contributing to society**

We consider ourselves to be a part of the society in which we are commercially active. We contribute to its welfare, advancement and sustainable development through our business activities. We consider the indirect and direct effects of our business activities on society and the environment, and endeavour to bring these into a reasonable balance of interests in economic, social and ecological terms. We respect and accept the different legal, societal, cultural and social backgrounds of the countries into which our value chain reaches, and give recognition to their structures, customs and traditions. If they conflict with the principles laid down here, we shall enter into dialogue with our business partners and work towards understanding and acceptance.

#### **Ethical economic activities and integrity**

We follow legal business practices in compliance with fair competition, the intellectual property rights of third parties and the provisions of cartel and antitrust law. We reject all forms of corruption and bribery and promote, in suitable ways, the principles of responsible business management such as transparency, accountability, responsibility, openness and integrity. Business partners are to be treated fairly, and contracts are to be honoured unless the basic parameters fundamentally change. Globally applicable values and principles must be respected, especially those designed to ensure human dignity and the internationally-recognised human rights.



## 2. Observance of human rights

The protection of human rights is the duty of the respective states in which we are commercially active. We at HB Protective Wear support the state in the fulfilment of its duty to protect human rights on its territory by respecting these rights in our operations. Through our activities, we avoid adverse impacts on the human rights of others and counter the deleterious effects on human rights in which we are involved.

In order to meet our responsibility to observe human rights, in terms of the risk of severe human rights effects and the manner and context of the business activity, we are governed by the duty of due diligence in the area of human rights.

This due diligence must include procedures for the determination, avoidance, mitigation and, if necessary, the redress of deleterious effects on human rights and must extend to those deleterious human rights effects which we ourselves cause or to which we contribute, or which are directly connected with our business activities, our products or our services as a consequence of our business relationships.

## 3. Labour rights and conditions

We respect the core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation ILO and create a safe working environment in respect for human dignity."

### **Freedom of association and right to collective agreements**

We respect the right of the employees and the employer to form organisations at will and without prior permission, which have as their object the furtherance and protection of the interests of employees or the employer, and to belong to such associations and to freely elect their representatives. We respect the right of the employees and the employer to conduct collective bargaining with respect to wages and working conditions. Employees may not be discriminated against in their employment as a consequence of their membership in labour organisations.

In countries in which the principles of freedom of association, right to organise and collective agreements are not maintained or the exercise of these rights is limited or forbidden, HB Protective Wear expects from its suppliers that they will permit their employees to elect their own representatives with whom they can enter into a dialogue over workplace issues.

We respect the right of the employees to bring grievances without incurring discrimination of any type. Such grievances shall be addressed according to a suitable procedure.



### **Ban on forced labour**

Forced labour exacted from persons under the threat of penalties of any kind is forbidden. Employees' services may be used only if they have offered them voluntarily and if the types of employment conform to national legislation and procedures. When an employee enters into a contract with a company, his or her identification papers and pay must not be withheld. Measures preventing employees from leaving the company or the production facilities, whether direct or indirect, are forbidden.

### **Ban on child labour and protection of young workers**

We stand for the effective elimination of child labour. We observe the lawful minimum age for acceptance of employment or labour which, according to the provisions of the International Labour Organisation ILO, may not be under the age at which compulsory school attendance ends, and in no case under 15 years.

As part of the recruitment process, suitable mechanisms for determination of age should prevent child labour. If we detect child labour, we shall initiate appropriate measures for assistance and for social reintegration which are centred around the welfare and the protection of the child.

HB Protective Wear employs youths from the age of 16 only if the type or the conditions of the work assigned to them does not endanger the life, health or morality of the youth affected and such youth receives reasonably adequate instruction or vocational training in the corresponding industry sector.

### **Ban on discrimination in employment and work**

Any type of discrimination, exclusion or preference based on race, background, religion, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, trade union membership or political affiliation and demonstrated in respect of hiring, pay, access to training programs, promotion, dismissal or retirement shall not be tolerated. Furthermore, the principle of equality of pay for male and female employees for equivalent work shall apply.

### **Working times**

Unless applicable national legislation or applicable collective bargaining provisions establish a lower maximum working time, the regular working time may not exceed 48 hours per week plus a maximum of 12 hours of overtime. Overtime shall at least be compensated according to applicable law or collective bargaining agreements, and ordering of the same shall remain an exception.



We grant our employees the right to rest breaks every workday and observe the respective major holidays provided by law. Employees must be granted a day off after six consecutive working days.

## **Wages**

Wages may not fall below the minimum wages specified by the state or collective bargaining agreements. In countries without wage ranges specified by law or collective bargaining agreements, we consider that the wages for full-time employment should be sufficient to meet the basic needs of the employee. At the same time, we know that HB Protective Wear alone cannot ensure an existence commensurate with human dignity; rather, supplemental state services and other social security measures may be necessary.

Wages shall not be withheld and must be paid regularly in a form suitable for the employee. Wage deductions are permitted only as provided by law or collective bargaining agreements, and must be designated. Employees shall be regularly informed about the composition of their pay.

## **Employment relationships**

The rules of the national labour law must be observed. The employees must be provided with comprehensible information regarding essential working conditions, including working times, remuneration, as well as payment and calculation methods. We protect employees' rights to terminate their employment, subject to the respectively applicable notification period. We furthermore strive to promote employees' professional qualifications.

## **Health and safety at the workplace**

Subject to national requirements, reasonable measures will be taken to guarantee health and safety at the workplace, in order to avoid workplace accidents as part of employment activities and to protect the health of all employees.

Applicable local provisions regarding workplace safety, health and security at the workplace, including building security and fire protection, are observed in order to reduce the risk of accidents and occupational illnesses to a minimum. Where necessary and appropriate, employees shall be provided with reasonable personal safety equipment. In cases of direct danger, employees have the right and the duty to immediately leave their workplace without seeking permission. Needy persons such as young workers, young mothers and pregnant women, as well as persons with disabilities, shall receive special protection.

## **Humane interaction**

We treat our workers with dignity and respect. We refrain from every form of derogatory treatment, abuse, harassment and intimidation, as well as unlawful retaliation against





employees. Disciplinary measures shall be set forth in writing and in a form that is understandable by the employee.

#### 4. Environmental protection

We comply with the applicable laws, provisions and administrative practices established to protect people and the environment in all of the countries where we operate. We generally conduct our business activities in such a way that they contribute to the general goal of sustainable development.

In doing so, we focus on a system tailored specifically to our company that enables us to examine our operational activities for environmentally damaging effects and, subject to existing regional laws as regulations, to take all necessary and reasonable measures in order to reduce impacts on people and the environment, to avoid environmental damage and to render aid within the context of the opportunities provided by such laws and regulations.

We strive for the continuous and long-term improvement of our environmental results, wherein we promote the introduction of suitable technologies and production processes that enable an efficient use of natural resources and energy, as well as the minimisation of emissions.

#### 5. Consumer interests

We take appropriate measures to guarantee the quality of the products we offer. We ensure that our products meet all statutory regulations in terms of consumer health and safety, and are safe and pose no health risks for their intended purpose.

HB Protective Wear considers consumers' interests as well in its informational and sales activities by employing fair business, marketing and advertising practices and promote and providing pertinent information to consumers.

#### 6. Communication

We communicate the content of this Code of Conduct to employees, contract partners and, if necessary, to third persons. There should be transparent evidence to show that the fundamental principles of this Code of Conduct are being adhered to. The disclosure of trade and company secrets or competition-relevant or other information worthy of protection is, however, exempted herefrom on legal grounds.



## 7. Implementation and enforcement

We comply with the present Code of Conduct in conducting our own affairs. We encourage our business partners to apply the Code of Conduct correspondingly. We support our business partners in structuring the supply chain from their side in such a way that human rights and employee rights are observed and the employment conditions are continuously improved.

For purposes of good corporate governance, we anchor the principles of responsible management of our organisation, as set forth in the Code, in our strategic and operative management system.

### Information

We are committed to conspicuously posting this Code of Conduct for our employees to see. Additionally, the content must be explained verbally using language that is easy to understand. New employees must be made aware of the Code of Conduct during their training and must also receive a verbal explanation of its content. This procedure, especially posting it in the respective national language, is expected from our suppliers, as well.

### Complaints

In the event of a breach of the requirements listed above, please direct your complaint to Mrs. Heike Wagner:  
Phone +49 2639 8309-47 or [hwagner@hb-online.com](mailto:hwagner@hb-online.com)

Klaus Berthold  
CEO