



# Social Compliance Assessment Guide

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*Respecting Human Rights in a Responsible  
Supply Chain*

March 2025



# Welcome

At Kroger, our Purpose is to Feed the Human Spirit™

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We are guided by our **Values: Honesty, Integrity, Respect, Safety, Diversity and Inclusion**. We care deeply about the rights of those with whom we work and rely on to operate our business every day, including our associates, customers, and the communities in which we operate.

Kroger is part of – and dependent on – global food and consumer goods supply chains. We aim to do our part to build more responsible, resilient supply chains for people and our planet. We believe sustainable and responsible sourcing enables us to continue offering our customers a wide range of affordable products.

Responsible Sourcing is vital to mitigate risks and drive improvement. As our customers and stakeholders increasingly care about responsible supply chain management, we set high standards for our products and maintain governance and risk management programs designed to promote ethical and responsible practices. We determine commitments, policies, and capabilities through dialogue, engagement with stakeholders, tracking trends and consulting with experts.

In line with our continuous improvement philosophy, we expect our vendors and suppliers to be fully transparent with their records, policies and practices. It is the responsibility of each vendor to ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in Kroger's [Vendor Code of Conduct](#) and strive toward alignment with leading industry practices.

This document is intended to provide our vendors and suppliers with a guide to Kroger's expectations for respecting human rights in a responsible supply chain.



#### **DISCLAIMER**

*PLEASE NOTE: This Social Compliance Assessment Guide is intended only to provide information and guidance to Kroger vendors, suppliers, facilities and others. The recipient of this document is solely responsible for reviewing and implementing any guidance as appropriate in its operations. This document does not constitute an agreement and nothing in this document creates any obligation on the part of any party to purchase or provide any products or services from/to another party, nor does it create a relationship of agency, or partnership, between any parties. Only those obligations as set forth in a definitive written agreement executed by the parties to such agreement, and subject to the terms and conditions set forth therein, are binding. For the avoidance of doubt, under no circumstances will this document diminish a vendor or supplier's warranties or other obligations to Kroger or its affiliates pursuant to any applicable agreement, statement of work, purchase order, material specification, or any other applicable policy or transaction document.*



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# Introduction

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## Purpose of this Document

This guide provides information, expectations and requirements of Kroger’s commitment to social responsibility for vendors and suppliers. At Kroger, we expect our vendors to not only implement fair labor practices and safe working conditions but to lead the way in championing workers’ well-being. By embracing transparency and accountability, vendors can drive a culture of continuous improvement and demonstrate their commitment to our values.



All expectations apply to vendors and suppliers who own facilities in the Kroger supply chain.

## Our Policies and Supporting Guidelines

At Kroger, we believe acting responsibly is not only the right thing to do, but also the right thing for our business. Our social responsibility standards are informed by guiding international frameworks, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines, United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the core conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Vendors are expected to regularly review and adhere to Kroger’s Vendor Code of Conduct. Please access the most updated version of the Vendor Code of Conduct on Kroger’s website [here](#). We also expect all vendors to communicate expectations consistent with this Code to their suppliers, facilities and business partners who provide products or services to Kroger.

A **vendor** is an organization that Kroger has an agreement with to provide products and/or services (and ultimately pays). It may or may not own the facilities that manufacture or produce the goods. A **supplier** is an organization who owns a facility that manufactures or produces goods that Kroger purchases through the vendor. All expectations apply to vendors and suppliers in the Kroger supply chain.

## Third-Party Assessment Firms

Kroger uses third-party assessment firms to manage and execute the Social Compliance Assessment process. Kroger collaborates closely with leading global assurance partner [LRQA](#) to apply segmentation and prioritize risk based on social and geographic factors. Assessment firms LRQA and [UL Solutions](#) conduct many of the assessment tools, including the standard full-scope social compliance audit (ERSA).

## Supplier Hub Support

This guide often references Kroger’s centralized vendor management system, [Supplier Hub](#). Onboarding onto Supplier Hub is a requirement for all vendors and suppliers that provide goods or services to Kroger.

Supplier Hub is also where vendors disclose their active facilities and monitor the facility assessment process. For more information about Supplier Hub and accompanying help documentation, please refer to the Supplier Hub [help page](#) on the Kroger website.



# Social Compliance Assessment Overview



Kroger upholds our commitment to social responsibility by utilizing a range of assessments and tools. The results of these assessments provide vital insights into the risks and performance of our supply chain, while offering actionable steps for improvement for all participants. Vendors and suppliers must adhere to the expectations outlined below, regardless of the specific assessment their facility receives.

A vendor who does not directly own the production facility is responsible for ensuring its supplier adheres to these principles to the same degree.

## ***Know Your Supply Chain***

Vendors and suppliers must be fully transparent about their supply chain participants. This includes accurately disclosing all relevant facilities in Kroger's Supplier Hub. Additionally, vendors are expected to maintain a current, comprehensive and accurate understanding of the standard operating procedures at each facility.

## ***Facility-level Transparency***

To ensure confidence that worker safety and well-being are prioritized, transparency at the facility level is critical. During assessments, facilities must cooperate with auditors and evaluators, providing full access to necessary areas and information. Facility management must be open, honest, and accurate about the true working conditions.

Attempts to mislead, exaggerate or deceive are unacceptable. Bribery is strictly prohibited and will result in severe consequences, including a minimum one-year suspension of business activities at the facility and a thorough re-evaluation process should Kroger allow the vendor to apply for reinstatement.

## ***Proactive Engagement and Continuous Improvement***

Vendors and suppliers must engage promptly and respectfully with the firm administering the assessment process. This collaboration will result in the creation and execution of corrective action plans (CAPs) that are both robust and sustainable, addressing all identified deficiencies in a timely and thorough manner. Kroger understands that some issues are complex in nature, involving tradeoffs and second order consequences, and will be practical in determining the best solution for all stakeholders.

## ***Empower Worker Voices***

Empowering workers to have a voice in the workplace is a hallmark of leading businesses. When management and workers engage in open communication, it creates a positive work environment where employees feel valued, leading to higher morale and better retention. These



factors contribute to a culture of diligence and attention to detail, which is crucial for maintaining high standards of quality and safety.

To address issues, complaints and grievances, vendors are required to provide all employees with access to a worker voice mechanism in a language they understand that enables them to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

### ***Ongoing Disclosure***

Vendors are responsible for regularly updating all relevant facility details, including contact information, the number of workers at the facility and current addresses. This continuous monitoring minimizes unnecessary rework during the assessment request process. Failure to properly update facility disclosure may result in suspension of business. Unauthorized subcontracting is strictly prohibited.

## **Program Scope**

All vendors and suppliers in Kroger's supply chain are considered in scope for Kroger's Social Compliance Program. Kroger reserves the right to utilize a third-party assessment firm to conduct an onsite facility assessment at any time. Priority focus for the assessment and audit program is placed on food and non-food vendors and each facility that performs the last assembly, packing, or processing step to:

- Company-branded product
- Food or food contact materials, unlabeled or unbranded products, ingredients or components that will be used in the preparation of finished products at Kroger manufacturing plants, stores, and/or commissaries
- Products manufactured or otherwise provided to Kroger that will require further processing, scaling, packaging, staging, etc., prior to being sold to the customer (grocery, meat, seafood, produce, deli/bakery items, bulk nuts, etc.)
- Domestic and foreign-sourced produce

Vendors are required to disclose the facilities described above in Supplier Hub.

## **Responsible Supply Chain Assessment Tools**

Kroger's assessment tools help our vendors and suppliers understand the risks at their facilities and the path to improvement. **Kroger determines the assessment type and frequency requirements for each facility. Facilities are required to conduct the assessment assigned to them.** Third-party assessment firms administer much of the assessment process on Kroger's behalf, following Kroger's directives.

Kroger uses a risk-based approach, deploying a range of tools to verify compliance throughout the supply chain. The subsequent table highlights the key assessment tools that Kroger utilizes most frequently.



Assessment Tools	Key Features
<b>Full-Scope Social Compliance Audit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ ERSA is a full scope onsite audit tool that assesses five core pillars: Labor, Health &amp; Safety, Environment, Business Ethics and Management Systems.</li></ul>
<b>Ethical Charter Implementation Program (ECIP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The Ethical Charter Implementation Program (ECIP) is a specialized program for fresh produce and floral vendors. ECIP builds capacity and enhances labor practices in the fresh produce industry, with a focus on continuous improvement. Learn more at: <a href="https://ethicalcharterprogram.org">https://ethicalcharterprogram.org</a></li></ul>
<b>Mutual Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ The Mutual Recognition Program is by <b>invitation only</b>, based on an analysis of several risk factors. Facilities that qualify will be notified by email with further guidance on the process. There is a fee for this program.</li><li>▶ For produce and/or floral vendors, Kroger will accept <a href="#">Fair Trade USA</a>, <a href="#">Equitable Food Initiative (EFI)</a> or <a href="#">Florverde</a> certifications. A supplier maintaining one of these certifications should disclose it in the Social Compliance section in Supplier Hub.</li></ul>
<b>Critical Issues Assessment (CIA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ A strategic tool that focuses on the most critical topics and areas vulnerable to zero tolerance issues.</li></ul>
<b>Worker Sentiment Survey (WSS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ A worker-completed survey provides direct sentiment insights and benchmarking across six dimensions of labor conditions that are indicative of worker wellbeing, environment, health and safety.</li></ul>
<b>Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ A questionnaire used to survey vendors about their policies and standard operating procedures to identify gaps.</li><li>▶ Used to empower vendors to better mitigate risk and prioritize areas for improvement.</li></ul>
<b>Worker Voice Helplines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ A transparent and trust-building process for vendors to identify cultural, operational, and social issues in their supply chain.</li><li>▶ Establishes safe and effective systems to enable ongoing training, support and oversight for resolving worker issues and grievances.</li></ul>

**Please note:**

Kroger reserves the right to determine the assessment tool for facilities regardless of previous assessments conducted by the facility themselves or by other customers.



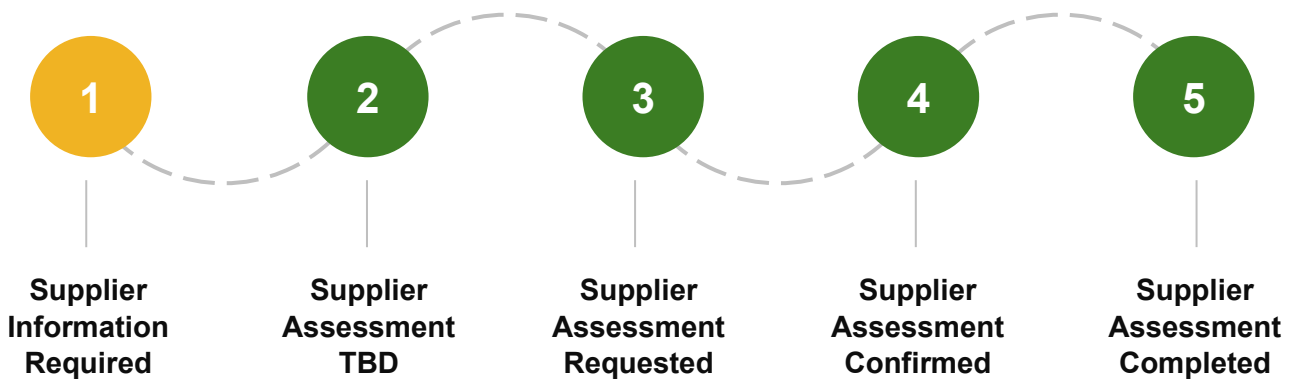
# Facility Assessment Process

## Social Compliance Status

Once each facility is disclosed in Supplier Hub, it is assigned a social compliance status. The social compliance status communicates the current standing of each facility to vendors, suppliers and Kroger stakeholders.

Vendors and suppliers should regularly review their status in Supplier Hub to determine what action may be required by the facility.







The standard facility assessment process flow in Supplier Hub is as follows:



KEY: ● = On track ● = Action required ● = Non-compliant

Social Compliance Status	Explanation of the Status	Steps Required to Move out of Status
● <b>Supplier Information Required</b>	The facility needs to complete the Social Compliance section of the facility disclosure.	Complete each section of the profile, select save and submit.
● <b>Supplier Assessment TBD</b>	The facility has completed its initial disclosure and is monitored by program management. If an assessment is deemed necessary, the facility will move to <i>Supplier Assessment Requested</i> status.	No action is required at this time. Please wait for further direction from the Kroger Social Compliance team or the assessment firm.
● <b>Supplier Assessment Requested</b>	The facility will receive an assessment request from the assessment firm or Kroger.	Action Required. Acknowledge and comply with the assessment request.



 <b>Supplier Assessment Confirmed</b>	The facility has confirmed the assessment date range and completed payment.	The facility should fully cooperate with the assessment process and allow the assessment to take place as scheduled.
 <b>Supplier Assessment Complete</b>	The facility has completed its assessment, and the report is shared by the audit firm.	The facility moves into the corrective action phase where it will develop and implement its corrective action plan (CAP).
 <b>On Hold</b>	In rare circumstances, Kroger may allow an assessment to be On Hold. The future assessment window may be subject to change.	Continue to engage with the assessment process and make necessary updates to resume the assessment process.
 <b>Canceled</b>	The assessment was canceled.	Respond to follow-up communication and provide updated facility information to proceed with the assessment.
 <b>Supplier Engagement Required</b>	This status indicates the facility has failed to meet Kroger requirements due to non-response, lack of engagement in the process, or inadequate corrective action.	Act on any outstanding Kroger requests. Failure to engage will result in internal escalation, and continued lack of engagement will result in a non-compliance status.
 <b>Non-Compliant</b>	After a thorough review of the facility and/or a lack of supplier engagement to address concerns or violations, the facility has been determined non-compliant. Business will be suspended.	Respond to the non-compliant alerts via email, engage with the facility and provide support to address concerns and violations.

## Maintaining Disclosures in Kroger Systems

To ensure an uninterrupted process, please regularly review the contacts listed on your Supplier Hub profile, especially the Facility Assessment Contact listed on the Social Compliance page. The facility assessment contact is responsible for facilitating the completion of the assessment and coordinating payment.

Vendors are responsible for managing their Supplier Hub profile to ensure accuracy of disclosure. Keeping facilities active that are no longer part of the supply chain and inaccuracies in the categorization questionnaire can lead to unnecessary assessment scheduling and cost.

## Supplier Hub Technical Support

For technical assistance regarding Supplier Hub, Kroger's Supplier Engagement Group is ready to assist you.



### Technical Support Phone:

Within the US: **844-277-6165**  
Outside the US: **+011 513-387-1140**

### Technical Support

Email:  
[SupplierCompliance@Kroger.com](mailto:SupplierCompliance@Kroger.com)



# Post-Assessment Process

Kroger expects vendors and suppliers to communicate, engage with facilities, and demonstrate willingness to improve identified non-compliances

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## Assessment Results

Upon conclusion of the assessment, a final assessment report will be shared with our vendor and facility contacts via email once it has been processed by the assessment firm. It is the responsibility of vendors and suppliers to engage with their facilities post-audit to ensure any issues identified are resolved.

The post-assessment process will vary by assessment type and results, and in some cases, a corrective action plan (CAP) will be required. If a CAP is required, an email communication from a CAP manager will be sent detailing next steps.

## Critical Issues

Critical issues indicate a severe violation of standards, which are unacceptable and must be remediated. Such violations may impact the vendor compliance status and disrupt business engagements. Issues include items related to worker vulnerability, business ethics and environmental hazards and pollutants.

If critical issues are found, Kroger will engage with vendors to have them remediated at the facility in an appropriate timeframe and manner.

## Zero Tolerance Findings

Zero tolerance findings such as bribery, forced labor, and child labor will result in immediate suspension of business and investigation. Please visit the [Appendix](#) for a list of zero tolerance and critical issues.

## Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

After a social compliance audit, the facility will be asked to complete a CAP if any issues need remediated. As part of the continuous improvement journey, Kroger expects vendors to communicate, engage with facilities, and demonstrate a willingness to improve identified non-compliances.





The goal of a CAP is to resolve the issue in a way that prevents recurrence. Improvements should be reflected in future assessment results, thus proving the sustainability of the CAP solutions implemented.

The CAP provides a way for facilities and their vendors to cooperate with Kroger and the CAP manager in addressing issues. A CAP is a formal plan to address each finding from an audit. It is the responsibility of Kroger vendors to ensure their facilities' cooperation, commitment, and engagement in the CAP process to fully address identified issues. To do so, facilities must not only solve the immediate problem identified, but also prevent it from happening again by investigating and addressing the root cause.

To submit the CAP, the facility will be invited to log into the CAP management system where it is required to explain the root cause of each finding and outline the actions necessary to remedy the issue. Each action must have a deadline and an assigned individual at the facility responsible for implementation.

### **Further Remediation Efforts**

Remediation of identified issues is the ultimate goal.

Due to the severity of some issues – particularly zero tolerance issues – there may be a circumstance where a deep dive remediation is the best tool to investigate and resolve a serious noncompliance finding.

Kroger reserves the right to assign alternative measures for comprehensive remediation.

### **Trainings and Digital Learning**

Kroger engages with vendors to address issues at facilities and improve compliance performance through targeted training and e-learning initiatives. Recognizing that continuous improvement is essential, we work collaboratively to enhance understanding and implementation of ethical business practices. By providing educational resources and support, we aim to empower our vendors to navigate challenges and foster a culture of compliance.

### **Proactive Vendor Engagements with Suppliers and Facilities: Worker Voice Mechanisms**

Kroger actively supports its vendors in mitigating and responding appropriately to supplier and facility worker feedback. Kroger promotes vendors' engagement with suppliers and facilities in setting up active, functioning worker voice and grievance mechanisms that capture, report, and facilitate remediation of identified issues. These mechanisms enable direct workers and contract employees to raise issues related to adverse human rights conditions.



# FAQs

## Frequently asked questions and answers

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**Q: How do I ensure I am in good standing with the program?**

**A:** Our program goal is to drive sustained improvement over time. Vendors that achieve outstanding assessment results and engagement in the process demonstrate their commitment to the program and are considered in good standing.

**Q: How do I disclose my facilities?**

**A:** Vendors must ensure accurate facility disclosures are maintained in their Supplier Hub profile, specifically on the Facility Address Book page.

Vendors that have frequently canceled assessments or issues of non-response will be subject to an escalation process within the Social Compliance Program and beyond.

**Q: Who pays for the assessment?**

**A:** Each location that receives an assessment request is responsible for payment of assessment services performed.

While the assessment itself is a crucial step in maintaining our standards and ensuring compliance, it's important to note that there may be additional expenditures beyond the initial fee. The cost may be direct or indirect, depending on the corrective actions necessary to address the violations identified during the assessment.

We understand that major expenditures may arise as an unexpected consideration, and we will make reasonable allowances so vendors can manage these potential expenses. Our goal is to ensure that any required corrections are implemented efficiently and sustainably, minimizing disruption to operations.

**Q: How is the assessment fee determined?**

**A:** Pricing is based on the location and size of the facility. For assessments conducted at the facility, travel and local taxes and fees are added to the assessment fee; these expenses vary based on the facility's location.

Onsite assessments range from:  
\$1,500 - \$7,000.

Most onsite assessments range from:  
\$2,000 - \$4,000

Remote assessments range from:  
\$1,000 to \$3,000

**Q: What happens if a facility fails to engage in the process?**

**A:** Facilities that do not take the assessment process seriously put their business with Kroger at risk. In severe cases, such as bribery, the facility may be removed from the Kroger supply chain.

Failure of a facility to cooperate with an assessment request or required corrective action will result in escalation to the vendor and additional consequences.



**Q: What happens if a vendor fails to meet requirements of the program?**

**A:** Vendors are held responsible for their facilities' lack of engagement in the program. Kroger reserves the right to remove production from vendors that are not meeting requirements.

Failure to comply or engage when requested may have implications for our continued business relationship.

**Q: How is the Kroger Social Compliance Assessment scheduled?**

**A:** The facilities will be contacted directly via email to schedule their required assessments; please ensure the facility contact on the Social Compliance page of Supplier Hub is current. Refer to the Social Compliance Process section to review the status of the facility to determine the proper next action for that facility.

**Q: Will Kroger accept a previous assessment I conducted? Will Kroger accept an alternative audit report?**

**A:** Facilities are expected to complete the assessment that Kroger assigns to them. For selected facilities, an alternative audit may be recognized through the Mutual Recognition Program. There is a fee for the program.

Participation in the Mutual Recognition Program is by invitation only, based on an analysis of several risk factors. Facilities that consistently achieve outstanding assessment results may be candidates for the program.

**Q: Are facilities required to conduct more than one Kroger assessment per year?**

**A:** It is rare that a facility will receive multiple Kroger requested assessments within the same year. In circumstances of zero tolerances, severe risks, or transparency issues, a greater assessment frequency may be assigned.

**Q: What happens when a facility changes its name or moves to a new address?**

**A:** Any changes to the facility name and address information must be updated in Supplier Hub and may require an update in the Dun & Bradstreet system. If a facility moves locations, a new Dun & Bradstreet number (DUNs) will need to be obtained.

**Q: Is there advance notice for assessments?**





**A:** Assessments are typically scheduled with a two-week announcement window, but other announcement timeframes are possible.

**Q: What is the vision of the Kroger Social Compliance Team?**



**A:** We continue to refine expectations for suppliers operating in areas of higher risk. We believe long-term change will happen through coalitions of stakeholders working together to understand, mitigate, monitor, and remedy the risks in that sector or location.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Zero Tolerance Issues List

Section	Sub-Section	Assessment Checklist
 <b>Business Ethics</b>	Transparency & Business Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility allows assessor(s) full access to its facility premises, workers, and records.</li> <li>✓ The facility has a business license for legal operation.</li> <li>✓ The facility does not attempt to bribe assessor(s) including offering any form of monetary compensation, gifts, or favors.</li> <li>✓ Workers are not punished through monetary, physical, or other means, for participating in worker interviews.</li> </ul>
 <b>Labor</b>	Young Worker & Child Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ There is no one employed by the facility currently below the age of fifteen (15) or in breach of local minimum age for work or mandatory schooling.</li> </ul>
	Forced Labor & Migrant Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility does not use any type of involuntary labor who are trafficked, imprisoned (not in compliance with ILO Convention 29), bonded, or indentured, either at the facility, or a broker.</li> <li>✓ Workers should maintain possession or control over original government issued identification and personal documentation, such as passports, identity papers, travel documents, and other personal legal documents.</li> </ul>
	Harassment & Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility does not tolerate sexual harassment and has committed to a workplace free of sexual harassment.</li> <li>✓ The facility does not use any form of or threat of physical violence, including slaps, pushes or other forms of physical contact to maintain labor discipline.</li> </ul>
 <b>Environment</b>	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility must not directly discharge and/or leak its untreated wastewater from processing that CONTAINS toxic and priority pollutants and might lead to severe environmental pollution.</li> <li>✓ The facility shall not have production processes that are prohibited by applicable laws and regulations or a relevant Environmental Protection Bureau.</li> <li>✓ The facility must not directly discharge its untreated exhaust gas that CONTAINS hazardous air pollutants, which might lead to severe environmental pollution.</li> <li>✓ The site shall not dispose of hazardous waste in a manner that might lead to severe environmental pollution, including onsite incineration and illegal landfill of hazardous waste that CONTAINS toxic pollutants for soil and/or water, and/or hazardous air pollutants.</li> </ul>
 <b>Management Systems</b>	Subcontracting (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility does not use unauthorized subcontracting.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Critical Issues List

Section	Sub-Section	Assessment Checklist
 <b>Business Ethics</b>	Transparency & Business Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility provides accurate and true payroll documents and time attendance records for review; for example, double-books.</li> </ul>
 <b>Labor</b>	Young Worker & Child Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ There is no employee employed by the facility historically below the age of fifteen (15) or in breach of the local minimum age for work or mandatory schooling at time of employment.</li> <li>✓ The facility has a system for identifying workstations and operations that are inappropriate for young workers according to applicable laws. The facility ensures juvenile workers do not perform work that jeopardizes their health, safety, or morals (as defined by law/ILO Conventions 138 and 182)</li> </ul>
	Forced Labor & Migrant Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The employees have the right to terminate their employment freely without being penalized financially, being threatened by physical or mental coercion or facing unlawful notice periods. For foreign migrant workers, if required by law, the facility pays for all travel costs for returning to their home.</li> <li>✓ The facility ensures that any amendments to contracts after workers' arrival meet local law, provide equal or better terms of employment. All amendments are written in a language that the worker understands, have been explained to workers and are signed with their consent.</li> <li>✓ All costs and fees associated with the recruitment and processing of workers either directly, or through a third-party agents / labor agency, are paid by the employer and not charged back to the workers. If any such fees are found to have been paid by workers, such fees shall be repaid to the workers within 90 days after joining the facility/of discovery.</li> <li>✓ The facility ensures that workers have full control of withdrawals from their bank accounts.</li> <li>✓ There is no portion of a worker's wages withheld for payment upon the end of the contract period. No mandatory saving program applicable or required for workers.</li> <li>✓ All overtime shall be voluntary. The facility ensures that all employees have the right to refuse overtime without being retaliated. Grievance records do not show any allegation that overtime is not voluntary.</li> <li>✓ There are no unreasonable restrictions on the movement of workers and their access to basic liberties at the workplace and if applicable in employer-controlled dormitory/housing.</li> <li>✓ Employees are free to leave the facility premises at the end of their shifts.</li> <li>✓ Employees shall not be forcibly required to live in employer-owned or controlled housing. The freedom of movement of employees who live in employer-controlled housing shall not be unreasonably restricted.</li> </ul>
	Foreign Migrant Workers in High-Risk Countries / Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility should establish written agreements with all chosen labor brokers, recruiters, and employment agencies, both in the country of the workers' origin and the destination. These agreements mandate strict compliance with all relevant policies and procedures of the facility and applicable laws and regulations. The labor brokers and recruiters are also responsible for overseeing their business partners' compliance, including sub-agents. The agreement must include clauses outlining appropriate measures to take in the event of any breaches by any parties involved.</li> <li>✓ The facility should strictly prohibit the isolation of employees, which includes but is not limited to placing them in remote locations with no available transportation and confiscating their mobile phones or other means of communication to prevent external contact.</li> </ul>

	Harassment & Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility does not use any form of verbal violence, including screaming, yelling, threatening, demeaning, or insulting language, to maintain labor discipline.</li> <li>✓ The facility does not use any form or threat of psychological abuse, such as forcing workers to sign letters of self-criticism or posting/publishing the names of workers subject to disciplinary measures to maintain labor discipline.</li> </ul>
	Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility does not, based on a woman's pregnancy, make decisions that result in dismissal, threat to dismiss, loss of seniority, or deduction of wages.</li> <li>✓ The facility ensures that pregnant women are not engaged in work that creates substantial risk to the health of the pregnant woman or their reproductive health. Women that might previously have been in such roles should be offered alternative work at the facility.</li> </ul>
	Freedom of Association & Grievance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility respects the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining. No employee shall be subject to harassment, intimidation, or retaliation in their efforts to freely associate or bargain collectively.</li> </ul>
	Wages & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility ensures that wages paid for regular worked hours are at least legal minimum wage or industry wage agreed within a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) whichever is higher.</li> </ul>
	Hours of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility shall have an attendance tracking mechanism to record workers' attendance and hours of work (e.g., timecards, fingerprint and face recognition and manual).</li> <li>✓ The overtime hours for all employees are within allowable limits under applicable laws or agreements, whichever is stricter. (Non-Compliant: Above 84 h/week)</li> <li>✓ All employees are provided with at least one day off (24 hours) in every 7-day period or as required by applicable law, whichever is stricter. (Non-Compliant: Above 42 working days)</li> </ul>
 <b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ There are no indications of possible structural collapse on the interior or exterior of buildings, such as visible cracks or sagging walls and floors.</li> <li>✓ Sufficient number of emergency exits at the facility (production floors, office areas, warehouses).</li> <li>✓ Emergency exits are unlocked during working hours (including overtime).</li> <li>✓ Dormitories are separated from production buildings and warehouses as legally required.</li> <li>✓ Sufficient number of emergency exits on each dormitory floor as legally required.</li> <li>✓ Emergency exits in dormitory are unlocked.</li> </ul>
 <b>Environment</b>	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The facility must not directly discharge and/or leak its untreated wastewater in a manner that might lead to severe environmental pollution, even if it does NOT contain toxic and priority pollutants.</li> <li>✓ The facility must not directly discharge its untreated exhaust gas in a manner that might lead to severe environmental pollution, even if it does NOT contain hazardous air pollutants.</li> <li>✓ The facility must not dispose of hazardous waste in a manner that might lead to severe environmental pollution, including onsite incineration and illegal landfill, even if it does NOT contain toxic pollutants.</li> <li>✓ There shall be no forbidden substance found in use at the facility, in accordance with the applicable restricted substance list.</li> </ul>

The Zero Tolerance and Critical Issues lists above were provided by LRQA in accordance with the ERSA program.

**For program-related questions not addressed in this guide you may reach out to: [SocialCompliance@Kroger.com](mailto:SocialCompliance@Kroger.com)**

**Please include the facility DUNS number in the request.**