

POLICY – PO422

Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices

Area: Operations
Source: Superintendent of Business Services

Approved: Feb. 27, 2006
Revised: Nov. 9, 2020

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board is committed to ensuring that all operational practices are consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Contentious issues, with respect to unfair labour practices within the international apparel industry, require policies and administrative procedures which define both practice and response.

2. Definitions

Apparel – any item of clothing intended for students or staff purchased through an activity carried out by a Board department, school or any of its services. This includes any apparel which may be purchased by students, parents/guardians or employees.

Unfair Labour Practices – any working condition that falls below the standards set by the United Nations International Labour Organization.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all businesses who supply apparel, including school uniforms, physical education uniforms, team athletic uniforms, spirit wear and employee uniforms require that goods are produced under conditions that meet or exceed the standards set by the United Nations International Labour Organization.

4. Application / Scope

This policy applies to all apparel purchasing activities carried out by all Board departments, schools or services whether purchased directly or by way of endorsing a supplier selected in accordance with any Board policy and/or administrative procedure.

5. Principles

5.1 The Board believes that:

- a) dignified working conditions contribute to the dignity of the human person and spirit in keeping with the social teachings of the Catholic Church;
- b) it has a duty and responsibility to ensure that any apparel supplied or authorized by the Board for purchase be produced under safe and fair working conditions;
- c) the minimum standards for safe and fair working conditions are those set by the United Nations International Labour Organization;
- d) all parties to the manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing and purchasing of apparel share in the moral obligation of ensuring that apparel items and any of its predecessor products, have been produced in accordance with the standards set by the United Nations International Labour Organization;
- e) it has a responsibility to request commercial enterprises doing business with the Board commit under contract to supplying only apparel obtained and/or produced under safe, just, and healthy standards as defined under the International Labour Organization (ILO) and/or local labour laws, to whichever standard is higher;
- f) non-compliance with the standards set under this policy shall constitute a breach of contract entitling the Board to rescind any agreement with the contracted supplier

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Director of Education shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and to amend them thereafter as the need arises.
- 6.2 Contracts awarded under this policy shall be given to suppliers who use the services of a third-party monitoring agency that is acceptable to the Board for monitoring and reporting on labour practices and conditions where the raw materials of the apparel and the finished product are produced.

- 6.3 The provisions of any contract, service contract, agreement to purchase or exclusive licence agreement shall include the following provision:
- a) “The supplier hereby warrants, represents and agrees, that any of its subcontractors, servants, agents or suppliers will, at all times during the term of this agreement and extended term, comply and adhere to all of the provisions of the Board’s Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices policy and its attendant administrative procedures. Breach of any provision of the Board policy and/or its administrative procedures, or failure to reasonably satisfy the school/Board that the suppliers continually adhere to the policy during the term of this agreement will entitle the Board or its bona fide agent, in its sole and absolute discretion, to provide written notice of termination of this agreement effective immediately. Notwithstanding, said written notice of termination, the supplier shall complete all outstanding orders including those from parents/guardians, but shall not accept or solicit any further orders from parents/guardians affiliated with any school of the Board.”

7. Sources

- 7.1 Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, Section 302(5)
7.2 Rerum Novarum – On Capital and Labor Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII May 15, 1891

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 Appropriate Dress for Pupils Administrative Procedure (AP610-2)
8.2 Apparel Purchases and Fair Labour Practices Administrative Procedure (AP422-1)