

# Ethical Code of Conduct





# Ethical Code of Conduct

## Introduction

This document highlights The Midcounties Co-operative's approach to Social Responsibility and what we expect of our suppliers.

As members of the Federal Retail and Trading Services Limited (FRTS) we also work with suppliers through this group. A Sound Sourcing Code of Conduct is in place for CRTG (the Co-operative Retail Trading Group).

## The Midcounties Co-operative Social Responsibility strategy

The Midcounties Co-operative is a consumer co-operative owned by our members. Our mission statement is: -

**'To be a successful consumer co-operative working towards creating a better, fairer world and to enhance the lives of colleagues, members, customers, and the communities we serve.'**

In order to achieve this mission, we follow co-operative values and principles, with a key value being Social Responsibility. As a socially responsible retailer we are committed to the following:

- Reducing our impact on the environment
- Supporting our communities in a sustainable way
- Managing our supply chain to develop ethical trade
- Embracing diversity and recognising the benefits this brings
- Offering training and development opportunities to our colleagues
- Providing a safe and secure workplace for our colleagues
- Raising awareness of social responsibility amongst colleagues, customers, members and other key stakeholders
- Working with our members and colleagues to develop our social responsibility practices
- Setting Social Responsibility targets and reviewing our performance
- Reporting openly on our Social Responsibility progress

More details on our Social Responsibility practices can be viewed in our Annual Social Responsibility report available at [www.midcounties.coop](http://www.midcounties.coop).



## The Midcounties Co-operative suppliers' criteria

As a responsible retailer, The Midcounties Co-operative is committed to building fair and sustainable relationships with its suppliers across its whole supply chain in order to secure decent working conditions for everybody involved in the production of products for The Midcounties Co-operative. We recognise the essential contribution that our suppliers make in achieving our aims and aspirations for sound sourcing.

We expect our suppliers to meet the following criteria: -

### 1. Reduce impact on the environment

- 1.1 Carbon reduction activities are in place
- 1.2 Waste management activities are in place with an aim of reducing waste going to landfill
- 1.3 Colleagues, customers and any other key stakeholders are engaged in environmental awareness activities

### 2. Engage and support local communities where possible

- 2.1 Support is provided (either financial or in kind) for local community groups
- 2.2 Colleagues and any other relevant key stakeholders are engaged in local community activity
- 2.3 Social risks are identified, and projects are in place to help mitigate these within the community

### 3. Provide safe and hygienic work conditions

- 3.1 A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided to colleagues
- 3.2 Colleagues shall receive regular and recorded health and safety training, and such training shall be repeated for new or reassigned colleagues
- 3.3 The company observing the code shall assign responsibility for health and safety to a senior management representative
- 3.4 A workplace wellbeing programme is in place to support the health of employees

### 4. Embrace diversity to facilitate a workplace where everyone feels valued

- 4.1 Colleagues, customers and key stakeholders are engaged in diversity awareness raising activities
- 4.2 Key diversity areas specific to the business are identified with a strategy in place to manage these areas
- 4.3 There is no discrimination in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination or retirement

### 5. Provide training and development opportunities for colleagues

- 5.1 Learning opportunities are provided to give colleagues the opportunity to develop skills and behaviours to carry out their roles effectively
- 5.2 Colleagues are provided regular opportunities to review career aspirations and development needs

## The Midcounties Co-operative suppliers' criteria

### 6. Ensure that working hours are not excessive

- 6.1 Working hours comply with national laws and benchmark industry standards, whichever affords greater protection
- 6.2 In any event, workers shall not on a regular basis be required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and shall be provided with at least one day off for every 7-day period on average. Overtime shall be voluntary, shall not exceed 12 hours per week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated at a premium rate.

### 7. Child labour shall not be used

- 7.1 There shall be no new recruitment of child labour
- 7.2 Companies shall develop or participate in and contribute to policies and programmes, which provide for the transition of any child found to be performing child labour to enable her or him to attend and remain in quality education until no longer a child; "child" and "child labour" being defined in the appendices
- 7.3 Children and young persons under 18 shall not be employed at night or in hazardous conditions.

### 8. Living wages are paid

- 8.1 Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standards, whichever is higher. In any event wages should always be enough to meet basic needs and to provide some discretionary income
- 8.2 All workers shall be provided with written and understandable Information about their employment conditions in respect to wages before they enter employment and about the particulars of their wages for the pay period concerned each time that they are paid
- 8.3 Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted nor shall any deductions from wages not provided for by national law be permitted without the expressed permission of the worker concerned. All disciplinary measures should be recorded

### 9. To prohibit harsh or inhumane treatment

- 9.1 Physical abuse or discipline, the threat of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse or other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.
- 9.2 Protection from forced labour, modern slavery and harsh or inhumane treatment will be upheld at all times.
- 9.3 Adherence to the Modern Slavery act must be upheld

### 10. Strive to positively influence the supply chain

- 10.1 Encourage suppliers to follow socially responsible practices
- 10.2 To every extent possible facilitate sharing of best practices regarding social responsibility



## The Midcounties Co-operative suppliers' criteria

### 11. Be transparent with social responsibility activity

- 11.1 Openly communicate about progress of Social Responsibility actions
- 11.2 Clear targets set for Social Responsibility performance available in the public domain

### 12. Health & Safety

- 12.1 The Contractor shall carry out the work with proper regard to his responsibilities under Health & Safety at Work legislation and may be required to submit a copy of his Health & Safety at Work Policy Statement prior to being allowed to commence work.

### 13. Anti-Corruption

- 13.1 The Midcounties Co-operative takes a zero tolerance approach to corruption within its businesses and supply chain. The Customer shares these values and shall ensure that adequate steps are in place within its business to avoid the giving or receiving of bribes and/ or the facilitation of tax evasion taking place.
- 13.2 The Customer shall comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption including, but not limited to, the Bribery Act 2010 and Criminal Finances Act 2017 ("Anti-corruption Legislation").
- 13.3 The Customer shall have adequate procedures in place to procure that those persons associated with provision of the services to The Midcounties Co-operative adhere to the Anti-corruption Legislation.

### 14. Modern Slavery Statement

This statement is made pursuant to s.54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and sets out the steps that The Midcounties Co-operative Limited has taken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within its business or supply chain.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. The Society has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within the business or our supply chain.

This statement in full can be viewed on The Midcounties Co-operative website.

<https://www.midcounties.coop/society/modern-slavery/>

### Audit and Review

If you sign up to this code of conduct, The Midcounties Co-operative would also like you to complete a self-audit and inform us of the actions you are taking to address any shortfalls.



**Agreement**

Please sign and return to confirm that you commit to this code of conduct.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Organisation        |  |
| Number of employees |  |
| Print name          |  |
| Signature           |  |
| Date                |  |
| Contact number      |  |
| Email address       |  |