



6 Job Quality

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Learn more about the Alliance and the draft standards in our latest report, *Introducing the Business Standards for 21st Century Leadership: Public Consultation Report and Draft Standards* available at <https://corporateracialequityalliance.org/corporate-standards>.

Reviewing and Submitting Feedback

How to Navigate This Standard

Each draft standard begins with an overview, including:

- The outcome that the standard supports achieving
- The basic requirement of the standard
- A list of the currently proposed performance targets for the standard
- The value proposition of adopting the standard
- The most closely associated equity outcomes, showing how achievement of the standard contributes to positive societal impact
- A non-exhaustive list of related sustainability standards and frameworks

Following the overview is a glossary of key terms. Then, each performance target is presented with specific requirements, metrics, implementation guidelines, and resources. To support companies in getting started, suggested interim targets and metrics are included as well.

Navigation links are provided at the bottom of each page, beginning on page 5.

Submitting Feedback

This is a living document and your participation in strengthening this work is important to us. Alongside our ongoing research and testing with companies, we look forward to feedback on these questions:

- Is the standard clear and compelling?
- Do you agree that the performance targets for this standard cover critical ways for companies to address discrimination and exclusion, and advance socially responsible business practices within the given topic? If not, why not?
- Are there additional or alternative performance targets you recommend for this standard?
- What additional guidance, if any, would be helpful for a company to get started and/or make steady progress toward achieving this standard?

Submit your feedback by completing [this survey](#) (letter submissions will also be accepted) or attending one of our virtual roundtables. [Find more information here on providing your feedback.](#)

6 The company provides quality jobs at all levels.





Requirement

■ Compensate and treat all workers fairly, including providing equitable compensation and benefits that enable workers at all levels to thrive and build a future.

Performance Targets

- P6.1** All workers are paid living wages.
- P6.2** All workers have essential benefits they can afford.
- P6.3** Pay equity and pay gaps are regularly analyzed across demographic groups and concrete action is taken to address any disparities.
- P6.4** Total compensation and rewards practices are socially responsible and promote well-being for all.
- P6.5** Other key employment terms and conditions are fair and respectful of workers at all levels.
- P6.6** Worker expertise informs Board oversight.
- P6.7** The rights of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining are respected.

Associated Equity Outcomes

-  Accountability Through Transparency
-  Balanced Power
-  Wealth Generation and Economic and Social Mobility
-  Health and Well-Being

Key Connections

- SDGs 1, 8, and 10
- ESRS S1
- IFRS S1
- UNGP 20

Business and Societal Value Proposition

Providing quality jobs at all levels of the company is one of the most powerful levers companies have to positively impact workers and communities, while also protecting the value creation engine of the business.

A quality job is one that pays living wages; offers essential benefits and fair rewards; ensures workers are safe from physical and emotional harm; and gives workers the predictability, flexibility, and voice they need to feel empowered and advance in their careers. Making such investments in the workforce not only has a positive impact on their lives, but also [promotes productivity, engagement, innovation, and value creation](#). Investing in quality jobs is also [consistent with stakeholder expectations](#) and [vital for a healthy economy, thriving families, and a stable democracy](#).

While workforce investments are often treated as costs to be minimized, insufficiently investing in the workforce [increases risk and costs](#) related to absenteeism, low engagement, turnover, and discrimination claims—all of which can impact business performance, brand value, and long-term success. [According to research on worker productivity](#), over half of employees report being relatively unproductive at work, including due to inadequate compensation, unsafe and unsupportive work environments, and a lack of flexibility and advancement opportunities. This potentially costs a median-size S&P 500 company between [\\$228 and \\$355 million in lost productivity annually](#). Investing in quality jobs mitigates this among other risks.

The performance targets for this Standard therefore focus on essential dimensions of providing quality jobs to all workers. See Standards 2, 4, and 5 for other aspects of job quality.

Glossary

Contingent workers

Individuals who are contracted to provide labor for the company, whether part-time, full-time, or on a temporary basis, such as gig workers, self-employed individuals, or workers from staffing agencies and other vendors.

Demographics or demographic groups

Characteristics of a specific human population, such as geographic location, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Direct workers

Individuals who are in an employment relationship with the company, such as full-time and part-time employees.

Disaggregate

To collect and separate compiled data into smaller units or subcategories so that component parts can be isolated and examined for trends and patterns (e.g., data organized by specific racial and ethnic groups versus “people of color” as a single grouping).

Disparity

A statistically significant difference in access, opportunity, use, or outcomes for one or more **demographic groups** that has no valid justification (i.e., cannot be explained by legitimate, nondiscriminatory business reasons). Disparities are indicative of unequal treatment and/or opportunities. In the context of the Standards, disparities can be addressed by adopting new systems, policies, and practices that promote fairness for all people regardless of their background.

Equity

Just and fair **inclusion** into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. When everyone is treated fairly according to their needs and no group of people is given special treatment.

Gap analysis

A comparative analysis of the current state of a set of quantitative or qualitative factors against a given Performance Target, including the Guidelines. Conducting such an analysis is step one across every Performance Target.

Inclusion

The values, practices, and policies that ensure all people, across all social demographics, feel respected, safe, and valued, including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded such as due to their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Inclusion values and leverages **diversity**, recognizing it as a source of strength for organizations.

Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of inequality across social categorizations, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and class, which in turn results in overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage for a given individual or group of people. As described by professor [Kimberlé W. Crenshaw](#) of Columbia Law School, who coined the term over 30 years ago, intersectionality is “[a lens... for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other.](#)”

Job function or type

The core set of activities or tasks an individual completes as part of the responsibilities of their position at the company, including daily duties, projects, and defined areas of oversight or management.

Leaders or leadership

Senior leaders, as defined below, plus:

- Middle management, including people managers who have oversight of, but are not directly managing, non-managerial workers; and
- Any other internal leaders with decision-making power over non-managerial workers.

Living wage

The amount of remuneration, based on a standard work week, needed for a worker and their family to cover the cost of essentials where they live, including food, childcare, health insurance, housing, transportation, and other necessities such as clothing and personal care items (excludes tips, overtime, commissions, and non-cash pay or benefits, such as grants of equity securities). A living wage is likely not the same as (and is typically higher than) the local minimum wage. This term is intended to be equivalent to how living wage is defined by the [Global Living Wage Coalition](#).

Non-managerial roles or workers

Independent contributors and other **direct workers** who do not oversee the company’s operations or other workers, including but not limited to entry-level and frontline roles.

Parity

The quality or state of being equal or equivalent.

Pay equity

Compensating **direct workers** who have the same or substantially similar job functions with equal pay, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age or other protected status or characteristic, while accounting for legitimate factors affecting pay, such as prior relevant experience and tenure with the company. The calculation should be based on a review of all forms of direct compensation, including base pay, commissions, bonuses, and grants of equity securities.

Pay gap (adjusted)

The difference between median compensation of **direct workers** across disaggregated demographic groups, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age, after accounting for factors that affect pay, such as job function, level, and experience. Though not the focus of this Standard, it may be standard practice for companies to conduct this analysis alongside pay equity and unadjusted pay gap analyses.

Pay gap (unadjusted)

The difference between median compensation of **direct workers** across disaggregated demographic groups, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age, without adjusting for other factors.

Senior leaders or senior leadership

- Officers as defined in the company's bylaws;
- Named executive officers as defined under U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission reporting rules;
- C-Suite or equivalent senior leaders; and
- Leaders with overall ownership and responsibility for department or divisional budgets.

Stakeholders

Individuals and groups who have an interest in the policies and practices of companies not only because they are affected by them, but also because they have rights to be respected and protected by companies, e.g., workers' rights to fair wages, consumers' rights to safe products, suppliers' rights to transparency, investors' rights to be informed of material facts, communities' rights to clean and safe neighborhoods, and society's rights to a healthy environment, among others.

Total compensation

The complete package of compensation provided to a **direct worker** annually, including all direct compensation (such as a salary or hourly wage, commissions, bonuses, and grants of equity securities) plus non-direct compensation (such as paid time off and retirement benefits).

Worker representatives

Formal representatives of groups of workers, including employee resource groups (or their representatives), representatives of worker-composed advisory committees, work councils, worker cooperatives, mutual aid groups, and labor unions.

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.1

All workers are paid living wages.

Requirement

Pay [living wages](#) to 100% of [direct workers](#) and, if applicable, take concrete steps to ensure living wages are paid to 100% of [contingent workers](#).

Metrics

- Percentage of direct workers paid living wages, [disaggregated](#) across at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.
- Percentage of contingent workers paid living wages, disaggregated across the same [demographic groups](#) (if applicable and as available).

Share Progress & Achievement

Disclosure available to the public of the company's living wage aspirations and projected timeline for achievement, either on the company's website or in an annual report (or other publicly available filing). Update disclosure upon achieving the Target and/or in the event of material timeline changes.

Once achieved: annual disclosure available to the public of the company's continued adherence to paying living wages.

Annual disclosure to the Board of the percentage of the workforce (direct and contingent) paid living wages and status of plans to achieve living wages across 100% of the workforce.

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

- RATIONALE:**
- Wages critically impact economic security, health, and wellness. In addition, living wages are a core component of the [Good Jobs Principles](#) developed by the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor and are widely considered [a civil and human rights issue](#). As a result, paying living wages to all workers is a material human capital management issue for companies. [The UN Global Compact asserts](#) paying living wages also “reduces inequalities and builds more resilient supply chains.”
- [An overwhelming majority of people also agree](#) that companies should pay their workers a living wage and doing so would [boost consumer purchasing power](#). According to the [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#), the average national living wage needed for a full-time worker to support a family that has another full-time working adult and two children was \$24.16 per hour in 2022. Yet, tens of millions of workers across the U.S., [especially women and people of color](#), work for only poverty wages.
- Notwithstanding the complexity and business model challenges some companies may encounter in adopting this Target, if living wages are not yet paid across the entire workforce, making progress toward doing so is urgent and profoundly important.
- IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:**
1. In addition to direct workers, this Target also applies to contingent workers, recognizing that the terms under

- which a company engages such workers directly influence whether such workers can earn a living wage.
2. Living wages for indirect workers is also important. See Standard 8 on promoting a socially responsible value chain.
 3. Depending on the industry, it may take some companies more time (potentially years) to fully achieve this Target. For some, it may even require adopting new business models. Multiple tools and resources are available to help. See the Resources for a starting list.
 4. Adopting Standard 13 on responsible civic and political engagement can support success here by helping to align business incentives at the local, state, and federal levels toward living wages for all.

- GUIDELINES:**
1. If the company is certified as a living wage employer for both direct and contingent workers by any of the following entities, it automatically meets this Target: [*to come*].
 2. If the company is certified as a living wage employer for direct workers only, this Target still applies to the extent it has contingent workers.
 3. If Guideline 1 does not apply to the company, identify the living wage in all locations where direct and/or contingent workers live.
 - a. Use the following living wage calculators:
 - i. U.S.-based workers: [Living Wages for US](#) or [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#)
 - ii. Workers based in other locations: [Anker Methodology](#) or [WageIndicator](#).

- b. Apply a household type of at least two working adults and two children to determine the living wage for a given location.
 - c. For any locations that the above calculators do not address, document the company's living wage calculation and sources relied on.
 - d. Gather workforce wage data and calculate the percentage of workers paid living wages as the number of direct/contingent workers paid at or above the living wage divided by the total number of direct/contingent workers.
 - e. Verify the accuracy of calculations through an independent third party.
- 4. If there are living wage gaps for direct workers, establish a time-based plan to achieve living wages for such workers, ensuring that progress made over time is equitable, including taking the following actions:
 - a. Setting meaningful interim targets for frontline and low-wage workers and ensuring progress over time is made across all job functions that are below a living wage.
 - b. Annually analyzing whether there are disparities across demographic groups (including at least across race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age) and adjusting plans to mitigate any disparities.
- 5. If the company engages contingent workers, take one or more of the following concrete actions:
 - a. Prior to engagement, diligently vet vendors on whether they provide their direct workers living wages. Review and confirm the same on any contract renewals.
 - b. Ensure the fees paid by the company to the vendor are sufficient to enable living wages for contingent workers.
 - c. Where feasible, include in contractual terms the vendor's certification that it provides living wages to its workers, calculated consistent with Guideline 3 above, and the obligation to certify its compliance annually.
- 6. On at least an annual basis, review whether living wage thresholds have shifted in any locations where direct and contingent workers live and adjust ongoing operating plans to continue meeting living wage thresholds.
- 7. When sharing plans with the Board, share first with the committee that has oversight of talent practices, typically the compensation committee. (See Targets 1.2 and 1.3 on Board oversight.)

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted of pay practices for direct workers and relevant contract terms for contingent workers.
- Analysis conducted of resources required to achieve living wages across the workforce, including review of business models, operating plans, and other underlying assumptions (see Target 7.4 for business model reviews).
- Time-based plan developed to achieve the Target and budget planning underway.
- 60% or more of direct workers and contingent workers are paid living wages, with no (or decreasing) [disparities](#) across demographic groups.
- 80% or more of direct workers and contingent workers are paid living wages, with no disparities across demographic groups.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with [senior leadership](#).
- Documentation of time-based plans and resource analyses to achieve Target.
- Percentage of direct workers paid living wages and, if applicable, percentage of contingent workers paid living wages, in each case, disaggregated across demographic groups.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks addressing similar issues.

Resources

[The Case for Living Wages: How Paying Living Wages Improves Business Performance and Tackles Poverty](#) (Anna Barford, et al., Business Fights Poverty, The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, and Shift Project, May 2022)

[Fairness in the Workplace with a Living Wage](#) (Unilever, accessed May 2024)

[How Both the Company and Employee Benefit from Higher Pay](#) (Rick Wartzman and Kelly Tang, Wall Street Journal, October 2021)

[Higher Wages for Low-Income Workers Lead to Higher Productivity](#) (Justin Wolfers and Jan Zilinsky, Peterson Institute for International Economics, January 2015)

[Annual Survey: In an Unstable Economic Environment, Workers and Wages Are More Important Than Ever to the American Public](#) (JUST Report, JUST Capital, September 2022)

[Improving Wages, Improving Lives: Why Raising the Minimum Wage is a Civil and Human Rights Issue](#) (Indivar Dutta-Gupta, et al., The Leadership Conference Education Fund and Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality, October 2014)

[Moving Living Wage Forward Faster: Action Guide](#) (Forward Faster Initiative, UN Global Compact, July 2023)

[Tackling Inequality: An Agenda for Business Action](#) (The Business Commission to Tackle Inequality of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, May 2023)

[Does Your Company Offer Fruitful Careers — Or Dead-End Jobs?](#) (Ethan Rouen and Marcela Escobari, Harvard Business Review, March 2022)

[Research: the ESG Issues That Matter Most to People](#) (Daniel J. Benjamin, Ori Heffetz, and Michael M. Weinstein, Harvard Business Review, July 2023)

[Meet the Low-Wage Workforce](#) (Martha Ross and Nicole Bateman, The Brookings Institution, November 2019)

[Working Poor Indicator](#) (National Equity Atlas, PolicyLink and USC Equity Research Institute, 2020)

[The Payoffs of Higher Pay: Elasticities of Productivity and Labor Supply With Respect To Wages](#) (Natalia Emanuel and Emma Harrington, Harvard University, October 2020)

[Shining a Light on Tech's Shadow Workforce](#) (Contract Worker Disparity Project, TechEquity Collaborative, January 2022)

[Responsible Contracting Standard: Tech Companies Closing the Gap in Contract Work](#) (Contract Worker Disparity Project, TechEquity Collaborative, January 2022)

[Living Wage: Take the Living Wage Tool](#) (UN Global Compact, accessed May 2024)

[Living Wage](#) (Forward Faster Initiative, UN Global Compact, accessed May 2024)

[Global Living Wage Coalition](#) (Global Living Wage Coalition [website], accessed May 2024)

[Introducing Anker Reference Values for Living Wage and Living Income](#) (Global Living Wage Coalition, July 2020)

[Living Wage Database](#) (Fair Wage Network, accessed May 2024)

[Living Wage Action Guide](#) (Roadmap on Living Wages, IDH, accessed May 2024)

[IDH Benchmark Finder](#) (IDH, accessed May 2024)

[WageMap](#) (BSR, Fair Wage Network, Living Wages for US, Living Wage Foundation, Loughborough University, New Foresight, WageIndicator, accessed May 2024)

[Wages](#) (International Labour Organization [website], accessed May 2024)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.2

All workers have essential benefits they can afford.

Requirement

Ensure all [direct workers](#) have essential benefits by establishing a comprehensive and inclusive benefits package and taking concrete steps to ensure it is accessible and affordable.

Metrics

Policy metric: company-wide benefits policy reflecting a benefits package consistent with the guidelines.

Practice metric: percentage of direct workers with essential benefits, [disaggregated](#) across at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age; and, if applicable, percentage of contingent workers with benefits, disaggregated across the same [demographic groups](#).

Share Progress & Achievement

At least annual disclosure to the Board of benefits offerings, including the quality of offerings; eligibility and uptake across the workforce; any [disparities](#) across demographic groups; and any concrete actions being taken to improve offerings (if applicable).

(Disclosures related to this Target are not intended to require disclosure of any information under attorney client privilege or attorney work product protections.)

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

Offering quality benefits is vital both to companies and their workers. [Multiple studies](#) have shown that quality benefits contribute not only to increased engagement, productivity, and retention, but also to the overall well-being of workers and the positive financial performance of companies. Unsurprisingly, quality benefits are highly valued by workers from all backgrounds. [According to one survey](#), 40% of workers would leave their current job to find employment that offers better benefits. When workers feel that their health and well-being are cared for, they are in turn more motivated and equipped to perform at their best.

[With the US population growing increasingly older and more racially and gender diverse](#), investing in comprehensive and inclusive benefits offerings is more important than ever. Yet millions of workers [do not have adequate benefits](#). [Insufficient paid leave](#), [childcare benefits](#), and [retirement benefits](#), especially for low-wage workers, are among the major gaps. Therefore it is critical that socially responsible employers ensure all workers are eligible for quality, comprehensive, and inclusive benefits. To meet the needs of all workers, that means ensuring benefits offerings are inclusive of all genders and all types of families, as well as affordable and accessible to all.

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:

1. Depending on the industry and relative resources of the company, it may take some companies more time to fully achieve this Target. There are multiple tools

and resources to help. See the Resources list.

2. Adopting Standard 13 on responsible civic and political engagement can support success here by promoting effective state and federal public policies that ensure all people have quality benefits.

GUIDELINES:

1. Establish a comprehensive, inclusive, and affordable health and wellness benefits package under which all direct workers are eligible by taking the concrete steps outlined below and formalizing the company's practices in a written policy.
2. The policy should be formally approved by the most senior leader(s) with oversight of benefits, as reflected by their signature(s) on the policy.
3. **On comprehensiveness and inclusion**, the benefits package should reflect offerings that are inclusive of all genders and people with disabilities, achieve [parity](#) for all types of families, and include at least the following:
 - a. Health insurance, including mental health care.
 - b. Dental insurance.
 - c. Vision insurance.
 - d. Paid time off.
 - e. Paid sick leave.
 - f. Paid leave for caregivers, including adoption and regardless of primary or secondary caregiver distinctions.
 - g. Unpaid parental/caregiver leave allowing workers to return to the same or similar job after leave.
 - h. An employee assistance program (EAP)

offering free and confidential counseling and mental health support.

- i. Dependent care benefits, including childcare.
- j. Commuting benefits.
- k. A retirement savings plan with an employer match (e.g. 401(k) plan).
- l. Life insurance.

m. Disability insurance, including short-term and long-term insurance.

n. Financial wellness benefits, such as [ABLE \(Achieving a Better Life Experience\) savings account plans](#), financial education and coaching, student loan assistance, tuition reimbursement, and/or emergency cash assistance.

o. Parity in benefits between (i) spouses and domestic partners and (ii) same-sex and different-sex spouses and domestic partners.

4. **On accessibility and affordability**, take at least the following concrete steps:

- a. Ensure the benefits meet federal Affordable Care Act standards for [minimum essential coverage that is “affordable” and that provides “minimum value.”](#)
- b. Apply an “opt-out” policy for as many of the types of benefits as possible.
- c. Ensure healthcare benefits are in effect as of employee start dates. Gaps in coverage can be an outsized barrier especially for people with disabilities.
- d. Annually provide enterprise-wide communications through multiple channels on

the types of benefits available and how to access and navigate offerings (e.g., all-hands meetings, via email, and offering on-site and digital learning sessions and office hours).

- e. Annually solicit feedback from workers on whether they are satisfied with the affordability, accessibility, breadth, and quality of benefits, including any other benefits they feel would be meaningful to their success.

5. For part-time workers, ensure at least one of the following applies:

- a. They are covered under the company’s policy;
- b. The base compensation they receive (excluding overtime) is sufficient for them to purchase benefits consistent with Guideline 4a; or
- c. They affirm in writing they have existing benefits coverage they are satisfied with (e.g., through a partner).

6. Annually assess whether there are any disparities in access and use of benefits as well as overall outcomes across [job types](#) and levels and demographic groups, including at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age. This may include the following analyses:

- a. Comparing benefits enrollment across demographic groups and by type of benefit;
- b. Comparing use of benefits across demographic groups and by type of benefit;
- c. Tracking the percentage of workers taking advantage of preventative services, such as having a primary care provider and accessing preventative screenings for their age bracket.

d. Tracking the annual number and type of claims filed and amounts paid out in workers compensation.

7. Annually take concrete action to address any disparities, such as improving the quality of offerings based on feedback from workers and tailoring communications to highlight specific benefits that may appeal to different groups or may be more relevant at specific times of year.

8. Though this Target applies to direct workers, if the company has a [contingent workforce](#), it should also ensure such workers have access to essential benefits they can afford as follows:

- a. If contracting directly with contingent workers, ensure contract fees are sufficient to enable them to purchase essential benefits consistent with Guideline 4a.
- b. If contracting with vendors, take one or more of the following concrete actions:
 - i. Prior to engagement, diligently vet vendors on whether they provide their direct workers essential benefits they can afford. Review and confirm the same on any contract renewals.
 - ii. Ensure the fees paid by the company to the vendor are sufficient to enable the vendor’s benefits coverage for its workers.
 - iii. Where feasible, include in contractual terms the vendor’s certification that it provides benefits to its workers consistent with Guideline 4a (or better) and the obligation to certify its compliance annually.

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted of benefits offerings, including the quality of offerings and eligibility and uptake across the workforce.
- Analysis conducted of resources required to ensure all direct workers are eligible for essential benefits consistent with the guidelines.
- Time-based plan developed and budget planning underway to achieve the Target.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with [senior leadership](#).
- Documentation of time-based plans and resource analyses to achieve Target.
- Documentation of concrete action(s) taken to improve offerings and/or address any disparities in uptake of benefits package.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[JUST Capital’s 2023 Americans’ Views on Business Survey: Americans Want More Action From Corporate America as Talk Dwindles Following ESG and ‘Woke Business’ Backlash](#) (Jennifer Tonti, JUST Report, JUST Capital, 2023)

[Quality Jobs Framework](#) (Jobs for the Future, 2023)

[A Systems Approach to Worker Health and Wellbeing](#) (Joy Inouye and John Dony, The Campbell Institute, National Safety Council, 2017)

[Beyond Safety: Leading Indicators for Health & Wellbeing](#) (Joy Inouye, The Campbell Institute, National Safety Council, 2019)

[The National Study of Workplace Equity](#) (Samuel Bradley, Jr. and Marcie Pitt-Catsoupes, Boston College School of Social Work and SHRM, December 2022)

[A Healthy Workforce Is Good for Business. Here's Why](#) (Anniken Grønstad, World Economic Forum, July 2023)

[Companies That Promote a Culture of Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Outperform in the Marketplace](#) (Raymond Fabius and Sharon Phares, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, June 2021)

[How Employers Can Spark a Movement to Help Us Live Longer and Healthier Lives](#) (Andy Davis, et al., Deloitte Insights, June 2023)

[High Quality Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance Has Potential to Increase Americans’ Life Spans by 12 Years](#) (Protecting Americans’ Coverage Together, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, August 2023)

[Minimum Value and Affordability](#) (Internal Revenue Service, accessed May 2024)

[Fact Sheet: Payroll Deduction Retirement Programs Build Economic Security](#) (David John, Gary Koenig, and Marissa Malta, AARP Public Policy Institute, July 2022)

[Best Employee Benefits In 2024](#) (Dana Miranda and Cassie Bottorff, Forbes Advisor, February 2023)

[The Most Desirable Employee Benefits](#) (Kerry Jones, Harvard Business Review, February 2017)

[Cash for Nannies, Extra Days Off: Child-Care Perks Top Workplace Benefits](#) (Kelsey Butler, Bloomberg, March 2024)

[Child Care Benefits for Workers Effectively Pay for Themselves, New Study Finds](#) (Emily Peck, Axios, March 2024)

[The New Plan to Create a Stock Market Portfolio for Every Child in America That's Caught Microsoft, Uber, Dell and Zillow's Attention](#) (Cheryl Winokur Munk, CNBC, November 2023)

[Rulemaking Petition to Require Issuers to Disclose Information About Their Human Capital Management Policies, Practices And Performance](#) (Human Capital Management Coalition [letter to U.S. SEC], July 2017)

[Employers Can Do More to Advance Health Equity](#) (Shantanu Nundy, Lisa A. Cooper, and Ellen Kelsay, Harvard Business Review Magazine, January–February 2023)

[Roadmap to Mental Wellness in the Workplace](#) (Disability:IN, January 2020)

[2023 Workplace Wellness Research](#) (Mental Health America, 2023)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.3

Pay equity and pay gaps are regularly analyzed across demographic groups and concrete action is taken to address any disparities.

Requirement

Annually measure [pay equity](#) and [pay gaps \(unadjusted\)](#) among [direct workers](#) across at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age, and take concrete action to address [disparities](#).

Metrics

Pay equity: percentage difference of annual compensation between direct workers in the same [job function](#), across at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Pay gaps (unadjusted): percentage difference of median annual compensation of direct workers across [demographic groups](#).

Share Progress & Achievement

Disclosure available to the public of (i) the company’s commitment to pay equity and annual pay equity reviews, (ii) any pay gaps across demographic groups, and (iii) steps being taken to eliminate any such gaps, either on the company’s website or in an annual report (or other publicly available filing).

Annual disclosure to the Board of the results of pay equity and pay gap analyses and any steps taken or to be taken to eliminate gaps.

Avoid sharing disaggregated demographic data when group sizes are too small to ensure individual anonymity (typically N < 25).

(Disclosures related to this Target are not intended to require disclosure of any information under attorney client privilege or attorney work product protections.)

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

This Target embodies a basic principle of pay fairness: *equal pay for equal work*. It also supports a company’s bottom line by helping to increase employee trust, morale, engagement, and retention, as well as prevent pay discrimination claims.

Historically and today, pay disparities are particularly significant for women and especially women of color, [with little change in the gender pay gap in the past two decades](#). Wage disparities are most pronounced across intersecting identities. [Transgender women and women with disabilities](#) are affected by wage disparities and wage disparities are [pronounced for Black and Hispanic women](#). Multiple causes of wage disparities are at play, including structural discrimination (such as, employers’ reliance on job applicants’ salary history, pay secrecy norms, and the overrepresentation of women in low wage jobs) as well as

implicit social biases (such as negative stereotypes about working mothers). Over time, these wage gaps compound, with estimates of lifetime earnings losses for Black and Latina women alone of [up to \\$1 million or more over a 40-year career](#).

Alongside adopting equitable and inclusive talent management practices (see Standard 5), regularly conducting pay equity reviews is therefore an essential component of being a socially responsible employer.

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:

1. This Target does not call for and should not be read as recommending or requiring businesses to make compensation or other employment decisions based on any protected status or characteristic in violation of any law.
2. Many companies already conduct annual pay equity and pay gap analyses across race and/or gender. This Target supports the consideration of additional common dimensions of bias and discrimination, as well as applying an [intersectional](#) lens in such reviews.
3. Adopting Standard 5 on workforce diversity will support success here by helping to ensure recruiting, hiring, and talent management practices combat bias and discrimination and promote equal opportunities for all, regardless of demographic background.

GUIDELINES:

1. On at least an annual basis, conduct an enterprise-wide review of pay equity and unadjusted pay gaps among direct workers as follows:
 - a. Review at least across race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age (subject to data availability; see Target 2.4 on people-related data disaggregation).

- b. Apply an intersectional lens in the analysis of results.
- c. For pay equity:
 - i. Review by job function or type and each type of compensation, including base pay, commissions, bonuses, and grants of equity securities.
 - ii. Account for legitimate factors affecting pay, such as prior relevant experience and tenure with the company (and check local laws, as they may inform what constitutes legitimate factors).
 - iii. Document any pay differences based on legitimate factors.
 - iv. Promptly remedy any pay disparities (i.e., differences in pay for equal work that cannot be explained by legitimate factors) by taking concrete action consistent with the guidelines below.
- d. For pay gaps:
 - i. Review based on the median compensation each demographic group receives for each type of compensation, including base pay, commissions, bonuses, and grants of equity securities.
 - ii. Document any pay gaps across demographic groups, without adjusting for other factors.
 - iii. If there are any pay gaps, take concrete action consistent with the guidelines below.

- 2. Concrete action is required if there are any **pay equity** disparities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or any other protected status or characteristic, as follows:
 - a. Make appropriate compensation adjustments for the affected individuals as promptly as possible to ensure equal pay for equal work.
 - b. Provide training to relevant [leaders](#) on the importance of making fair pay decisions and ensuring equal opportunity across all roles and functions.
 - c. Determine any other appropriate course(s) of action based on the circumstances, which may include the following:
 - i. Auditing talent management systems and practices, including performance assessment practices (see Target 5.3).
 - ii. Establishing standardized and transparent advancement policies and practices, including requiring people managers to make promotion decisions in an equitable and inclusive manner using skills-based and consistent promotion criteria (see Target 5.3).
 - iii. Establishing an annual budget reserve to ensure funds are available to promptly address pay equity issues.
- 3. Concrete action is required if there are any **pay gaps** based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or any other protected status or characteristic. The company should determine the most appropriate course of action based on its circumstances, which may include the following:

- a. Regularly analyzing promotion and internal hire rates across demographic groups (see Target 5.5).
 - b. Implementing standardized and transparent promotion and internal hiring procedures (see Target 5.3).
 - c. Offering more development and advancement opportunities (see Target 5.3).
- 4. If the company engages a third-party firm to conduct or guide the analysis, ensure they have an aligned understanding of legitimate factors affecting pay consistent with skills-based hiring and advancement practices (see Standard 5).
- 5. Though this Target applies to direct workers, if the company has a [contingent workforce](#), it should take steps to ensure such workers are also paid equitably, which may include vetting vendors on whether they pay living wages prior to engagement or ensuring contractual terms with the vendor include a representation that it is committed to pay equity, conducts annual reviews, and remediates issues accordingly.
- 6. When sharing results or updates with the Board, share first with the committee that has oversight of talent practices, typically the compensation committee. (See Targets 1.2 and 1.3 on Board oversight.)

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- Initial enterprise-wide pay equity and pay gap analyses conducted.
- Initial plan prepared to make compensation adjustments where needed based on the outcome of pay equity analysis.
- Long-term plan prepared to maintain a budget reserve for annual pay equity reviews.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with [senior leadership](#) and the Board.
- Documentation of initial plan to make compensation adjustments.
- Documentation of long-term budget reserve plans.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[The Importance of Pay Equity](#) (Lisa Nagele-Piazza, SHRM, February 2020)

[Pay Equity: What is it and Why is it Important?](#) (ADP, accessed May 2024)

[How to Identify — and Fix — Pay Inequality at Your Company](#) (Harvard Business Review, November 2020)

[Transparency on Racial Pay Equity Increased From 15% to 24% in 2023. With Disclosure More Common Among Companies That Disclose Detailed Demographic Data](#) (Aleksandra Radeva, JUST Capital, June 2023)

[The Wage Gap: The Who, How, Why, and What to Do](#) (National Women’s Law Center [fact sheet], October 2020)

[The Enduring Grip of the Gender Pay Gap](#) (Rakesh Kochhar, Pew Research Center, March 2023)

[Closing the Gender Pay Gap](#) (Tamara Lytle, SHRM, June 2019)

[Women of Color and the Wage Gap](#) (Robin Bleiweis, Jocelyn Frye, and Rose Khattar, The Center for American Progress, November 2021)

[2024 Gender Pay Gap Report](#) (Payscale Research, 2024)

[Principle Six of the UN Global Compact: Labour](#) (Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, UN Global Compact, accessed May 2024)

[Pay Equity Analysis Is a Critical Step to Advancing Racial Equity in Corporate America](#) (Molly Stutzman, Aleksandra Radeva, and Kim Ira, JUST Capital, 2021)

[The Unadjusted Pay Gap vs. the Adjusted Pay Gap](#) (Margret Vilborg Bjarnadottir and David Anderson, PayAnalytics, November 2022)

[UMD Study: To Close Gender Pay Gap, Use Analytics](#) (Veronica Robinson, Maryland Today, April 2023)

[The National Study of Workplace Equity](#) (Samuel Bradley, Jr. and Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes, Boston College School of Social Work and SHRM, December 2022)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.4

Total compensation and rewards practices are socially responsible and promote well-being for all.

Requirement

Codify and operationalize compensation and rewards practices that are socially responsible and promote well-being for [direct workers](#) at all levels.

Metrics

Policy metric: one or more written policies integrating the practices in the guidelines.

Practice metrics: CEO-to-median worker pay ratio and percentage of direct workers participating in company ownership consistent with the guidelines, [disaggregated](#) by job type and level, and at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Share Progress & Achievement

Disclosure available to the public of the company's commitment to socially responsible pay practices and its CEO-to-median worker pay ratio, either on the company's website or in an annual report (or other publicly available filing). Update disclosure in the event

of material changes.

Annual disclosure to the Board of the CEO-to-median worker pay ratio and the percentage of direct workers whose employment terms and rewards are consistent with the guidelines, disaggregated by [job type](#) and level, and at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Avoid sharing disaggregated demographic data when group sizes are too small to ensure individual anonymity (typically N < 25).

(Disclosures related to this Target are not intended to require disclosure of any information under attorney client privilege or attorney work product protections.)

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

Alongside monitoring and closing wage gaps (Target 6.3), proactively addressing overall income gaps is a key component of combating inequality and being a socially responsible employer. Despite tremendous productivity gains during the past several decades, annual incomes for most workers [have not kept pace as they once did](#). Meaningful opportunities to build wealth and a better life have largely been concentrated in the top ranks of companies. Since 1978, the [typical workers' income has only increased 15.3% while CEO income has increased 1,209.2%](#). In short, millions of workers are not receiving the rewards of their hard labor notwithstanding generating tremendous value creation for their companies.

By adopting socially responsible compensation and rewards practices—including anchoring compensation philosophy in all workers' financial wellness, maintaining a reasonable CEO-to-median worker pay ratio, and expanding workers' ownership participation—companies can play a meaningful

role in reversing this trend. Doing so is also in the best interests of the company by promoting the well-being of the entire workforce, in turn protecting the value creation engine.

- IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:**
- 1. This Target does not call for and should not be read as recommending or requiring businesses to make compensation or other employment decisions based on any protected status or characteristic in violation of any law.
 - 2. This Target is closely related to Target 5.3 on talent management systems and practices and should be taken on in tandem.
 - 3. Many companies have existing policies on employment compensation and rewards. The guidelines below may be incorporated in one or more of such existing policies.

- GUIDELINES:**
- 1. Adopt compensation and rewards practices that are socially responsible and promote well-being by taking the concrete steps outlined below and formalizing the company's practices in a written policy.
 - 2. The policy should be formally approved by the most senior leader(s) with oversight of compensation practices (and the Board where such approval is required), as reflected by their signature(s) on the policy.
 - 3. **On compensation practices**, take at least the following concrete steps:
 - a. Adopt an enterprise-wide compensation philosophy that is based on promoting shared prosperity across the workforce and supporting the financial wellness of workers at all levels.

- b. Integrate the compensation philosophy into executive compensation plan design, including by adopting the following:
 - i. A balance between financial measures and non-financial measures;
 - ii. A balance between rewarding short term success and long term value creation;
 - iii. Measures related to being a socially responsible employer are part of baseline performance expectations, not add-ons or sweeteners;
 - iv. Objective measures for **all** performance determinations, which for non-financial measures should at least include progress on (and ultimately achieving) Targets 3.4, 4.4, 4.5, 6.1, 9.2 and 9.3; and
 - v. An explicit prohibition on any rewards or compensation increases in connection with or after broad-based layoffs, notwithstanding any short-term improvement to the company's financial position resulting from such layoffs.
- c. Maintain a reasonable CEO-to-median worker pay ratio by either of the following (*note to reviewers: this guideline, in particular, is undergoing further research and testing*):
 - i. Ensuring the ratio of **total compensation** of the CEO (or highest paid executive) relative to the median worker does not exceed 30-to-1 (this is based on the [United Nations Research Institute for Social Development's \(UNRISD\) Sustainable Development Performance Indicator II.B.3](#), but note

UNRISD measures the ratio based on median pay of the *lowest-paid quartile of employees*); or

- ii. Ensuring the CEO-to-median worker pay ratio (measured as noted above) is no greater than the industry average **and** the total compensation of the lowest paid employee(s) is sufficient for their [financial health and wellness](#) (excluding overtime), including allowing for short and long term savings, investing in retirement, ready resources for unexpected events, and the ability to build wealth.
4. **On rewards practices**, take at least the following concrete steps:
- a. Establish one or more concrete ways of incentivizing all direct workers toward the company's long-term success, including supporting the company's efforts to be a socially responsible employer.
 - b. Provide direct workers at all levels the opportunity to become an owner of the company through any of the following means:
 - i. An employee stock ownership plan;
 - ii. An employee stock purchase plan or other stock-based employee benefit program;
 - iii. A profit-sharing plan, such as through a perpetual purpose trust or employee ownership trust; or
 - iv. Becoming a worker cooperative.
 - c. Ensure such ownership participation is meaningful, fair, and structured in a manner all

direct workers can afford, including by taking the following steps:

- i. Making it free for direct workers earning less than \$100,000 annually and ensuring it is affordable for all other workers (e.g., offering cashless exercise on stock options or offering restricted stock units instead of options);
 - ii. Providing the potential to earn at least half of one's annual earnings in ownership value;
 - iii. Not limiting it to stock options alone, if the company also offers other types of equity securities (e.g., restricted stock, stock appreciation rights, and phantom stock); and
 - iv. Setting a meaningful time-based goal of greater worker ownership, such as becoming [30% worker owned](#).
- d. If the company is a [\[Certified Employee-Owned\]](#) company, it automatically meets Guidelines 4b and 4c above.
5. Annually assess the success of the company's efforts, including soliciting the feedback from workers on compensation and rewards practices and take concrete action where appropriate.

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted of compensation and rewards practices.
- New or updated compensation and rewards policy drafted and presented to applicable [senior leader\(s\)](#) for approval (as well as Board approval where required).
- Education and training on new policy for all hiring managers and team members involved in talent management.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with [senior leadership](#).
- Final draft of new or updated compensation and rewards policy.
- Communication and training materials for hiring managers and talent management team members.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[Rising Inequality: A Major Issue of Our Time](#) (Zia Qureshi, The Brookings Institution, May 2023)

[Statement on Good Jobs](#) (Good Jobs Champions Group, an initiative of the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and the Families and Workers Fund, accessed May 2024)

[Quality Jobs Framework](#) (Jobs for the Future, 2023)

[The People Factor: How Investing in Employees Pays Off](#) (Christopher Bruno, et al., CPP Investments Insights Institute, FCLTGlobal, The Wharton School University of Pennsylvania, accessed May 2024)

[Does Your Company Offer Fruitful Careers — Or Dead-End Jobs?](#) (Ethan Rouen and Marcela Escobari, Harvard Business Review, March 2022)

[Capitalism for the Long Term](#) (Dominic Barton, Harvard Business Review Magazine, March 2011)

[Trends in Income From 1975 to 2018](#) (Carter C. Price and Kathryn A. Edwards, RAND Corporation, 2020)

[The Payoffs of Higher Pay: Elasticities of Productivity and Labor Supply With Respect To Wages](#) (Natalia Emanuel and Emma Harrington, Harvard University, October 2020)

[Authentic Sustainability Assessment: A User Manual for the Sustainable Development Performance Indicators](#) (Ilcheong Yi, et al., United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2022)

[Modern Principles for Sensible and Effective Executive Pay](#) (Business & Society Program, The Aspen Institute and Korn Ferry, accessed May 2024)

[Wage Gap Between CEOs and U.S. Workers Jumped to 670-to-1 Last Year. Study Finds](#) (Dominic Rushe, The Guardian, June 2022)

[CEO Pay Slightly Declined in 2022 But it Has Soared 1,209.2% Since 1978 Compared With a 15.3% Rise in Typical Workers’ Pay](#) (Josh Bivens and Jori Kandra, Economic Policy Institute, September 2023)

[CEO Pay](#) (As You Sow, 2024)

[How Much \(More\) Should CEOs Make? A Universal Desire for More Equal Pay](#) (Sorapop Kiatpongsan and Michael I. Norton, Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2014)

[Executive Compensation: An Analysis Identifies ESG Leaders and Laggards](#) (Brian Bueno, Farient Advisors, January 2023)

[ESG Performance Metrics in Executive Pay](#) (Matteo Tonello, Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, March 2024)

[Do Corporate Social Performance Targets in Executive Compensation Contribute to Corporate Social Performance?](#) (Karen Mass, Journal of Business Ethics, January 2016)

[The High Cost of Neglecting Low-Wage Workers](#) (Joseph Fuller and Manjari Raman, Harvard Business Review Magazine, May–June 2023)

[The Financial Health of People With Disabilities](#) (Andrew Warren, et al., Financial Health Network, National Disability Institute, The Harkin Institute, August 2023)

[Shedding Light on Native American Households’ Financial Stress](#) (Ava LaPlante and Vanessa Palmer, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, March 2024)

[Pessimism and Hope: A Survey of the Financial Status and Aspirations of Black Americans](#) (Jessica Fulton, et al., Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, May 2023)

[Employee Ownership and Economic Well-Being](#) (National Center for Employee Ownership, May 2017)

[Employee Ownership and Wealth Inequality: A Path to Reducing Wealth Concentration](#) (Thomas Dudley and Ethan Rouen, Harvard Business School, September 2021)

[Building Quality Jobs Through Ownership](#) (Areen Jalajel, Gallup, November 2023)

[Employee Ownership by the Numbers](#) (National Center for Employee Ownership, February 2024)

[Key Studies on Employee Ownership and Corporate Performance](#) (National Center for Employee Ownership, February 2022)

[The Big Benefits of Employee Ownership](#) (Thomas Dudley and Ethan Rouen, Harvard Business Review Magazine, May 2021)

[Three Inspiring Examples of Employee-Owners Building Life-Changing Wealth](#) (Thomas Dudley, Certified EO, accessed May 2024)

[Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing Website with Key Studies](#) (Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Management and Labor Relations, accessed May 2024)

[Job Quality of Employee Share Owners in the United States: January 1st 2024 Shares Lab Quarterly Report](#) (Michael Palmieri, et al., Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, January 2024)

[Turning Employees Into Owners Rebuilding the American Dream](#) (Michael Quarrey, et al., Ownership America, 2021)

[The Shares Laboratory: Quarterly Reports](#) (Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Management and Labor Relations, 2024)

[Alternative Ownership Enterprises Learning Hub](#) (Transform Finance, 2024)

[How We Help: We See a Better Future for Employees and Companies](#) (Ownership Works, 2024)

[Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2022](#) (Consumer and Community Research Section, Division of Consumer and Community Affairs, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, May 2023)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.5

Other key employment terms and conditions are fair and respectful of workers at all levels.

Requirement

Codify and operationalize key employment terms and conditions that are fair and respectful of workers at all levels.

Metrics

Policy metric: one or more written policies integrating the practices in the guidelines.

Practice metric: percentage of [direct workers](#) whose employment terms are consistent with the guidelines, [disaggregated](#) by [job type](#) and level, and at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Share Progress & Achievement

Annual disclosure to the Board of the percentage of direct workers whose employment terms are consistent with the guidelines, disaggregated by job type and level, and at least race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

Avoid sharing disaggregated demographic data when group sizes are too small to ensure individual anonymity (typically N < 25).

(Disclosures related to this Target are not intended to require disclosure of any information under attorney client privilege or attorney work product protections.)

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

A quality job is one that allows workers at all levels to earn a decent living and provide for their families, keeps workers safe from physical and emotional harm, provides the predictability and flexibility they need to be successful, and respects workers’ dignity and job mobility. This means ensuring that the terms and conditions of employment are fair and respectful of workers at all levels—from investing in a safe workplace to adopting predictable scheduling for shift-based workers, establishing trust in the tools used to monitor workers, and ensuring boilerplate offer letters and employment agreements are tailored to business needs and do not overreach.

Each of the practices noted in the Guidelines addresses common business practices that can hamper the well-being of workers, especially frontline workers. Though this Target may present a number of new practices for many companies, these practices collectively offer a powerful opportunity to strengthen job quality and respect the dignity of workers at all levels.

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:

- 1. This Target does not call for and should not be read as recommending or requiring businesses to make any employment decisions based on any protected status or characteristic in violation of any law.

- 2. This Target is closely related to Target 5.3 on talent management systems and practices and should be taken on in tandem.
- 3. The guidelines below may be incorporated into one or more existing policies.
- 4. A sample policy with standard employment terms consistent with the guidelines below will be included with this Target upon the launch of the final Standards.

GUIDELINES:

- 1. Adopt standard employment terms and enforce working conditions that are fair and respectful of workers at all levels by taking the concrete steps outlined below and formalizing the company’s practices in a written policy.
- 2. The policy should be formally approved by the most senior leader(s) with oversight of employment terms, as reflected by their signature(s) on the policy.
- 3. **On the conditions of work**, take at least the following concrete steps:
 - a. **Conduct annual reviews of worker classifications and, to the extent feasible, operationalize a bias toward full-time roles**, which may include taking the following actions:
 - i. Annually validate that any part-time roles or contract roles are classified as such due to a one-time need, or a lack of sufficient hours, or the worker’s specific request (unsolicited by the company).
 - ii. Offering more full-time work than part-time or contract work, if the company has a frontline workforce.

- b. **Establish a safe and healthy work environment**, including by taking the following actions for any roles that involve physical labor, exposure to difficult content, or work in other risky or dangerous environments:

- i. Adopt multiple annual safety goals based on [leading indicators of safety and health](#), such as conducting monthly safety refresher trainings for all relevant workers and setting a 97% attendance goal for each training.
- ii. Annually solicit input from workers on ways to continually improve the safety of working conditions.
- iii. Ensure the annual total recordable incident rate (also known as total case incident rate) is no greater than the industry average, though the company should always strive for a rate of zero.

- c. **Establish predictable scheduling for all workers**, including by taking the following actions for shift-based workers:

- i. Provide at least two weeks' advance notice on schedules.
- ii. Provide opportunities for input on schedules.
- iii. Pay a bonus or higher compensation for last-minute shift changes.
- iv. Offer extra hours to existing workers before hiring more part-time workers.
- v. Ensure workers have meaningful rest between shifts (e.g., 10 hours or more)

or receive higher compensation for voluntarily taking back-to-back shifts with limited rest (e.g., "[clopening](#)" shifts).

- d. **Establish trust and transparency in the use of any productivity, monitoring, and surveillance tools**, including by taking the following actions:

- i. Widely communicate the necessity and purpose of such tools to all workers.
- ii. Obtain input from workers at all relevant levels in the scope and implementation of such tools to ensure they feel the tools are fair and have appropriate guardrails for their privacy and safety.
- iii. Obtain workers' informed prior consent (e.g., new hires) in a manner that gives them the ability to fully consider the implications (e.g., details should not be buried in fine print).
- iv. Ensure workers have access to the data that is collected about them.
- v. Avoid sharing or monetizing any data obtained from such tools (e.g., selling to third parties).

- e. **Preserve human and humane employment decision-making**, including by taking the following actions:

- i. Assess any automated or AI-enabled tools used to manage workers or the workplace to confirm there is no bias or disparate impact based on any protected characteristics.

- ii. Widely communicate the necessity and purpose of such tools to all workers.
- iii. Ensure a seasoned HR leader or other relevant leader provides final review of any employment related decision-making powered by such tools. See Target 5.3 on avoiding such tools entirely for employment termination decisions.

4. **On contractual employment terms**, take at least the following concrete steps:

- a. **At least every other year, conduct a review of standard employment terms** (e.g., offer letter and/or employment agreement templates) to ensure any restrictions during and after employment are fair and based on valid business needs.

- b. **Avoid employment terms that prevent or create barriers to job mobility**, including avoiding:

- i. Non-compete agreements for non-exempt workers and workers earning less than \$200,000 annually.
- ii. [Stay-or-pay clauses](#), such as requiring repayment of the cost of on-the-job training in the event a worker departs before a stipulated period.

- c. **Limit mandatory arbitration terms (if used)**, as follows:

- i. Ensure the benefits and burdens are mutual (e.g., both parties have the right to attorneys' fees and the right to sue as an alternative).

- ii. Exclude employment discrimination claims from mandatory arbitration (including but not limited to sexual harassment and sexual assault).
 - iii. Avoid including any class action waivers.
 - iv. Avoid confidentiality terms that limit workers’ ability to exercise their rights, including taking collective action without fear.
 - d. **Limit the scope of confidentiality obligations in settlements related to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other discrimination claims (if any arise)**, by not imposing confidentiality obligations over the underlying facts and circumstances of the claim(s) in settlement agreements.
5. Operationalize the contractual terms for direct workers as follows:
- a. For existing workers, via a standard offer letter amendment or other similarly formal means applicable to direct workers at all levels.
 - b. For new hires, via updated offer letter templates for all levels and job types with clear protocols established to ensure there are no deviations from the standard terms.
 - c. For settlement agreements, via updated templates with notations on when to include the confidentiality carveout.
6. Though this Target applies to direct workers, if the company has a [contingent workforce](#) and any of the terms above are within its control for such workers, it should also ensure such terms extend to such workers, though it may do so via alternative means if

there are legal impediments to addressing contingent worker practices in the same policies as direct workers.

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted of standard employment terms and conditions.
- New or updated standard employment terms policy drafted and presented to applicable [senior leader\(s\)](#) for approval.
- Education and training on new policy for all hiring managers and team members involved in talent management.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with senior leadership.
- Final draft of new or updated standard employment terms policy.
- Communication and training materials for hiring managers and talent management team members.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[Statement on Good Jobs](#) (Good Jobs Champions Group, an initiative of the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and the Families and Workers Fund, accessed May 2024)

[Quality Jobs Framework](#) (Jobs for the Future, 2023)

[Does Your Company Offer Fruitful Careers — Or Dead-End Jobs?](#) (Ethan Rouen and Marcela Escobari, Harvard Business Review, March 2022)

[Using Leading Indicators to Improve Safety and Health Outcomes](#) (Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, June 2019)

[Environmental, Health, and Safety Research and White Papers](#) (The Campbell Institute, National Safety Council, accessed May 2024)

[A Systems Approach to Worker Health and Wellbeing](#) (Joy Inouye and John Dony, The Campbell Institute, National Safety Council, 2017)

[Strengthening Accountability for Discrimination: Confronting Fundamental Power Imbalances in the Employment Relationship](#) (Jenny R. Yang and Jane Liu, Economic Policy Institute, January 2021)

[Can't Catch a Break: Intersectional Inequalities at Work](#) (Kristen Harknett, Charlotte O’Herron, and Evelyn Bellew, Sociological Science, March 2024)

[The Movement to Make Workers’ Schedules More Humane](#) (Stephanie Wykstra, Vox Media, November 2019)

[‘Fair Workweek’ Laws Help More Than 1.8 Million Workers](#) (Julia Wolfe, Janelle Jones, and David Cooper, Economic Policy Institute, July 2018)

[Shining a Light on Tech's Shadow Workforce](#) (Contract Worker Disparity Project, TechEquity Collaborative, January 2022)

[Responsible Contracting Standard: Tech Companies Closing the Gap in Contract Work](#) (Contract Worker Disparity Project, TechEquity Collaborative, January 2022)

[Location-based Platform Work Principles](#) (Fairwork, September 2022)

[Fairwork AI Principles](#) (Fairwork, July 2023)

[Electronically Monitoring Your Employees? It's Impacting Their Mental Health](#) (Michele Lerner, American Psychological Association, September 2023)

[How Worker Surveillance is Backfiring On Employers](#) (Kate Morgan and Delaney Nolan, BBC, January 2023)

[The Long Shadow of Workplace Surveillance](#) (Wilneida Negrón and Aiha Nguyen, Stanford Social Innovation Review, September 2023)

[Socioeconomic and Job Status Differences in the Experience of Perceived Unacceptable Electronic Performance Monitoring](#) (Bradley D. Pitcher, et al., Technology, Mind, and Behavior, Autumn 2022)

[Internet Surveillance in the Workplace: 43% Report Having Their Online Activity Monitored in 2024](#) (Katherine Haan, Forbes Advisor, March 2024)

[The Growing Use of Mandatory Arbitration: Access to the Courts is Now Barred for More Than 60 Million American Workers](#) (Alexander J.S. Colvin, Economic Policy Institute, April 2018)

[How to End the Silence Around Sexual-Harassment Settlements](#) (Stephanie Russell-Kraft, The Nation, January 2018)

[New Data on Non-Compete Contracts and What They Mean for Workers](#) (Tyler Boesch, et al., Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, June 2023)

[Pay Thousands to Quit Your Job? Some Employers Say So.](#) (Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein, The New York Times, November 2023)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.6

Worker expertise informs Board oversight.

Requirement

Annually facilitate two or more meaningful connections between **direct workers** and Board directors to inform oversight and decision-making related to job quality and worker experience.

Metric

At least two annual connections between direct workers and Board directors consistent with the guidelines.

Share Progress & Achievement

Annual disclosure to the workforce of ways to get involved in worker-Board connections, key insights gained, and any concrete actions taken to improve job quality and worker experience.

At least annual disclosure to the Board on outcomes of worker-Board connections and status of any concrete actions being considered or already taken to improve job quality and worker experience.

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

When a company [seeks out and acts on feedback from its workers](#), it demonstrates trust in the workforce. Demonstrating trust in turn fosters [greater loyalty, commitment, and engagement](#) from workers. Increased trust also [radiates outward to influence perception, reputation, decision-making, and trust across other stakeholders](#), including investors, customers, communities, and the general public. Nevertheless, just [30% of U.S. employees](#) strongly agree that their voices count at work. At the same time, survey data shows that many Board directors “[lack a depth of visibility into the employee experience](#).” Other survey data also shows that while many directors feel informed about talent issues, [they want to have deeper discussions around talent](#).

With talent issues more prominent on Board agendas today, [ensuring insights from the workforce inform Board oversight is critical](#). Accordingly, this Target aims to supplement the indirect ways Boards are informed of talent matters by establishing direct channels to the workforce. Elevating worker voice to the Board level is also a powerful and efficient way to meet the needs of both the Board and the workforce. Doing so as a regular practice will deepen the Board’s understanding of job quality and workforce experience and promote more informed oversight and decision-making.

Though this Target may present a new practice for many companies, it is a powerful opportunity to strengthen job quality and corporate governance together.

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:

1. This Target complements ongoing Board education (see Target 3.1) and any existing workforce expertise among the Board (see Target 5.7) with direct connection to and a deeper understanding of the

- perspectives and experience of direct workers.
2. If the company is new to this practice, take time to learn from peers and other experts on how to effectively institutionalize this practice and be open to trying different approaches over time. See the Resources for a starting list.

GUIDELINES:

1. **Establish, document, and clearly communicate the parameters of the program**, including by taking the following actions:
 - a. Inviting ERGs, DEI Councils, or other existing worker advisory groups to collaborate on designing approaches that would be most meaningful to workers.
 - b. Co-creating the parameters, mutual expectations, and goals of the program with the workers that will be involved well in advance.
 - c. Senior leaders should encourage participation and workers to be candid without fear of any retaliation.
2. **Participation of Board directors:**
 - a. More than one director should be engaged in this practice on an annual basis.
 - b. Engagement can occur among all directors, at the committee level, or through any other subset of directors.
3. **Participation of direct workers:**
 - a. Participation should be voluntary and take place during paid time.
 - b. Invite direct workers from different levels of the company to participate, especially [non-managerial workers](#) (including frontline

workers, if applicable). Senior leaders, however, should not participate.

- c. Provide orientation about the role of the Board of Directors and the purpose of making worker-Board connections.
- d. Monitor participation rates across levels and demographic groups and invest in more outreach as needed to ensure non-managerial workers are included.

4. **Connection Approaches:** Annually facilitate two or more worker-Board connections from any of the three types of connections below (informal gatherings, a dedicated worker advisory body, or worker attendance at Board meetings). A few examples are provided for each type of connection. Design the approach(es) best suited to the company’s context.

a. **Informal gatherings for two-way dialogue**, such as:

- i. Organizing small-group gatherings;
- ii. Inviting directors to departmental meetings or all-staff town halls with open Q&A;
- iii. Establishing quarterly virtual “meet and greets” for directors to get to know different teams; or
- iv. Establishing focus groups to meet with directors on specific topics.

b. **Dedicated worker advisory body**, such as:

- i. ERGs, DEI Councils, or other existing worker advisory groups meeting with a designated group of directors annually; or
- ii. Establishing a dedicated worker advisory

council composed of workers from multiple levels (including non-managerial and frontline workers, as applicable) to share their perspectives on matters related to job quality and worker experience at a Board or standing committee meeting.

c. **Invite workers to Board meetings**, such as:

- i. Inviting one or more groups of workers to join portions of Board meetings to provide their input or perspective on talent practices under review; or
- ii. Inviting the union (if applicable) to present to the Board on an annual basis.

5. **Sharing key takeaways:**

- a. Directors participating in this experience should share the insights they gain with the full Board.
 - b. Senior leaders should in turn share key takeaways with the workforce—such as in leadership team meetings, town halls, and departmental meetings—as well as any concrete actions being considered or already taken to improve job quality and worker experience. (And, if any feedback from workers is not acted on, provide a clear explanation why not).
 - c. As appropriate (and desired by participants), provide recognition to the workers who participate in this leadership opportunity.
6. Continually improve the execution of this practice by obtaining feedback from participating workers and directors.

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted on worker-Board engagement practices.
- Initial planning conducted on formal and informal modes of connecting direct workers and Board members.
- Key takeaways gained from worker-Board connection(s) documented and shared with the full Board and workforce as appropriate.
- One or more actions taken to improve job quality and worker experience based on insights gained.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with [senior leadership](#) and the Board.
- Documentation of initial planning for worker-Board connections.
- Record of insights gained shared with the full Board and workforce.
- Number of actions taken annually based on insights gained from worker-Board connection(s).

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[Engaging Frontline Employee Voice](#) (Talia Alongi, et al., Talent Rewire, accessed May 2024)

[The Board’s Oversight of Employee Voice](#) (Holly Fetter and Benjamin Colton, Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, April 2023)

[Time to Rethink Talent in the Boardroom](#) (Jo Iwasaki, Karen Edelman, and Yasmine Chahed, Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, March 2024)

[What We Mean By “Worker Voice”](#) (National Fund for Workforce Solutions, accessed May 2024)

[Job Design Framework](#) (National Fund for Workforce Solutions, accessed May 2024)

[Worker Voice and the New Corporate Boardroom](#) (Business & Society Program, The Aspen Institute, August 2021)

[Guidance Note: Board Duties in Ensuring Company Engagement with Affected Stakeholders](#) (The Global Future Council on Human Rights, World Economic Forum, May 2022)

[Worker Voice in America: Is There a Gap between What Workers Expect and What They Experience?](#) (Thomas A. Kochan, et al., ILR Review, 2019)

[Planning for a New Reality: Agenda for the Prepared Board](#) (Business & Society Program, The Aspen Institute, November 2023)

[Listen to Lead: Raise Retention and Boost Business](#) (Ford Foundation and Provoc, 2023)

[What Will It Take to Close the Executive-Worker Voice Gap?](#) (Business & Society Program, The Aspen Institute, 2021)

[The Labor-Savvy Leader](#) (Roy E. Bahat, Thomas A. Kochan, and Liba Wenig Rubenstein, Harvard Business Review Magazine, July–August 2023)

[Dear CEO: Here’s Why You Should Trust Your Employees](#) (Cydney Roach, Edelman, September 2022)

[Worker Voices: Shifting Perspectives and Expectations on Employment](#) (Sarah Miller, et al., Fed Communities, a collaboration among the Board of Governors and the 12 Reserve Banks of the U.S. Federal Reserve System, May 2023)

[Lead From the Top: Building Sustainability Competence On Corporate Boards](#) (Venna Ramani, Ceres, 2017)

PERFORMANCE TARGET 6.7

The rights of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining are respected.

Requirement

In any worker collective organizing, the company respects the rights of [direct workers](#) to freedom of association and collective bargaining by taking concrete action consistent with the guidelines.

Metrics

Policy metric: one policy on respecting the rights of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining consistent with the guidelines.

Practice metric: number of concrete actions taken consistent with the guidelines.

Share Progress & Achievement

Disclosure available to the public of the company’s commitment to respecting the rights of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining and the concrete actions taken to demonstrate that, either on the company’s website or in an annual report (or other publicly available filing).

Rationale, Tips, and Guidelines

RATIONALE:

Workers, customers, investors, and the public consider the treatment of workers [among the most important social issues for companies to prioritize](#). Supporting and being responsive to the [voice of workers](#) in the workplace is a vital part of this equation. This includes respecting the rights of workers to free association and collective bargaining.

While many companies may fear workers organizing and assume it is bad for business, research shows that organized labor historically [reduces inequality \(including racial and gender inequality\)](#), [increases productivity and retention](#), and [supports the well-being of workers, communities, and even our democracy](#). Public support for unions today is also [as high as it has ever been](#), with union support particularly high among young people ([88% of those under the age of 30](#)).

Regardless of where a company stands on organized labor, reflexively fighting any worker collective organizing can backfire and is a missed opportunity to listen and transform the workplace for the better. Being a [labor-savvy company](#) instead—including being ready to work collaboratively with organized labor—is key to business success, especially with the marked increase in union activity today. It is also consistent with international human rights norms, including [Principle 3 of the UN Global Compact](#), which states: “Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.”

Accordingly, this Target supports companies in walking the talk with a more productive playbook in the event of any worker collective organizing. For companies that want to be seen as equitable, inclusive, and socially responsible employers, getting this right is critical to maintaining trust and respecting workers’ basic human rights.

IMPLEMENTATION TIPS:

- 1. This Target does not require passively accepting any worker collective organizing, rather it aims to activate a more productive and collaborative stance in engaging with workers who may attempt to, or actually, organize.
- 2. This Target applies to all forms of good faith collective organizing carried out by direct workers, including strikes, protests, and formal organized labor efforts from unions to worker cooperatives, and mutual aid groups.
- 3. If any [leaders](#) exhibit aversion to this Target, share the Resources to help build greater understanding and take more time to build buy-in.

GUIDELINES:

- 1. Adopt a formal written policy stating the company respects the rights of direct workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining and that it will take proactive steps to demonstrate such respect consistent with the guidelines below.
- 2. The policy should be formally approved by the most senior leader(s) with oversight of workforce treatment and wellbeing, as reflected by their signature(s) on the policy.
- 3. In the event of any worker collective organizing, the company proactively demonstrates its respect for the rights of direct workers as follows:
 - a. Take at least one of the following concrete steps:
 - i. Publicly adopt a stance of neutrality.
 - ii. Publicly adopt a stance of support.
 - iii. Sign a neutrality agreement.

- iv. Provide support that may be requested by the organizing workers, such as funding for independent third-party “know your rights” training.
- v. Provide worker representatives the space to carry out their work and allow other related activities to take place on business premises without interference.
- b. Refrain from engaging in any practices that are considered union-busting, including refraining from the following:
 - i. Firing organizers.
 - ii. Engaging in delay tactics.
 - iii. Flooding workers with anti-union communications.
 - iv. Directing any workers, such as mid-level managers, to discourage other workers from participating or joining in the action.
 - v. Questioning workers about whether they support the collective organizing.
 - vi. Making any suggestion to workers that advancement opportunities could be impacted if they support the action.

Example Interim Targets

Note: these examples are not intended to be exhaustive. At launch, guidance on setting interim targets will be available.

- [Gap analysis](#) conducted of current policies and practices.
- New or updated policy drafted and presented to applicable [senior leader\(s\)](#) for approval.
- One or more concrete actions are taken consistent with the guidelines.

Example Interim Metrics

Note: some metrics may apply to more than one Example Interim Target; not necessarily one-to-one alignment.

- Record of gap analysis results shared with senior leadership.
- Final draft of new or updated policy.
- Number of concrete actions taken consistent with the guidelines.

Relevance to Other Frameworks

Coming with the launch of the final standards: mapping to other standards and frameworks that address similar issues.

Resources

[What We Mean By “Worker Voice”](#) (National Fund for Workforce Solutions, accessed May 2024)

[The Labor-Savvy Leader](#) (Roy E. Bahat, Thomas A. Kochan, and Liba Wenig Rubenstein, Harvard Business Review Magazine, July–August 2023)

[Unions and Inequality Over the Twentieth Century: New Evidence from Survey Data](#) (Henry S. Farber, et al., National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series, May 2018, revised April 2021)

[Labor Unions and the U.S. Economy](#) (Laura Feiveson, U.S. Department of the Treasury, August 2023)

[Harnessing Union Power for Business Success](#) (Tamara Lytle, SHRM, November 2022)

[How Businesses Should \(and Shouldn’t\) Respond to Union Organizing](#) (Roy E. Bahat and Thomas A. Kochan, Harvard Business Review, January 2023)

[Unionbusters 101](#) (Erin Johansson, Jobs With Justice, accessed May 2024)

[The Shared Power Advantage: How to Build a Thriving Company Where Workers Have a Seat at the Table](#) (Michelle Peng, Cari Romm Nazeer, and Liba Wenig Rubenstein, Charter and Aspen Institute, March 2024)

[Microsoft Pledges Neutrality in Union Campaigns at Activision](#) (Noam Scheiber and Karen Weise, The New York Times, June 2022)

[Microsoft Agrees to Remain Neutral in Union Campaigns](#) (Noam Scheiber, The New York Times, December 2023)

[VW and Its Workers Explore a Union at a Tennessee Plant](#) (Steven Greenhouse, The New York Times, September 2013)

[Principle Three of the UN Global Compact: Labour](#) (Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, UN Global Compact, accessed May 2024)

[U.S. Approval of Labor Unions at Highest Point Since 1965](#) (Justin McCarthy, Gallup, August 2022)

[Two-Thirds of Americans Support Unions: Poll](#) (Taylor Giorno, The Hill, August 2023)

[Clean Slate for Worker Power: Building a Just Economy and Democracy](#) (Sharon Block and Benjamin Sachs, Harvard Law School Center for Labor and a Just Economy, 2020)

[Unions Are Not Only Good For Workers, They're Good For Communities and For Democracy](#) (Asha Banerjee, et al., Economic Policy Institute, December 2021)

[Aspen Business Roundtable on Organized Labor](#) (Aspen Institute, accessed May 2024)

[People of Color Will Be a Majority of the American Working Class in 2032: What This Means for the Effort to Grow Wages and Reduce Inequality](#) (Valerie Wilson, Economic Policy Institute, June 2016)

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