TOP GUIDELINES FOR SUPPLIERS' PROTECTION OF WORKERS DURING COVID-19

As an important supplier, this guide is designed to help you move into a lasting recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic. A strong response program that supports workers and staff can help boost productivity and morale while making everyone feel more comfortable in the workplace. Developing and implementing a flexible system will improve your resiliency as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve. The guidelines below may be updated as the pandemic evolves. *The* Dell Supplier Principles *and all local laws and regulations must be followed*.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Enhancing Health and Safety Practices

- **Provide PPE free-of-charge and encourage good hygiene.** Support workers to consistently and continuously wear face coverings or masks, wash hands with soap or sanitizer, and provide resources to maintain working PPE. Consider providing opportunities throughout the day to uphold these precautions, including handwashing breaks and times to check that PPE is in working order.

- **Enact Social Distancing precautions.** The use of tape, markers, or stickers can help guide people to maintain a distance of a minimum of 1 meter, 2 meters if possible. Consider reconfiguring workspaces, canteens, changing rooms, transportation. Stagger shifts and meal breaks. Consider locations that may get crowded such as entrance ways, lobbies, meeting and break rooms, stairwells, elevators and lifts. Maintain a suitable balance between enacting social distancing and limiting movements; for example, do not limit the ability to use the washroom.

- **Maintain living spaces and housing (dorms and hostels).** This can be difficult, but it is important. Increase the frequency of cleaning, remind workers of good practices, and visit workers to see how they are doing. Do not restrict rights or quarantine workers unless required by local law or when workers are sick. Workers unable to work due to sickness or other required restrictions must be excused from going to work. Consider partnerships with peers, local government, hotels, and businesses to increase housing capacity to allow distancing.

- **Develop, communicate, and rapidly implement an identification, isolation, contact history, and treatment plan should the virus be suspected.** Rapid action and open communication to workers will help alleviate fears. Including workers in reinforcing this supportive system can allow everyone to be proactive in preventing the spread of the virus at work. Ensure records maintain the privacy and security of all workers and follow privacy laws. Records shall not be used to discriminate against workers, nor used for any other purpose other than containing and preventing illness.

Enhancing Workforce and Human Resources Practices

- **All local law and regulations, contracts, the RBA Code of Conduct, and other agreements must be followed.** Be careful to avoid favoring one group of workers over another, regardless of the reason. Any adjustment to base pay or overtime pay and/or allowances and benefits must be legal and conforming to any Collective Bargaining Agreement, union, or other agreement.

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- **Pay special attention to migrant workers, contingent workforce, contractors, and dispatch workers** who may have less access to information and mechanisms to protect themselves. Ensuring that all enhanced health, safety, and human resource measures account for these workers will support them to peacefully coexist with all other workers. This will make them feel valued, included, and not marginalized. Consider translation, interpretive services, and additional support roles. Long-time workers in these groups can be leaders that can help you communicate and provide worker feedback!

- **Maintain ethical recruitment standards with agencies and temporary workers.** *It is never ethical to exploit vulnerable or desperate job seekers. This is a time of high risk for forced and child labor due to losses of jobs and opportunities.* Uphold policies for avoiding the risk of forced labor and child labor, including enacting [no recruitment fees](). Communicate recruitment standards transparently to all agents and your hiring staff. Communicate job requirements clearly and transparently to all new job seekers. Avoid discrimination for social or medical reasons which would not impact a candidate's ability to do the job. Support workforce productivity by giving all workers a positive start!

- **Communicate clearly, consistently, and frequently to all workers and supervising staff.** Providing accurate scientific information from legitimate sources can support workers' knowledge to protect themselves, their coworkers, families, and communities. Discourage the spread of disinformation and rumors that can promote discrimination. Good communication can alleviate anxiety, reduce fear, help manage stresses at home and at work, and help workers feel valued.

- **Assure workers that overtime is voluntary.** Workers who feel they have a choice tend to be more productive. Consider limiting overtime to reduce stress on themselves and their families.

- **If workforce reductions are required, follow all applicable laws, contract terms, and agreements.** Ensure workers receive their final paycheck, including overtime and other benefits. For foreign or domestic migrant workers, transportation costs are to be paid by the employer or agent. If workers are owed repayment for past recruiting fees, these must be paid upon contract termination.

- **Support workers who are sick and/or quarantined.** Clearly communicate and uphold sick leave, personal days, and unpaid leave options. Consider special incremental flexibility.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Treating Workers Fairly in Reduced Workload, Pay, and Benefit Situations

- **Reinforce a workplace culture that supports workers' wellbeing.** Workers can experience anxiety at work and at home. Providing resources and counselling assistance; even remotely or by video, can help support worker recovery and resilience to cope with stresses at work and at home. Stress and anxiety can lead to unconscious bias, discrimination, or harassment for social or medical reasons. Foster a workplace that reinforces mutual respect for all workers.

- **Consider adjusting leave and wage benefits to support workers to make choices that will help protect themselves, their coworkers, and families.** This can include implementing a robust sick leave policy and/or supporting wages and benefits to workers quarantined or affected by COVID-19 within their families and communities. Support workers in accessing social insurance schemes provided by local or national governments. Help to limit the financial impact on workers. They are more likely to stay home when sick, reducing impact to others and the business.

- **If possible, maintain job security for all workers.** If a reduction in workforce is being considered, explore options such as a furlough in which workers are still employed and receive some or all benefits except wages. Rehiring and retraining have costs that can delay return to production levels.

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- **If possible, resist terminating employment of workers who have chosen to stay away from work.** Make a reasonable attempt to understand why workers have not come to work; address valid concerns regarding workplace conditions. Remind workers of their paid time off and unpaid leave options. If a worker is caring for family, consider temporary accommodations or flexibility in work hours.

- **If possible, minimize financial impacts to workers if you told some or all workers to stay home.** If possible, pay at least minimum salary. Ask if workers wish to work fewer hours, then reduce overall hours slightly for all workers rather than reducing all hours from a subset of workers.

- **Be careful when considering pay reductions.** Be careful not to discriminate by favoring one group of workers over another. Consider making pay reductions temporary and whether the difference can be repaid later.

- **Monitor worker well-being when changes are made to wages, benefits, and workload, as these changes could affect or reduce production capacity.** Avoid increasing workloads or line speeds without added staff, automation, or other efficiencies.

Making Comprehensive Adjustments to Workplace Systems

- **Proactively conduct outreach to workers to get feedback and safety concerns.** Talk to your health & safety committees, worker representatives, and workers about removing or reducing risks. Include workers when developing solutions and making adjustments rather than predicting their reactions. Maintain channels for all workers to raise concerns and questions anonymously. Consider asking workers if they feel safe and informed, and encourage any other questions that solicit workers' opinions. When workers are heard and involved, they feel more accountable.

- **Maintain recordkeeping of new health & safety risks and implementation of new procedures.** Record and monitor PPE inventory and use, visitor logs, enhanced cleaning, and who has been quarantined. Ensure these records maintain the privacy and security of workers and do not contribute towards discrimination against workers. Build a file of your best practices to share and remind your supervisors of the good work being done. Share this with your customers and partners if you can – they are likely to be interested in learning of your good work.
- **Maintain a resilient management system by reviewing and adapting as you learn what works and what doesn't.** Continuous improvement and adjustments will help protect your workforce and enable business continuity as the pandemic and regulations evolve.

Together, we can build a more resilient supply chain while protecting and elevating workers.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
- RBA Code of Conduct and RBA Definition of Fees
- RBA Member Advisory on Protecting Worker Rights While Promoting Business Continuity During and After the Coronavirus Outbreak
- ELEVATE 1-hour video for factories: Wellness at Work: Supporting Workers During COVID-19
- IOM Guidance on migrant worker protection; for migrant workers whose job is affected
- ILO guidance on Safe Return to Work and for SMEs, a 6 step business continuity plan
- World Health Organization advice for getting workplaces ready for COVID-19. Country level data and COVID-19 trainings in different languages.
- Family-friendly policies and other good workplace practices in the context of COVID-19
- UNDP guidance for rapid self-assessment: Human Rights Due Diligence and COVID-19

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