



# Global Supplier Standard





## Preface

Essity works to create customer and consumer value by providing products that are made with respect for people and nature. As a leading producer of hygiene and health solutions, we not only focus on our own performance, but also on that of our suppliers and, when needed, also further upstream in the supply chain. In selecting suppliers, we look at performance and require compliance with Essity demands and continuous improvement work as well as overall commitment in all areas covered by this Global Supplier Standard.

Demands from the market, from partners, customers, consumers, investors, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), regulators and the general public are becoming increasingly stringent, as do the demands for transparency, for supply chain due diligence, and for proper documentation and follow up. We believe that the Global Supplier Standard will make requirements clearer for both Essity and our suppliers. In that way, we can together satisfy these evolving demands and provide products we can all be proud of, meeting or exceeding the expectations of our customers.

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# Global Supplier Standard

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background and definitions

At Essity, we are constantly working to be the best in class by improving our organization, our processes and the skills of our employees. We are committed to a customer-focused approach and achieving continuous improvement. We expect and encourage our suppliers to adopt these same principles and practices. In support of Essity's strategy we seek to work together with our suppliers to improve overall performance.

This Global Supplier Standard (hereafter referred to as "GSS") applies to suppliers of goods and services to the Essity group.

This GSS comprises the requirements for responsible business operations, quality and sustainable development with which suppliers to Essity must comply. These requirements and expectations are presented in the different chapters of the GSS; "Supplier Code of Conduct", "Quality", "Product Safety", "Environment", "Chemicals" and the additional Annexes.

It refers to international standards and defines specific Essity requirements. This GSS may be supplemented from time-to-time by other documents containing additional requirements.

In this document, the following terms have the following meanings:

"Goods" means all sorts of materials utilized in Essity's production (e.g. non-wovens, fibers, plastic films), packaging materials, chemical substances and preparations (e.g. industrial chemicals<sup>1</sup>, functional additives<sup>2</sup> and auxiliaries<sup>3</sup>), machinery, non-production material as well as merchandise<sup>4</sup> (as defined below).

"Services" means all types of services provided by suppliers, including services in connection with the supply of goods.

If a supplier's production is conducted at separate sites or if part of the production process is subcontracted, the requirements in this GSS continue to apply in full and are relevant for all subcontractors involved in the production process of the goods.

## 1.2 Supplier evaluation and compliance

Goods selection and supplier selection have distinct processes at Essity. Both goods and suppliers will be evaluated before supply to Essity will be authorized. Such an evaluation can take the form of a questionnaire, visit or an audit at supplier's premises. The evaluation can also take place again during the supply relationship at periodic intervals.

Upon at least thirty (30) days prior written notice, Essity personnel or an external auditing company selected by Essity shall have the right to assess supplier compliance with this GSS. Supplier shall provide access to its premises and all pertinent information. During the assessment the auditor may interview workers and their elected representatives. For any non-compliance identified, corrective actions will be agreed upon by Essity and supplier and executed to ensure that compliance is attained.

By exception to the foregoing, in case Essity has reasons to believe that the Supplier deviates persistently from or breaches in a material way the GSS, Essity or an external auditing company selected by Essity, has the right to perform an audit immediately and gain access to all relevant documents, premises and information without delay.

Supplier shall pay the reasonable fees and expenses of the external auditing company related to audits including but not limited to the above mentioned, the estimated amount of which shall be communicated by Essity or the auditing company before the start of the audit.

### **1.3 Sedex membership**

Upon Essity's request, suppliers shall become a member at their own cost and share their social and ethical status via the online Sedex (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange) platform or such other platform as Essity may designate. The Sedex system includes a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and a risk assessment tool, that will be used as input in Essity's review of the supplier's social, ethical and environmental status.

### **1.4 Sub-suppliers**

The supplier shall implement appropriate measures to ensure that its own suppliers comply with:

- All legal and contractual requirements in relation to the production and delivery of raw materials/components and/or services, including but not limited to conformance with required specifications, and
- similar requirements as those set forth in this GSS to the extent that said requirements apply to the sub-supplier, its raw materials/components and/or services, including but not limited to the provisions related to the Supplier Code of Conduct (Chapter 2).

The supplier shall also ensure that raw material/component specifications or service specifications agreed upon with its own suppliers are consistent with the required specifications of the goods and/or services supplied to Essity, as well as with the requirements set forth in this GSS.

<sup>1</sup> Industrial chemicals refer to all chemicals, e.g. process chemicals and process aids, except functional additives and auxiliaries.

<sup>2</sup> Functional additives refer to e.g. super-absorbers, perfumes, lotions, adhesives, dyes/printing inks.

<sup>3</sup> Auxiliaries are chemicals that are not directly part of the production process, e.g. cleaning agents, maintenance chemicals or paints.

<sup>4</sup> Merchandise means products, whether fully or partially assembled, including, without limitation, hygiene products, cosmetic products, detergents, healthcare products, biocidal products, dispensers, electronic parts as well as promotional articles.



# Supplier Code of Conduct

This Supplier Code of Conduct explains what Essity expects from you as an Essity supplier with regards to environment, human rights, business practices, employee relations, health and safety and other topics related to sustainable and responsible business practices. It forms the foundation of Essity's Sustainable Procurement program and defines what customers, consumers, investors, and other stakeholders can expect from Essity. Choosing responsible business partners is important to us and we will work together with our suppliers to make improvements with respect to social, ethical and environmental performance.

Essity is a member of the United Nations Global Compact, which consists of ten principles in the areas of human rights, labor standards, the environment and anti-corruption. The Essity requirements are mainly based on internationally agreed standards such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization (ILO) Core Conventions, but also on national legislation.



## 2 Supplier code of conduct

### 2.1 Responsible sourcing and human rights and environmental due diligence

All our business partners, including suppliers, distributors, consultants and independent contractors are expected to adopt and comply with the ethical business standards and values set out in this GSS, and to actively communicate such standards when dealing with their own (sub-)suppliers.

Supplier must have ethical and responsible sourcing practices in place and source only from companies that satisfy the requirements of this GSS.

Supplier must secure a due diligence framework to ensure that the supplier has policies and processes in place to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for adverse impacts in their own operations and related to their own (sub-) suppliers in regard to human rights and environmental risks. The due diligence framework shall be governed by the supplier's senior management and the approach shall be based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct. Essity reserves the right to verify compliance of the supplier's human rights policy and due diligence framework, to secure it operates in line with the mentioned principles and guidance documents.

Also, supplier shall be aware of all sites and companies involved in their production and supply chain, and upon request should be able to provide Essity with adequate details of the supply chain for the goods supplied to Essity.

### 2.2 Ethical business practices

#### 2.2.1 Integrity

Supplier shall conduct their business in a professional and independent manner at all times, and in accordance with standards set forth in all applicable international and national laws and regulations while recognizing that Essity's requirements may sometimes exceed those standards. At minimum, supplier must act with integrity, honesty and fairness in all aspects of their business.

#### 2.2.2 Fair competition

Supplier and all persons acting on their behalf shall comply with national and supranational antitrust and competition laws. They shall not enter directly or indirectly into any illegal agreements with their competitors nor exchange sensitive information, e.g. regarding markets, customers, strategies, prices and the like. All suppliers and all persons acting on their behalf shall participate in public tenders and private sector bidding procedures by strictly following the applicable laws and regulations.

#### 2.2.3 Conflicts of interest

Supplier shall inform Essity if any Essity employee has an interest in the supplier's business which might cause a conflict of interest. Supplier and persons acting on their behalf must avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their private activities, entities in which they, their close relatives or associates have an interest, their business activities with other parties and their part in the business relationship with Essity. Supplier shall inform Essity about existing conflicts of interest as soon as it becomes aware of such conflicts.



#### 2.2.4 Anti-corruption and bribery

Supplier and all persons acting on their behalf shall comply with all applicable anti-corruption laws while conducting business with Essity. Bribery and any other form of corrupt business practice are strictly prohibited. The direct or indirect offer, granting or acceptance of illegitimate benefits to generate, maintain or accelerate business is unacceptable. Supplier must ensure that no such benefits are exchanged in the course of their business.

Supplier shall conduct appropriate risk-based due diligence prior to engaging any sub-supplier to ensure that such third parties comply with all applicable anti-corruption laws.

#### 2.2.5 Gifts and entertainment

Supplier must not provide any gift, meal or entertainment to an Essity employee that might influence, or appear to influence, an Essity employee's decision in relation to Essity's business with the supplier.

Essity representatives are not allowed to accept gifts or hospitality if this may influence or appear to influence a business decision. Essity employees shall always pay for their own travel and accommodation, e.g. when visiting supplier or attending conferences.

#### 2.2.6 Accurate books and records and tax compliance

Keeping accurate books and records as well as declaring truthfully all required taxes and duties is an indispensable part of running a lawful and transparent business in a sustainable way. Essity expects its supplier to act with the highest degree of diligence in this respect.

#### 2.2.7 Data protection

Supplier shall comply with all applicable data protection laws in collecting, processing, storing or otherwise handling personal data of any individuals, including, without limitation, their own employees and employees of their customers, suppliers and business partners.

#### 2.2.8 Trade restrictions and sanctions

Supplier should ensure its business is conducted in compliance with any applicable trade restrictions and sanctions, as well as rules concerning export controls.

#### 2.2.9 Duty to report

Supplier must report to their Essity representatives any suspicions of a material breach of any of Supplier's obligation under this Supplier Code of Conduct section including any breach by Supplier's sub-suppliers.

### 2.3 Occupational health and safety

Suppliers must take the necessary steps to ensure a safe, hygienic and healthy working environment for all their employees in accordance with local legislation.

As part of this effort, Supplier must have in place a documented Health and Safety Management System providing for continuous monitoring and improvement of the working environment. The preferred standard is the ISO 45001 certification. Supplier must also have a senior manager within its organization who is directly responsible for Health and Safety. All suppliers are required to provide relevant information to enable Essity to fulfil its obligations regarding occupational health and safety.

## **2.4 Fair labor practices and free association and collective bargaining**

Essity expects its suppliers will treat their employees and all persons acting on their behalf with the highest ethical standards. Supplier must adhere to international and national conventions and laws in the area of fundamental rights, including, but not limited to, non-discrimination, freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, protection of children and mothers and the right to form works' councils. Also, the supplier is expected to adopt an open attitude towards the activities of trade unions and their organisational activities. Furthermore, Essity suppliers are not allowed to use or threaten to use corporal punishment or other forms of abuse.

If required by local law, all employees of an Essity supplier must have an employment contract. Suppliers' working hours shall comply with national laws and local industry standards, and wages and other benefits provided by supplier must be fair and at least equal to the minimum relevant legal and industry standards. Payment of wages shall be made directly to the employee or an employee-controlled account. Payment frequency shall be at least once per month and there shall be no late payment of wages.

## **2.5 Forced labor**

Essity does not accept any form of forced labor, bonded labor or involuntary prison labor. Supplier shall take measures to ensure they do not engage in or support the use of any form of forced, bonded labor or involuntary prison labor as set forth in the ILO conventions No. 29 and 105. This includes all forms of human trafficking and working against one's own will or choice. No employee shall be required to lodge deposits or identity papers when commencing employment and every employee should be free to leave their employer after reasonable notice. If Supplier uses a staffing recruiter or agency, in no event shall workers be charged fees or expenses related to their recruitment.

## **2.6 Child labor**

Essity does not accept child labor or any other form of exploitation of children. Suppliers shall always strictly follow legal requirements as well as ILO convention No. 138 on the minimum age for work. Suppliers should work actively to prevent all forms of child labor or exploitation in their sphere of influence. Preventive measures expected from suppliers include, at minimum, establishing a system to verify the worker's age at the time of employment and eligibility to work. Documentation shall be maintained to demonstrate due diligence. In the event of any failure to comply with the requirements of not using any child labor, the supplier is expected to remedy the situation as quickly as possible and in the best interest of the child.

## **2.7 Discrimination**

Essity suppliers are expected to adopt and enforce policies which effectively prohibit discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, marital or parental status, ethnic or national origin, caste, sexual orientation, religious belief, political affiliation, age, disability, or of membership in a trade union or employee organization.

## **2.8 Conflict minerals and human rights**

Essity products must not be linked to armed conflicts or human rights abuses. No raw materials or supplies should originate from any conflict area, and components included in electronics supplied to Essity shall be the subject of a documented responsible supply chain. Relevant information shall be provided to Essity in the form of a completed CMRT document. Included components may not contain the minerals defined as conflict minerals (tantalum, tin, tungsten and gold) or their derivatives unless they are sourced through recognized and responsible certification schemes.

## **2.9 Respect for the environment**

At all times, Essity suppliers are expected to act in an environmentally responsible manner, and to respect applicable legislation. Essity suppliers are expected to implement procedures and standards that, at minimum, meet legal requirements and cover environmental aspects of waste management, handling and disposal of chemicals and other hazardous materials, emissions to air and water as well as energy and water use.

Essity requires its suppliers to make continuous improvements in environmental protection and to minimize the environmental impact and pollution generated by their activities. Environmental aspects shall not be limited to the supplier's own operation. Local, regional and global environmental issues shall be taken into consideration.

## **2.10 Community relations and impact on local communities**

Essity encourages suppliers to be a positive influence within and act with respect for the communities in which they operate. Essity values suppliers who provides their employees with a thriving workplace environment and development opportunities.

## **2.11 Supplier diversity**

Essity values relationships with a broad spectrum of suppliers and work towards providing the maximum attainable opportunity for small and diverse businesses in the performance of all vendors. Therefore, Essity seeks to extend and develop its Supplier Diversity program, and values suppliers who utilize ethnic- or gender-neutral means to allow opportunities for small and diverse businesses to participate in subcontracts, where participation opportunities are present. Small and diverse businesses, as referred to by Essity, includes groups that are certified 51% owned, controlled, operated and managed by ethnic minority (MBE), women (WBE), service-disabled veteran (SDVOB or DVBE), LGBT+ (LGBTBE), disabled (DOBE) and/or as defined locally.

## **2.12 Grievance mechanisms**

Essity expects its suppliers to have in place effective grievance channels through which individuals who may be adversely impacted by the supplier's business practices can report complaints and grievances about violations to the principles outlined in this GSS.



### **2.13 Essity's grievance mechanism**

External parties such as suppliers' work force can report what they believe to be a violation of this Supplier Code of Conduct at [www.essity.com](http://www.essity.com).

### **2.14 Breach of the supplier code of conduct**

If a supplier or any of its own (sub-)suppliers fails to comply with the requirements set forth in this Supplier Code of Conduct, the supplier must take appropriate action to remedy the breach and prevent a recurrence of such breach in the future. Essity reserves the right to terminate the business relationship with any supplier who deviates persistently from or breaches this Supplier Code of Conduct in a material way.

# Quality

This GSS is based on the principles set out in the ISO 9001 standard, notably requiring from suppliers a strong customer focus, continuous improvement, a risk-based approach and process orientation in quality management systems. For certain product categories, such as medical devices, supplementary regulations and requirements will apply as set out in Annex A3.

In addition, Essity expects its suppliers to act proactively to secure high quality as well as highly reliable, capable and controlled processes at supplier sites, ensuring compliance with required specifications and overall supplier performance.



## 3 Quality

### 3.1 Quality management system

Essity requires Supplier to implement and follow a quality management system conforming to all requirements in the current ISO 9001 standard. In general, the preferred level is ISO 9001 certification.

For regulated products requiring compliance with specific standards and/or Good Manufacturing Practices, GMP, Supplier must have the appropriate certification, valid for the intended market (for example ISO 13485 for certain Medical Devices, ISO 22716 or equivalent for Cosmetics, GFSI for certain Food or Food Service Products, etc.)

### 3.2 Risk management

Supplier shall conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the impact on goods supplied to Essity each time a change is introduced into its production process, including, without limitation, a contamination risk assessment. In making such assessment, Supplier shall consider the factors specified in Annex A1. All risk assessments shall be documented and kept updated.

Supplier's organization shall have a written contingency plan in place, including production back-up solutions, which may be implemented as necessary in the event of short supply of raw materials, production disruption and so on in order to avoid or limit detrimental consequences for Essity.

### 3.3 Site standards (infrastructure)

Essity expects that supplying sites are suitably designed, constructed and maintained in compliance with all relevant legislation and operate in a safe and secure environment including restricted access to the site and minimized risk of goods contamination.

The manufacturing process flow shall be organized to allow sufficient working space and storage capacity with adequate

employee facilities (including rest areas, toilets, lockers and changing areas) provided and maintained in a clean and hygienic condition

### 3.4 Competence

Supplier's organization shall have a good understanding of the following:

- Products, services, process and quality assurance in Supplier's field of activity
- Supplier's own market status
- Patents and other intellectual property in Supplier's field of activity
- Products, services and markets in the field where Essity operates

### 3.5 Documentation requirements

Relevant documented information shall be kept available for evaluation by Essity for a period of no less than five years or, if longer, for the period stated in applicable legislation and/or regulations (e.g. for chain of custody, medical devices, cosmetics regulation, REACH regulation).

At a minimum, such information should include:

- Specifications of the goods delivered
- Quality control data/certificates of analysis and or batch record (if required) to prove conformity of the goods delivered
- Traceability documentation of raw materials/components used for production of the goods delivered

### 3.6 Retention samples

Retention samples shall be kept, if required, available for evaluation by Essity.



### 3.7 Communication and interaction with Essity

Supplier shall document their processes for interaction with Essity.

Supplier shall appoint a qualified individual to serve as the Essity coordinator for agreements, orders, customer satisfaction and feedback, complaints, quality issues, queries and corrective actions.

Supplier shall also appoint a technical contact person who shall be responsible for ongoing technical activities and shall be authorized to communicate and make decisions directly in consultation with their Essity counterpart. The roles of the technical contact person and Essity coordinator can be filled by the same individual if desired. He or she should be able to communicate well in English and be able to travel to Essity facilities. Local communication between Supplier and Essity may be in the local language.

Furthermore, Supplier shall identify a contact person or persons for product safety and environmental information.

The content of agreements with and feedback from Essity shall be communicated by Supplier to relevant functions within its organization.

Upon request, Supplier shall communicate the plans and status of activities performed in cooperation with or on behalf of Essity.

Supplier is expected to proactively present new developments.

Essity expects Supplier to respond to any queries within a reasonable period of time. Supplier shall ensure that relevant persons in their organization receive information about and understand the interactions between their own development activities and those of Essity.

### 3.8 Specifications

All goods shall be defined by an agreed set of specifications, or technical data sheet and with a unique identification code during regular supply as well as in development phases. During a development phase, the identification may be temporary.

If after delivery of the goods, Supplier becomes aware of a condition that may indicate that the specification has not been obtained, Supplier shall notify Essity immediately.

### 3.9 Change management

Supplier may not make any changes to the goods and/or to the production process, unless such changes have been communicated to and agreed in writing by the authorized Essity contact. This applies to all changes including changes of:

- Location of manufacturing
- Process/equipment of manufacturing
- Raw materials/components from incumbent or new/alternative sub-suppliers

Minor process optimization and minor maintenance changes that have no impact on the delivered goods and do not inhibit Supplier's compliance with this GSS and other applicable requirements are exempt of this requirement.

The time frame for communication must be a minimum of three (3) months, preferably six (6) months in advance of commercial deliveries, except for changes that are due to unforeseeable events beyond Supplier's control and that are thus unavoidable. The time frame for communication may be longer if required by regulations applicable to the product.

Essity's approval of a change will not relieve Supplier of its obligations and responsibilities. A new goods identification code shall be used if raw materials /components or process conditions

change significantly, particularly if the changes may influence the goods' chemical composition.

### 3.10 Production processes

Supplier shall ensure that processes are implemented under controlled conditions including the following:

- Process results shall be continuously controlled toward the target value for relevant properties
- Process capability shall be completed and documented; other methods of validation shall be applied when appropriate or required
- Statistical techniques shall be used to demonstrate that a process is capable and in control, and if applicable, include the use of Cpk/Ppk (process capability index) for capability studies
- Control plans shall be documented and demonstrate compliance with Essity requirements and other applicable requirements in the relevant field. The characteristics of a control plan shall be identified through risk assessments
- Preventive maintenance of equipment shall be carried out to ensure continuous process capability
- Where applicable, automatic feedback and control systems and/or SPC (Statistical Process Control) shall be implemented. Process variations shall be evaluated continually and the causes of uncontrolled variations eliminated

### 3.11 Design and development

The development and launch of new goods shall follow a documented cross-functional process. The process description shall include:

- How Essity's expectations and requirements are considered, including timelines
- How goods in the development phase are transferred to regular production
- How parameters necessary for repetitive production of goods in the development phase are documented, e.g. goods composition, process parameters

When requested by Essity, a formal agreement on the scope and goals of a development project shall be reached between Supplier and Essity. A separate confidentiality agreement may also be required.

The initial stage of projects for developing new goods shall include the following considerations:

- Process capability analysis, also valid for pilot machines, when applicable
- Patents and other intellectual property
- Cost analysis
- Regulatory and product safety aspects
- Environmental aspects including energy
- Occupational health and safety aspects

### **3.12 Identification and traceability**

Supplier shall establish and maintain procedures that allow the traceability of goods and the raw materials/components used in production of the goods.

Traceability records needed to identify delivered goods, which have a risk of non-conformity, shall be made available to Essity on demand and in critical situations at short notice. Goods identification shall be recorded in a manner that permits relevant recall procedures. Traceability and recall procedures shall be documented and tested yearly.

### **3.13 Root cause analysis and action plan**

Supplier shall perform a root cause analysis with respect to all reported quality complaints in order to avoid repeating defects in future deliveries. Corrective and preventive actions shall be presented to Essity, including a short and long-term action plan.

### **3.14 Storage and Transport**

Goods shall be stored in adequate conditions. Vehicles shall be suitable for transportation of the relevant goods and should be regularly cleaned and inspected to ensure that they are free from damage, odors and contamination. All vehicles, regardless of source, shall be inspected before loading and records of inspection kept. All goods must be prepared for shipment in a manner to prevent damage, contamination or other deterioration of the goods.

### **3.15 Internal audits**

Supplier internal audits shall include the requirements of the Supplier Standard, with special attention to the traceability system.

### **3.16 Testing**

Personnel performing tests on raw materials /component properties and/or goods shall be proficient in using test methods. Test methods used shall be well defined, validated, documented, and preferably in compliance with a recognized standard for the specific industry. All measuring instruments shall be calibrated and checked utilizing a metrology system.



# Product safety and chemicals

Safe products have the highest priority and Essity is working systematically to ensure that all its products are safe to use and compliant with applicable legislations. Suppliers to Essity have a vital role in this effort. Full support and collaboration are expected to assure that Essity can fulfil its regulatory obligations and its product safety policy. Specifically, Essity is asking its suppliers to (i) **not use**, defined chemicals (see annex) that are of specific concern in goods, (ii) disclose detailed information on chemicals used/present in the goods and (iii) certify compliance to relevant chemicals and product legislations.



## 4 Product safety and chemicals

### 4.1 Chemicals of special concern

Essity has identified chemical substances of special concern that are, therefore, subject to prohibitions and restrictions. The lists of such substances can be found in Annex A2. In addition to the chemicals in Annex A2, specific requirements on chemicals for different types of goods may exist. Detailed descriptions of chemicals requirements will be provided when needed. Statements on compliance to Essity requirements will be requested for goods.

### 4.2 Safety assessments

Essity has defined procedures for assessing the safety of goods and final products for their intended use. These procedures and the subsequent requirements could be different for different types of goods. Bought in finished goods must also clear a safety assessment in which information about finished goods and/or its included materials/components is normally required and assessed the same way as for other goods supplied.

For goods where a chemical assessment is needed, e.g. for chemical substances, chemical mixtures and for materials used for production of hygiene articles, detailed information on chemical content in goods is required. This information includes chemical names, CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service) numbers and the concentration (as % w/w). Without this information Essity cannot fulfil its obligation to only place safe products on the market. Chemical assessments often require information from sub-suppliers. A supporting role of the main supplier is hereby expected by Essity.

The received chemical composition is thoroughly checked against chemical lists and other data sources. Also known impurities and contaminants are assessed. In many cases a toxicological risk assessment (TRA) is performed. It includes hazard identification, dose-response assessment, exposure assessment, and risk characterization.

The supplier shall inform Essity via defined contacts (preferably the **Product safety function**) about all changes of compositions of goods and changes in classification (e.g., according to CLP/UN GHS) of the components/substances contained in the goods, as this could impact the safety assessment.

### 4.3 Regulatory compliance and supplier chemical management

Approval to use goods for production and to place products on the market also requires compliance with relevant legislation and standards. Detailed descriptions of regulatory compliance requirements for specific goods will be provided when needed. Statements on regulatory compliance will be requested for goods. What is relevant varies with type of material/component/article and the intended market for the Essity product.

Legislation in the following areas (but not limited to these areas) is relevant to the Essity product portfolio:

- General product safety
- Chemicals
- Cosmetics
- Medical devices
- Biocides
- Food contact
- Electrical equipment
- Textiles
- Toys
- Occupational health and safety
- Transport of dangerous goods

See also annex 3

Other types of legislation and standards may also apply.

Suppliers may be required to follow chemical legislation for parts of the world other than where the goods are delivered, as the final Essity product may be distributed globally.

Regarding EU REACH Regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals), Essity requires suppliers supplying within and to the EU to take full responsibility for, registering, notifying and/or applying for authorization as and when required. This also applies when customs documents identify Essity as the importer.

A non-exhaustive list of legislations and abbreviations relevant to Essity businesses can be found in Annex A3 via the following link [\*\*www.essity.com/gss\*\*](http://www.essity.com/gss).

#### **4.4 Other information**

Depending on the type of goods, Supplier will be asked to provide information that may include:

- SDS (Safety Data Sheet) according to relevant legislation (e.g., REACH Regulation or GHS) or other relevant Safety information when an SDS is not applicable.
- Information on restricted substances
- Technical product specification
- Information on impurities, e.g., residual monomers.
- Information on toxicological/ safety tests already performed (e.g., cytotoxicity, skin irritation or sensitization tests ).
- Information on safety performance, including fire rating, and compliance tests performed (e.g., for toys and dispensers).
- Product information file, according to EU cosmetics legislation.

Essity has a restrictive view on the use of animal testing and is committed to reducing animal testing to the absolute minimum.

See Essity position on Animal testing ([\*\*Essity.com\*\*](http://Essity.com))

#### **4.6 Confidentiality**

If Supplier prefers, a confidentiality agreement can be signed restricting the use of the detailed information to the persons responsible for performing the product safety assessment, and only for the purpose of assessing health, regulatory, environmental and safety aspects of the goods.

#### **4.7 Supplier chemicals management and quality assurance**

##### **4.7.1 Contamination prevention and hygiene control**

The production of goods for Essity shall take place under controlled conditions. A contamination risk assessment and related contamination prevention shall be performed in accordance with methodologies laid out in recognized standards/guidelines. The risk assessment shall be reviewed/ updated each time a change is introduced in the production process to prevent, minimize, or eliminate risks for contamination of the goods supplied as far as possible.

##### **4.7.2 All goods (excluding industrial chemicals and auxiliaries)**

For all goods (excluding industrial chemicals and auxiliaries) the controlled conditions shall include contamination production and in the handling of raw materials, as well as intermediate and finished goods. Production of goods shall follow the current GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) applicable for the type of goods involved. Supplier must have in place recognized and appropriate standards for hygiene control in its production processes and premises (including personal hygiene and hygiene control of premises and equipment).

##### **4.7.3 Industrial chemicals and auxiliaries**

Industrial chemicals and auxiliaries shall be produced according to common industry standards in accordance with quality and traceability requirements which are at least as stringent as those laid out in ISO 9001. All chemicals must be delivered at the purity and quality levels required by the relevant raw material specification (e.g., for food contact or technical quality, depending on the type of chemical and how it will be used).



# Environment

Essity sustainability work is pursued through well-being for people and planet while reducing the environmental footprint through reduced climate impact, protecting biodiversity and improving circularity. We work continuously to improve the sustainability profile of our products throughout their life cycles, including, without limitation, efforts to develop resource efficiency. This in turn requires information, commitment, improvements and transparency from our suppliers. The specific requirements for different types of materials are specified in section 5.5 – 5.13.

Supplier must, at minimum, comply with relevant environmental legislation and industry standards and be able to demonstrate such compliance upon request.





## 5 Environment

### 5.1 Environmental management system

Essity maintains a continuous focus on the current environmental status and on the future improvements required to reduce the environmental impact of its products and activities. Supplier should be prepared to demonstrate their commitment and ability to support this initiative.

Supplier must adopt and implement a documented EMS (Environmental Management System), preferably at levels specific in the current ISO 14001 certification, including, at minimum:

- An environmental and/or sustainability policy
- A documented investigation of Supplier's current environmental impact, including analyses and prioritizations which can be used as a basis for planning actions to reduce environmental impact, and an identification of all applicable legal requirements
- Defined and documented responsibilities, and available resources
- Setting of goals and actions for continuous improvement
- Regular management review of the EMS and its effectiveness

### 5.2 Climate and energy

Essity has joined the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign and our net zero commitment and Science Based Targets is part of our journey to reduce greenhouse gases. Essity also endeavors to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions from a life cycle perspective, i.e. from the extraction of resources, through production, transportation, use and waste after use. One of our key action areas is low carbon materials.

Essity expects all suppliers to actively contribute to our common journey and to work to reduce emissions, in terms of energy and electricity involved in the manufacture, transportation and sourcing of goods supplied. For energy- and energy efficiency management the use of ISO 50001 standard is recommended.

Supplier must have a climate strategy in place including an energy and electricity program with defined activities and goals for improving energy efficiency and reducing climate impact.

Essity will give preference to those suppliers who increase their proportionate use of renewable energy and electricity and work with alternative materials/goods that are more environmentally sound. Essity promotes suppliers that also consider sub-suppliers' climate impact as well as low emission transport modes (per ton-kilometer) and freight and transport optimization to Essity.

### 5.3 Protect biodiversity

Essity recognizes the risks and challenges of biodiversity loss. We recognize that as a global user of both fresh and recycled fibers as well as other renewable resources and materials, our business is dependent on healthy and functioning ecosystems for our long-term survival and future success. With growing biodiversity risks and challenges, we want to do our part and contribute to the regeneration of ecosystems and prevent further biodiversity loss. Reduced climate impact, less pollution from air, land, water and waste from our value chain will contribute to reduced stress on our eco systems for forests and agriculture areas.

Nature consideration and protection of biodiversity by responsible management is a priority for Essity and we require our suppliers to maintain and safeguard responsible forest and agriculture management based on the principles of biodiversity and forest conservation<sup>5</sup>.

Supplier's biodiversity impact will be assessed based on their climate impact, pollution to land, air, water and waste as well local initiatives to improve biodiversity, eco systems and land use affected by their operations. We require that renewable materials are sourced through a publicly recognized third-party certification of biomass sourcing and supply chain.

#### **5.4 Circularity**

Essity aims to design products and services for a circular society. We want to replace primary fossil-based materials and resources with low carbon footprint alternatives, renewable or secondary recycled materials and resources. This should be achieved via increased circular content and via the use of mass balance. Reusable design is another way to improve circularity. This means that for certain applications the use of textile materials will be considered and the requirements will follow the general requirements in GSS. How materials can create value after product use is also valuable such as, if they are suitable for recycling or composting depending on product category as well as the contribution to renewable or recovered energy in incineration.

We want to improve the technical recyclability for plastic and paper packaging globally. In Europe, guidance is provided by

the recyclability requirements by the cross-industry European initiative RecyClass. Hence, final plastic packaging should fulfil the criteria from RecyClass A-C, preferably verified by certificates. In North America, final plastic packaging should fulfil the criteria from How2Recycle, preferably third-party reviewed.

Final paper packaging should be recyclable with low amounts of residues, verified by third party using established lab methods.

Circularity implies that Supplier needs to consider the carbon footprint, the recyclability, compostability and the choices of chemicals for all materials in the value chain in order to optimize alternative waste management. More information on chemical substances is available in Annex 2 via the following link [www.essity.com/gss](http://www.essity.com/gss).

#### **5.5 Wood and wood derived fibers and products<sup>6</sup>**

It is Essity's ambition to promote forest certification and to only purchase wood fibre from certified and chain of custody sources, this includes fibre containing raw materials such as timber, pulp, packaging, mother reels and any other wood derived articles and materials supplied by third parties. Essity accepts both Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification™ (PEFC™) international forestry certification schemes, with a preference for FSC.

Essity requires that all suppliers of wood fiber materials hold a FSC Chain-of-Custody (CoC) certification, regardless of adherence to other forest certification. The portion originating from certified forests shall be continually reviewed and

suppliers are requested to define plans for increasing their use of certified wood and fibers throughout their supply chain.

Essity recognizes that some suppliers, especially new suppliers and converters, may not have FSC CoC in place to meet the minimum FSC Controlled Wood requirement. In these cases, if Supplier is prepared to implement FSC or PEFC CoC certification within 12 months, Essity may continue to support Supplier as they work towards implementation. However, the wood/fibre sourced by Supplier will be assessed to ensure compliance with the FSC Controlled Wood defined below:

Wood from the following types of sources is not accepted:

- Illegally harvested wood
- Wood harvested in violation of traditional or human rights
- Wood harvested in forest in which high conservation values (HCVs) are threatened by forest management activities
- Wood harvested in forests being converted to plantations and non-forest use
- Wood from forests in which genetically modified trees are planted

Pulp suppliers will receive a copy of the Essity Global Fiber Sourcing Policy together with a detailed pulp supplier questionnaire every two years. Compliance to the policy is mandatory, and any issue which may result in Supplier being non-compliant must be reported to Essity as early as possible. Please note the requirements for reporting on the amount of certified wood purchased by the supplying pulp mills and the supplier action plans to increase the certified amount in the supply chain. In addition we require information about how any degradation of the supplying forests is identified and measured.

To assist Essity in meeting the increasing regulatory demands (e.g. Timber Regulation and the proposed EU regulation on deforestation-free products) to confirm the wood pulp origins and legal harvesting, Supplier is required to provide documents and other evidences (such as felling permits etc.) when requested by Essity within 48 hours. To support this, a delivery of pulp to an Essity mill or factory will be chosen and a full traceability package shall be provided by Supplier. This package needs to include documentation (permits etc.) confirming the legal sourcing of wood and the geographical location of the forests in the specific pulp supplied, as well as shipping documentation from forest to pulp mill, and pulp mill to Essity, including any relevant customs paperwork.

## 5.6 Pulp production

The environmental impact of production, i.e. emissions to air<sup>7</sup> and emissions to water<sup>8</sup>, contribute to the assessment of Supplier's environmental performance. Levels and technology comparable with the European Industrial Emissions Directive and its associated BAT levels (Best Available Techniques) are preferred.

## 5.7 Cotton

Cotton is considered as a high-risk material by Essity in terms of its social and environmental impact. The crop is often grown in areas where basic human rights are not respected. Furthermore, cotton farming, if not well managed, can lead to irresponsible application of insecticides & pesticides with adverse impact on water quality and human and animal health.

Essity encourages the production of sustainable cotton, e.g., cotton produced pursuant to a recognized certification scheme such as BCI (Better Cotton Initiative), Fair Trade and GOTS of which BCI is the preferred option. Supplier shall be transparent and comply with Essity's requirements for information regarding traceability and origin of cotton.

### **5.8 Other renewable fibers**

Other renewable fibers can be derived from primary sources such as bamboo, corn, sugar cane or cotton or from by-products or secondary sources such as wheat straw. Supplier to Essity of any other renewable fibers intended for any part of the goods will be asked to fulfill requirements similar to those applicable for fresh wood fibers, e.g. origin, traceability and environmental and social performance and use of relevant recognized certification systems.

### **5.9 Recovered wood fibers**

Recovered fibers shall regarding environmental and social performance fulfill the same requirements as applicable to virgin wood fibers, including FSC Chain-of-custody certification.

### **5.10 Renewable plastics**

Renewable plastics can be used in packaging, nonwovens, plastic films or renewable super absorbents in any hygiene or health product or packaging. Renewable plastics, i.e., bio-based plastics can be derived from primary sources such as vegetable fats and oils, starch and cellulose or from by-products or secondary sources such as tall oil and are alternatives to finite fossil plastics. Suppliers to Essity of renewable plastics, must

provide information about the minimum bio-based content as well as on the minimum bio-based carbon content, determined and reported according to a recognized, widely accepted international, regional or national standard.

In addition, Supplier must comply to Essity's requirements for use of relevant recognized certification schemes as well as for information regarding traceability and origin. Important common factors to review for the supply chain of renewable plastics are:

1. The source of the renewable feedstock
2. Secured regrowth by responsible management of forestry or agriculture
3. Nature consideration and protection of biodiversity by responsible management of forestry or agriculture
4. Responsible production with socially acceptable conditions which positively impact local communities e.g., secure no forced and child labor, hazardous labor conditions or conflict over land rights, no ethical issues in the supply chain, e.g., corruption
5. Food security<sup>9</sup>, i.e., food availability, is not comprised
6. GMO free materials is the first option (5.14).

1-4 above should be included in certifications schemes and 5 must be assessed by Essity.



### **5.11 Recycled plastics**

Recycled plastics can be used in packaging, nonwovens, plastic films or renewable super absorbents in any hygiene or health products. We accept recycled plastics from mechanically or chemically recycled sources and aim for low carbon alternatives. Recycled plastics shall fulfill the same requirements as applicable to primary plastics, with regards to environmental and social performance.

### **5.12 Mass balanced sources for plastics and chemicals**

An alternative way of replacing fossil-based materials is to introduce the mass balance approach for products or packaging from renewable or recycled sources.

The mass balanced approach supports the increase of the renewable or recycled material input in the material production where fossil-based sources are replaced with renewable or recycled sources and then allocated through mass balancing to the material used. Feedstock for mass balanced materials will be assessed case by case and follow criteria for renewable or recycled materials. Supplier shall comply with Essity's requirements for use of relevant recognized certification schemes for the supply chain as well as for the resources used.

### **5.13 Renewable ingredients**

Cosmetics products or chemicals can contain renewable ingredients such as palm oil or similar. Supplier of cosmetics or chemicals will be requested to show documentation that their supply chain is certified according to a recognized system such as RSPO (Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil). Low carbon renewable ingredients are preferred.

### **5.14 Genetically modified organisms (GMO)**

Renewable fibers and ingredients include fibers or ingredients from managed forests or other agricultural crops. The vast majority of Essity's product assortment does not include raw materials with a GM (Gene Modified) origin. Forest fibers shall always be free of GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms).

In those few cases where a raw material could be of GM origin, the GMO-free alternative shall be the preferred choice. If a GMO-free alternative is not available, Essity's approval is required and an assessment from a safety and environmental perspective will be performed by Essity before such approval is given.

### **5.15 Electronics**

Components included in electronics supplied to Essity shall be the subject of a documented responsible supply chain. Relevant information shall be provided to Essity in the form of a completed CMRT document to make sure absence of conflict minerals. We also expect additional information about the technical recyclability of electronic components.

### **5.16 Environmental questionnaires**

Essity continually assesses the environmental performance of its suppliers. As part of this effort, and as input for life cycle assessments and/or environmental labeling, updates and surveys are necessary.

Supplier will be required to answer questions put forward by Essity from time-to-time on various topics at the individual site level, including:

- Use of energy (electricity and fuels)
- Water use
- Source and traceability of feedstock and raw materials
- Emissions to land, air, water
- Waste
- Transports
- Local initiatives to improve biodiversity

Essity may also require that Supplier provide such environmental information about their sub-suppliers and the materials/ components they add to the supply chain.

On Supplier's request, a confidentiality agreement can be signed to restrict the use of the information where only Supplier's environmental status is assessed by the Sustainability Products & Services, Regulatory Affairs and Product Safety departments.

<sup>5</sup>Principles of biodiversity and forest conservation are described in UNEP environmental, social and sustainability framework Safeguard standard 1: Biodiversity, Eco systems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management

<sup>6</sup>Wood derived fibers include, but are not limited to, pulps, mother reels, packaging, semi-finished and finished goods containing fibers originating from forest operations.

<sup>7</sup>GHGs (Greenhouse Gases, e.g. sulfur and nitrogen oxides)

<sup>8</sup>COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand), and/or BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand), TOC (Total Organic Carbon), AOX (Adsorbable Organic Halides) and phosphorus

<sup>9</sup>Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. This is also related to the UN sustainable development goals, i.e. the SDGs, where the 2nd goal is "zero hunger". The phrase "food security is not comprised" refers to the intention that Essity's use of resources and materials must not lead to negative impact on food security. However, this does not mean that any feedstocks that are also used for food or related to food production are not accepted. Negative impact on food security and hunger is caused by many factors such as political instability, low incomes and indirect effects of the climate effect.

# Third party sustainability labelling

At Essity, credibility and transparency are the cornerstones of our sustainability efforts. We collaborate with various external organizations to advance our sustainability goals, resulting in some of our products being labeled or certified by third parties. These certifications, limited to specific product types and market requirements, ensure publicly that our products meet stringent safety, quality, social, and environmental standards.



## 6 Third party sustainability labelling

Credibility and transparency are essential in our sustainability work for Essity materials and products. We are working with several external organizations to support our sustainability ambitions. This means that some of Essity's products are labelled or certified by third parties. The scope is restricted to certain product types and market requirements.

Third party labels or certification means an independent organization (often referred to as competent body) has reviewed the manufacturing process of a product and has determined that the final product, materials or ingredients complies with specific requirements on safety, quality, social and/ or environmental performance and/or origin/provenance.

Essity is using several third-party sustainability labels or certifications with the purpose of labeling products and services. Their mark on Essity's products provides different statements; either for the environmental impact, or social impact such as human rights and/or health and safety aspects. By using Third Party Sustainability Labels, Essity ensures transparency and external review of the Essity and suppliers' sustainability work.

For some of Essity's tender processes, third party sustainability labels are a prerequisite as they directly show good environmental and social performance that impacts both the health of people and our eco systems, by setting strict requirements.

Third party labels and certifications are awarded through various institutions, associations or independent testing institutes called competent bodies.

Documentation for fulfilling requirements of third-party labels will be requested by Essity. Such documentation may include strictly confidential information such as composition lists or production information in which also sub-suppliers will need to be disclosed. Third party labels often require information from sub-suppliers including sub-supplier's certificates and/or signatures. A supporting role of the main supplier is hereby expected by Essity.

To find more information and the respective criteria for the different labels, please go to their official websites. Examples of third-party labels and certifications used by Essity are listed in Annex A4 at **[www.essity.com/gss](http://www.essity.com/gss)**.



# Annex A1: Hygiene Control

A contamination risk assessment shall be performed for all goods. This appendix describes the requirements regarding contamination prevention in the supplier's production processes and premises.

Wherever relevant, written instructions shall be available.





## A1.1 Personal hygiene

- A. Personal hygiene is primarily the responsibility of the individual concerned but should be enforced by management where necessary, e.g. in cases in which an employee continually ignores the established procedures.
- B. Appropriately clean clothing (including clean shoes) shall be worn by all employees in all areas where raw materials, semi-finished goods and/or finished goods are exposed. This includes maintenance operations.
- C. Where appropriate, employees' hair shall be tied back and covered.
- D. Hand washing facilities should be available within a reasonable distance from production and packing areas.
- E. Eating and drinking shall be prohibited except in designated areas (with the possible exception of drinking water in plastic bottles). Suitable separate premises should be provided where employees may eat.
- F. The use of tobacco shall be prohibited except in designated areas. Such areas shall be well away from the production environment.
- G. Visible and/or detectable plasters or dressings shall cover cuts or sores on exposed skin.
- H. Where appropriate, hygiene regulations should be clearly displayed.

## A1.2 Premises and equipment

- A. Premises and equipment shall be cleaned in accordance with written cleaning instructions. Records should be kept.
- B. Lighting that is sufficiently intense to allow the detection of defects is required in production, inspection and storage areas.
- C. Unless Supplier has equivalent expertise and resources, a reputable pest control contractor should be consulted. Written reports are to be provided after each inspection of the pest control system. Appropriate measures shall be taken to prevent insects, birds and rodents from entering the premises, e.g. by implementing fly-screening and door-closing routines.
- D. All sources of glass and brittle plastic in or above the production process shall be identified. Appropriate steps shall be taken to prevent fragments from contaminating raw materials, semi-finished goods and/or finished goods after a breakage, e.g. by enclosing lights or replacing glass windows. Appropriate procedures shall be followed in the event of a breakage.
- E. Solvents and cleaning agents shall be stored in appropriate designated areas.
- F. Leakage of oils and lubricants should be prevented by means of an adequate maintenance system.
- G. Process additives such as oils, greases, lubricants and cleaning agents should not be allowed to come into contact with raw materials, semi-finished goods and/or finished goods.

- H. Contamination from dripping water, condensation, etc., should be prevented.
- I. Needles, razor blades and similar items are to be kept in designated areas and away from production processes. Used blades, etc., are to be collected in designated boxes.
- J. During production, all tools and unused spare parts shall be kept away from machinery.
- K. All raw materials, semi-finished goods and/or finished goods at all stages of the production process shall be stored in such a way as to prevent their contamination. Pallets should be in good condition and should be kept clean and dry. If wooden pallets are used, measures should be taken to prevent contamination of the raw material, semi-finished goods and/or goods (e.g. wood splinters). Where appropriate, clean layer sheets should be used.
- L. All repairs and maintenance carried out during production shall be suitably monitored to prevent contamination.

## Essity AB

Essity is a leading global hygiene and health company. We are dedicated to improving well-being through our products and services. Sales are conducted in approximately 150 countries under the leading global brands TENA and Tork, and other strong brands, such as Actimove, JOBST, Knix, Leukoplast, Libero, Libresse, Lotus, Modibodi, Nosotras, Saba, Tempo, TOM Organic, Vinda and Zewa. Essity has about 48,000 employees. Net sales in 2022 amounted to approximately SEK 156bn (EUR 15bn). The company's headquarters is located in Stockholm, Sweden, and Essity is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm. Essity breaks barriers to well-being and contributes to a healthy, sustainable and circular society. More information at [www.essity.com](http://www.essity.com).

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Breaking Barriers to **Well-being**