



Papa John's

Locations: Georgia (HQ)
Industries: Food Beverage and Tobacco

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Papa John's is High Risk. The company yields to political activism in shaping corporate governance, potentially alienating consumers, dividing employees, and harming shareholders. Papa John's embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues. This approach fails to safeguard free exercise, free speech, and free enterprise.

Corporate Weaponization

Has canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors due to their political views or religious beliefs OR corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries. Medium Risk

Papa John's received a score of 100 on the 2026 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. The company recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it prioritizes sexual issues over merit (1)(2)(3). Papa John's received a score of 100 on the 2025 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. The company recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it prioritizes sexual issues over merit (4)(5). However, Papa John's has not canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs (6).

Charitable giving (including employee matching programs) policies or practices discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or religious beliefs. High Risk

Papa John's HRC 2026 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2)(3). Papa John's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (4)(5). Papa John's does not discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or beliefs (6).

Employment policies fail to protect against viewpoint or other discrimination and/or are ideological in nature. High Risk

Papa John's HRC 2026 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend at least one, controversial training on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. The company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and a specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (1)(2)(3). Papa John's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. The company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and a specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (4)(5).

Papa John's employees are required to complete unconscious bias training (6). The company does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (7)(8).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Papa John's HRC 2026 CEI rating indicates the company potentially agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy. By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2)(3). Papa John's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy. By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (4)(5). Papa John's former CEO, Rob Lynch, signed the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion pledge, which includes a commitment to promote DEI through bias education training in the workplace, strategize on DEI programs/initiatives with other signatories, and engage boards of directors when developing and evaluating DEI strategies (6)(7).

Uses corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Papa John's HRC 2026 CEI rating indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits, lab monitoring, and mental health benefits. The company also covers at least five of the following services: reconstructive hair removal, cosmetic hair removal, tracheal shave or reduction, facial surgeries, voice modification surgery, voice modification therapy, lipoplasty or filling for body masculinization or feminization, and travel and lodging expenses. Additionally, the company has potentially pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2)(3)(4). Papa John's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits and lab monitoring, travel and lodging. Additionally, the company has pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (5)(6). In 2020, Papa John's pulled its advertising from Tucker Carlson's show on Fox News following comments Carlson made regarding the Black Lives Matter movement and the death of George Floyd. Carlson suggested that the protests were "definitely not about black lives" and described them as "riots" (7)(8)(9)(10). In 2019, the company established partnerships with the Louisville Urban League and the University of Louisville LGBT Center (11). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of Papa John's using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (12).

Uses corporate political actions and/or financial contributions for ideological, non-business purposes. High Risk

HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2). Papa John's does not operate a PAC or engage in lobbying at this time (3)(4)(5).

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