



Apple

Subsidiaries: Beats Electronics

Locations: California (HQ)

Industries: Technology Hardware and Equipment

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Apple has canceled apps for their political views or other ideological reasons. Apple terminated an employee who sued the company for political discrimination. Apple scored a 100 on the 2023 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. By complying with the HRC's controversial demands, Apple increases the risk of dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company covers transgender-related medical costs for its employees and their children and provides specific sexual orientation and gender identity-based benefits. It also uses sex and gender ideology criteria in employee recruitment, vendor selection, marketing, and philanthropic support. Apple forces employees to undergo multiple ideological trainings and uses its reputation, corporate funds, and political influence to support controversial sex and gender ideologies, organizations, and legislation. The company provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children. Apple has engaged in censorship activity in China and Taiwan and has been accused of colluding with the Chinese Communist Party. The company leverages its corporate reputation and funds to support and solicit support for groups hostile to freedom of expression, like the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Tim Cook, the CEO, has referred to religious freedom legislation as "pro-discrimination" and is a signatory of the Business Roundtable's 2019 Statement on the Purpose of Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism. Apple has pledged \$100 million to BLM and related causes and its medical benefits cover travel costs for employee abortions. The company covers the cost of "medically necessary transition-related care" for its employees and their children. Apple is committed to carbon neutrality by 2030. Apple is a silver partner of PFLAG. The company is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race. Apple's CEO is a signatory of the Business Roundtable's 2019 Statement on the Purpose of Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism over traditional shareholder obligations. The company is a Ceres Network Member and committed to carbon neutrality by 2040. For these reasons, Apple receives a High Risk rating.

Corporate Weaponization

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

Apple received a score of 100 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). Apple removed Parler from its app store for "failing to effectively police content" (3). It did the same for Gab, even though Gab appealed the suspension, pointing out that many other approved social networks contained identical content that Apple did not scrutinize (4). Apple has also enabled censorship in other countries, including China and Taiwan (5)(6). Apple has also banned Fortnite, Metadata+, Trapster, and many other apps (7). According to various reports, including from Apple itself, the company blocks millions of apps each year; some of

these banned apps are available on other platforms, such as Google Play (8). Some of these banned apps have accused Apple of banning them for political or other reasons (9). After Elon Musk became CEO of Twitter, Apple allegedly threatened to pull Twitter from its App Store (10). However, Apple CEO Tim Cook has claimed that the company “never considered removing the platform” and attributed the issue to a “misunderstanding” (11).

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

Apple’s HRC CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2)

Employment policies fail to protect against discrimination based on political affiliation/views and/or religion. High Risk

Apple’s HRC 2023 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 (1)(2). Apple has implemented ESG requirements into its business practices, including mandatory unconscious bias training (34)(5). Apple fired an employee who objected to its censorship, spurring an ongoing lawsuit over political discrimination (6)(7). The company does not protect its employees against viewpoint discrimination (8).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support ideological causes and/or organizations hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Apple’s HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy (1)(2). By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Apple used iTunes to solicit donations for the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) (3). Apple CEO Tim Cook wrote a Washington Post op-ed referring to religious freedom legislation as “pro-discrimination” (4). Apple also advocates for the Equality Act and transgender participation in girls’ and women’s sports (5)(6). Apple voiced opposition to various state legislatures’ efforts to secure their voting systems as well as the 2015 NC “Bathroom Bill” that required people to use the restroom corresponding to their biological sex (7)(89). The company is a Ceres Network Member, committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2040 (10)(11). Apple committed to a 2030 carbon neutrality pledge (12). Apple CEO Tim Cook is a member of the Business Roundtable and signed its 2019 Statement on the Purpose of Corporation, which promotes stakeholder capitalism over traditional obligations to shareholders and customers (13)(14). The company opposed the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, which would prohibit teaching gender identity and sexual orientation to kids in K-3rd grade (15).

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

Apple provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3)(4)(5). Apple’s HRC 2023 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 (6)(7). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company stated "...we support our employees' rights to make their own decisions regarding their reproductive health. For more than a decade, Apple's comprehensive benefits have allowed our employees to travel out-of-state for medical care if its unavailable in their home state." (8). Apple has given \$1 million to the SPLC and is a Platinum Sponsor of the HRC (9)(10). Overall, Apple has pledged \$100 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related causes (11)(12). Apple is a Titanium sponsor of Out and Equal and is a corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (13)(14)(15)(16)(17). Apple is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race (18)(19).

Uses corporate political contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.

High Risk

Apple's HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Apple does not operate a PAC at this time but has lobbied for ideological purposes (3)(4)(5).

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