



Merck & Co.

Locations: New Jersey (HQ)

Industries: Health Care Equipment and Services

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Merck & Co. 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, Merck 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. Merck 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. Merck is part of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media and does not provide its employees with protections against viewpoint discrimination but has not publicly terminated business relationships based on views or beliefs. The company indirectly funds Planned Parenthood. Merck pledged \$20 million to BLM and related causes. The company discriminates against religious organizations in its charitable giving and supports LGBTQ causes and organizations. Merck opposed various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces. The company is a bronze partner of PFLAG. Merck is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race. For these reasons, Merck 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. **Medium Risk**

Merck received a score of 95 on the 2023 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)(23)(4)(5). However, it has not publicly terminated business relationships due to religious beliefs or political views.

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

Merck's HRC CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). Merck will not permit donations to "religious organizations or groups whose activities are primarily sectarian in purpose" (3).

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

High Risk

Merck'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). Merck does not protect its employees from viewpoint discrimination (3).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

High Risk

Merck'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)(23)(4)(5). CEO Robert Davis is a member of the Business Roundtable but has not supported ideological initiatives (67).

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

High Risk

Merck'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 (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Merck does both, directly and indirectly, fund Planned Parenthood through partnering with affiliate groups and organizations such as the Family Planning 2020 program (3)(4). Merck is a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (5)(6)(7). The company has pledged over \$20 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related causes, though it is unclear which organizations received funding (8)(9). Merck is a copper sponsor of Out & Equal and a corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (10)(11)(12)(13)(14). Merck is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race (15)(16).

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

High Risk

Merck'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. Merck donates in a bipartisan manner but has donated to the Equality PAC (3)(4)(5).

The contents of this website and related resources (collectively, the "materials") are general in nature and intended for educational use only. Nothing in the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content constitutes legal or professional advice for any specific matter. Anyone seeking legal or professional advice should obtain such advice from competent counsel. Since individual circumstances vary, anyone reviewing the materials and/or any other 1792 Exchange content is strongly urged to obtain specific legal and/or other professional advice before acting or refraining from acting based on such materials or other 1792 Exchange content. 1792 Exchange accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage, howsoever incurred, which may result from accessing or relying on the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content. Further, 1792 Exchange disclaims, to the fullest extent permitted by

law, all liability for any acts or omissions based on the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content.

USER AGREEMENT: Company reports and other resources are intended only for the private educational use of the registered user. Republishing and distributing reports and resources is strictly prohibited. By downloading reports and resources, the user accepts these conditions.

© 1792 Exchange 2023