



WHY LA COUNTY SHOULD CARE ABOUT ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROCUREMENT POLICIES

In 2022, Los Angeles County spent \$10.7 billion on purchasing and contracts.¹ As the below data demonstrates LA County is currently likely contacting for products with forced labor made goods. In fact the County has a total of almost **3000 contracts (2998 to be exact)** for supplies identified globally as being at risk of forced labor including garments, electronics, and agricultural products. Yet our policies are outdated and do not provide tested protections to ensure companies contracting with LA county have the protections in place to ensure workers who are making goods for LA county are not being exploited. The County needs to require *all* suppliers and service providers seeking to contract with the county to take active steps to prohibit trafficking-related activities in their supply chains. This targeted approach is long overdue.

It is recommended that the LA County require companies contracting with the County of Los Angeles to certify that no forced labor or human trafficking is involved in their production processes, mandate the inclusion of language in government contracts that prohibits the use of forced labor and misleading recruitment practices, such as charging employees recruitment fees. Additionally, companies should be asked to develop a compliance plan to prevent and address forced labor in their supply chains, with a tiered rollout focused on highest-risk sectors first. More recommendations can be found in [this drafted anti-procurement policy language sample](#) that is modeled after the [federal government’s established statutory anti-trafficking measures](#).²

GOODS PRODUCED BY CHILD LABOR OR FORCED LABOR

The 2024 Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) report identifies [a range of goods produced globally through child labor and forced labor](#).³ Among the most commonly exploited products are garments, electronics, coffee, and others listed in the table below.⁴

Recently, Los Angeles County awarded multiple contracts to procure said goods and the chart below provides details on the number of contracts Los Angeles County has recently issued for products known to be linked to child labor or forced labor practices.^{5,6}



¹ www.doingbusiness.lacounty.gov

² [https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/01/29/2015-01524/federal-acquisition-regulation-ending-trafficking-in-persons#:~:text=The%20final%20rule%20at%20FAR,and%20\(ii\)%20has%20an%20estimated](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/01/29/2015-01524/federal-acquisition-regulation-ending-trafficking-in-persons#:~:text=The%20final%20rule%20at%20FAR,and%20(ii)%20has%20an%20estimated)

³ 2024 List of Goods Produced By Child Labor or Forced Labor, retrieved from: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ilab/child_labor_reports/tda2023/2024-tvpra-list-of-goods.pdf

⁴ 2024 List of Goods Produced By Child Labor or Forced Labor, retrieved from: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ilab/child_labor_reports/tda2023/2024-tvpra-list-of-goods.pdf

⁵ www.doingbusiness.lacounty.gov

⁶ SJI gathered information from www.doingbusiness.lacounty.gov by navigating to the "[Vendor List by Commodity](#)" under the contracting tab. In the search engine, SJI entered the names of goods listed in the 2024 TVPRA list of goods produced by child or forced labor and included in the chart the number under "Recently Awarded" chart. SJI cleared all filters to ensure lit listed contracts awarded to companies outside of California as well.

TYPE OF GOODS	NUMBER OF CONTRACTS LA COUNTYRECENTLY CONTRACTED FOR SAID GOODS	DESCRIPTION OF FORCED LABOR/CHILD LABOR FOUND IN PRODUCTION OF SAID GOOD
Manufactured Goods		
Garments	Uniforms: 202 Clothing: 657	Garments: Produced with forced labor in countries like China and Burma (Myanmar), particularly in the garment industry.
Electronics	Phones: 616 Computers: 559 Laptops: 290 Tablets: 96	Electronics: Forced labor is prevalent in China, particularly in the production of electronics and related components like solar cells.
Agricultural Products		
Cocoa	17	Cocoa: From Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, significant portions of the world's cocoa are produced with child labor and forced labor.
Coffee	110	Coffee: Produced in several countries like India, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic, often using child labor.
Cotton	451	Cotton: Produced in several countries like India, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic, often using child labor.
Mining and Raw Minerals		
Copper	402	Cobalt, Copper, and Gold: Notably from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), these minerals are linked to child labor and forced labor.
Gold	32	Cobalt, Copper, and Gold: Notably from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), these minerals are linked to child labor and forced labor.
Cobalt	25	Cobalt, Copper, and Gold: Notably from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), these minerals are linked to child labor and forced labor.
Products that use manganese	Batteries: 523 Fungicides: 19	Lithium and Manganese: Found in countries like Zimbabwe and Zambia, and used in global industries like electric vehicles and batteries.
Products that use lithium	<i>See goods listed under electronics</i>	Lithium and Manganese: Found in countries like Zimbabwe and Zambia, and used in global industries like electric vehicles and batteries.

CONCLUSION

If Los Angeles County is contracting for these goods, we must ensure that strong policies are in place to prevent any human trafficking or forced labor in their production. Given the complexities and lack of transparency in global supply chains, there are significant risks of labor exploitation, including forced labor and child labor. It is vital that LA County adopts robust due diligence practices, such as regular labor audits, supplier codes of conduct, and partnerships with organizations focused on supply chain transparency.

Furthermore, LA County should align its contracting processes with federal labor trafficking anti-procurement policies and global standards aimed at preventing labor exploitation. This will not only protect the County from potential legal and reputational risks but also ensure that the goods it procures are ethically sourced. By prioritizing ethical supply chain practices, LA County can help lead the way in combating human trafficking and forced labor, ensuring that its procurement practices support workers' rights and uphold social responsibility.

ABOUT SJI

The Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Policy Initiative (“SJI”) is an evidenced based and community-informed think tank that intentionally fills gaps in human trafficking prevention with an intersectional approach through systemic change and policy innovation. SJI focuses its policy advocacy under 5 pillars: Government Accountability, Racial Justice, Immigrant Justice, Climate Justice and Economic Justice.

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