

## **COVID-19. The impact and the effect on The Woody Group**

*(Nederlandse versie volgt)*

The past few months have been a very challenging time for the fashion industry in general. In the news we hear about shortages in raw materials, mass layoffs, order cancellations and delivery delays among many other sudden disruptions in the supply chain. We, as an industry can only get through this if we all work together! While many fashion companies are cancelling orders and leaving suppliers empty handed, The Woody Group has been working very hard to mitigate the effects of the global pandemic within our supply chain, on our employees and stakeholders.

This way the global pandemic has had little or no impact on our company's commitment to our partners and suppliers. These commitments go well beyond a typical brand-factory relationship and will continue to do so despite the COVID-19 outbreak.

Thanks to swift actions, open communication and collaboration, from us and our suppliers, The Woody Group has been able to place the Winter 20/21 orders almost as normal.

We understand that our company's actions have direct consequences on the lives of hundreds of people and their families. As being a family company ourselves, taking care of each other is in our DNA, naturally, we strive for more than just completed orders, even more in this difficult climate. Together with our suppliers and multi stakeholder organizations like Fear Wear Foundation, which we are a member of, we are continuously evaluating, monitoring and trying to improve working conditions in our production locations.

How the Woody Group supports its suppliers:

1. We stay in close communication with our suppliers whether they are closed or open to listen to their needs and to make decisions in collaboration. We keep our Order commitments.
2. We keep track of different safety and hygiene measures our suppliers are taking and we also share these good practices between suppliers in our network.
3. There is an open and continuously communication with FWF and we implement their feedback. We keep our Social commitments.

Our partners in China have already returned to business and are actively sharing their experiences and know how, throughout our whole supplier network, in the spirit of 'sharing is caring'. Together we will get through this difficult period with stronger bonds and better partnerships!

Some of our production is in India, which is currently under lockdown at least until 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. This will most certainly have catastrophic consequences for millions of people. India's Minister of Textiles has urged brands to stand in solidarity with their suppliers across India. We also strongly believe in solidarity with our suppliers. Our FWF audited supplier in India is waiting until the lockdown is finished to make a clear further action and work following the rules of the government to a safe return.

Our Turkish production facility as part of The Woody Group is voluntarily closed, for preventing contamination and flatten the curve, until half of May. They are preparing for a complete COVID-19 measures installed reopening.

The Woody Group's family: our employees, suppliers, partners and clients can rest assured that our company is taking the best possible action under the current conditions to provide a stable and safe work environment.

We wish you all to stay safe, here in Belgium and all over the globe!

With Woody-love from Ghent

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## **COVID-19 - Update from The Woody Group**

### **Extra details about our production facility TEKUMUT in Turkey**

*(Nederlandstalige versie volgt)*

Our factory in Turkey, which produces more than 85% of our production, took a voluntary decision to cease production until half of May, while still providing wage and benefits to all its employees.

This early action enabled the management to have sufficient time to develop necessary safety and hygiene guidelines/protocols that go above and beyond the advised measurements in Turkey. To ensure the necessary respiratory hygiene once full production resumes, the management decided to producing face masks. With the expertise of the Creamoda Technical Services here in Belgium we were able to advise them with the right patterns and methods.

They made a small team for producing Community masks following all the precautions and instructions. After the production of first samples, our factory in Turkey received a positive advice from the Health Department and will produce 5000 pieces by beginning of May, for own use. Of course, they have informed the local authorities of the possibility to produce mouth masks for the local hospitals and health facilities for free. As the Woody Pajamas are renowned for their quality, they make it an honor that the masks too will be of top quality.

Following extra safety and health measures, implemented in all domains of the factory life before the reopening:

#### **Workers transportation:**

- As always, workers are provided with transportation to and from the factory, but instead of transporting 20 people at the time, the newly developed guidelines allow only 8.
- Special attention is paid to disinfecting the vans.

#### **At the factory:**

- After entering workers must wash and disinfect their hands at a designated zone under supervision
  - All hygienic materials are provided by the factory
- Before entry in the production hall is granted each worker's, temperature is checked.
  - In case of doubt a doctor will decide if there is a risk
- The equipment and machines have been moved to ensure social distancing

- All the workers must wear face masks
  - Masks are free of charge
  - Masks will be changed every 4 hours, thrown in special bins for disinfection wash.
  - Washing is done at the factory
- A doctor regularly visits the production location and checks on the employees
  - A special attention was given to employees with chronic conditions who are in the high risk group, the factory made certain that these employees would not be involved, while still receiving salary and benefits
  - Special attention is paid to the cleaning of sanitary areas, lunch area and changing rooms.

#### **Making of the mask:**

- Always with washed hands
- With a sterilized machine, needles, scissors and other tools
- Mask is also worn by the seamstress.

#### **Offices:**

- No one goes in
  - All subjects must be discussed while keeping social distance, at the front of the door

#### **Free time/ Lunch**

- Must always happen with respect for social distancing
- Lunch area is reorganized to accommodate social distancing
- The lunch area is in an open, well ventilated area

The Tekumut management doesn't look at the actions they took as something extraordinary, but as the compassionate and right thing to do.

But they also take a strict stance at the same time, warning that failure to follow the rules will endanger lives and thus have serious consequences.

Are these measures expensive and acquire a lot of planning?

Yes, but human lives and wellbeing of their families is more important to Tekumut than any short-term expenses. Tekumut is a family company, it was set up in the same philosophy as The Woody Group Belgium.

With Woody-love from Duzce Turkey

#### **The Woody Group**

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