



FORGE STATEMENT ON CHILD LABOR REPORTS

March 2, 2023

We have been horrified at reports of the scope and scale of exploitive child labor across the United States. The stories have been shocking, but unfortunately, not surprising for those of us who have worked in the staffing industry and who have had to be wary of exploitive sponsors, forged paperwork, unsafe working conditions and the growing sophistication of bad actors.

We have worked hard to conduct business the right way for nearly three decades, and we are extremely proud of our record and our reputation. We work with client partners who share our values, and we have walked away from companies who we felt weren't doing enough to guarantee safe working conditions. We have an experienced, well-trained and caring staff, who work hard to ensure we comply with all labor laws and regulations. Under no circumstances would we ever knowingly place a child under the age of 18 with one of our clients.

We also will not be a scapegoat for a systemic breakdown that implicates everything from U.S. border policies to our social safety net to our regulatory and labor environment. As a regional staffing agency, there is depressingly little we can do to affect change at scale. However, there is much we can do – and have done – to protect the people and companies we work directly with. That includes striving to ensure accurate documentation is being provided by our applicants, working with applicable national agencies to ensure we're following all policies and procedures, and launching our "Forge Certified" partner program, which is a rigorous and ongoing process to ensure safe and fair working conditions for our applicants and workers. We do our absolute best every day to do things the right way and affect positive change in the lives of our workers.

Even though we only play a small role in a much larger societal issue, we believe in being part of the solution. While our records show we have no one employed under the age of 18, we recognize we can always do more to ensure we have the proper safeguards in place. For example, we have already proactively reached out to the Michigan Department of Labor for guidance, and we will fully cooperate in any investigation or review they are conducting. We have also initiated our own independent third-party review of our processes to ensure we do everything we can to protect the most vulnerable among us.

While we are heartbroken at the stories we have heard, we are hopeful that this national conversation will serve as a catalyst for systemwide change. At Forge, we are committed to being part of that process.