

DANISH FASHION ETHICAL CHARTER

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PURPOSE

The Danish Fashion Ethical Charter seeks to ensure the well-being of employees in the Danish fashion industry and to contribute to the creation of relevant and appropriate information about eating disorders and about the beauty and body ideals the fashion industry is a part of creating. This includes, for example models, influencers, editors, stylists, photographers, make-up artists, designers and others, all of whom play a role in establishing those ideals.

Danish Fashion Ethical Charter will also help raise awareness and influence attitudes in the fashion industry as well as in the media and in society in general, which is why the charter contains various measures and rules signatories must adhere to.

BACKGROUND

The Danish Fashion Ethical Charter was founded in 2007 by what was then called Danish Fashion Institute in collaboration with the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm. Previously the purpose of the charter was exclusively to ensure better conditions for Danish models and to produce valuable information about eating disorders and the body ideals the fashion industry helps generate. Initially the charter represented a plea to the industry, but various high-profile cases led to its expansion in 2013 to include specific rules related to age, a healthy diet and wages. In 2015 the charter entered into a new phase when the Danish fashion industry was given the opportunity to actively sign and apply the charter. A steering group for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter was also established. In 2017 the group launched the world's first health check for models, and in 2018 two new values were added to the charter. Moreover, the charter encompassed the entire Danish fashion industry, though the rules continued to primarily focus on Danish models. In 2021 the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter was updated based on the desire to prevent abusive behaviour in the industry.

VALUES

The Danish Fashion Ethical Charter focuses on five core values involving accountability, compassionate respect and health:

1. We respect and protect industry employees (including models) and the colleagues we work with. We wish to ensure their health and safety, and we appreciate diversity.
2. We are aware of and take responsibility for the impact the fashion industry has on body ideals, especially on young people.
3. We wish to promote and work towards healthy lifestyles as well as a healthy body ideal that reflects a healthy relationship to food, body and exercise.
4. We wish to promote and work towards greater diversity in the fashion industry regarding age, ethnicity, ability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, size etc. All signatories undertake to ensure that they have, for instance the necessary skills and products backstage to work with all skin colours and hair types, as well as to take into account any preferences in terms of, e.g. religion.
5. All signatories of the charter undertake to exhibit respectful behaviour in the fashion industry – which means that offensive behaviour is not tolerated in the workplace, on

photoshoots, at shows etc. This includes speaking nicely to one another and respecting one another's (including models') personal physical and psychological boundaries.

RULES

The Danish Fashion Ethical Charter consists of five general rules specifically related to models:

1) Age limit

Models must be at least 16 years of age in order to work.

Models who are 15 years of age can be given dispensation to work if accompanied by an adult.

Models under 15 can only work with children's and teenage clothing and likewise must be accompanied by an adult (which the agency arranges). The charter also refers to the Danish Working Environment Act.

2) Healthy diet

Clients (fashion companies, photographers, magazines, ad agencies and others) commit to serving models nutritious and healthy food at jobs that last more than two hours.

3) Wages

Models must receive monetary payment for their work. Dispensation from the obligation to pay wages is only possible in agreement with the model for work done for educational institutions, student projects, charities and non-commercial publications (i.e. publications without advertising revenues or sales).

Agreements concerning specific wages and conditions are made between the model agency/the model and the client, as well as between the model agency and the model. Greater transparency and assurance of the individual model's rights are required in this regard.

4) Health checks

Many people, especially the young, struggle to achieve unrealistically thin body ideals and the occurrence of serious eating disorders is on the rise, which is why the type of beauty and body ideals the fashion industry creates is highly important. In 2017 the steering group for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter introduced and conducted a successful pilot project with health checks for models.

The aim of the pilot project was to do a health check on all models who were, or turned, 16 in 2017. The health check was then evaluated with input from models, agencies, parents and the steering group for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter. Based on this a mandatory health check was introduced for all models until they reach 22 years of age.

5) Offensive behaviour

As signatories of the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter, companies, agencies, organisations and other actors in the industry undertake to ensure that they have a written company policy on this area so that clear procedures exist on how they should deal with and prevent offensive behaviour, including racism, sexism, exaggerated bullying and other degrading or abusive behaviour at work, whether it occurs internally or externally at, for example photoshoots or shows.

If anyone discovers that there is no policy or procedures in place, we encourage them to contact the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter directly.

HEALTH CHECKS

Who must undergo health checks?

All models must undergo a health check every other year from the age of 16 until they turn 22.

In addition, the steering group for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter can recommend to a model agency that it have a model (regardless of age) undergo a health check if the steering group finds that there are substantial grounds for serious concern about a model's behaviour or body measurements. Any communication between the steering group and the agency will be confidential. The recommendation is well-intended and not meant as a criticism or as coercion. If the agency and the model (as well as the parents) find that the concern is justified, then the model can always have a health check done at their own expense. If a model agency is seriously concerned about a model, it can also recommend that the model do a health check (regardless of age).

Procedure for health checks

The health check, to be carried out by the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm, will be conducted by professional staff and involve an approximately 90-minute interview using the Eating Disorder Examination, an internationally recognised tool for diagnosing possible eating disorders. The assessment will determine whether and to what extent a model is at risk of or meets the criteria for an eating disorder.

The following criteria will be used and result in the following steps being taken:

- *No or mild concern:* The model can safely continue current work and will not undergo another health check for two years
- *Concern:* The model is recommended to take part in support sessions with a representative from the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm and can continue working if they receive help
- *Severe concern:* The model is referred to further evaluation by their doctor and is not permitted to work again until cleared or, if necessary, under treatment. It is not possible to work as a model while undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Every time a model undergoes a health check, a record of the visit containing the results is documented. The agency in question will receive notice from the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm that its model has undergone a health check and be given the results. If the model's body mass index (BMI) is exceptionally low, the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm will inform the model and the agency. If the model's BMI is exceptionally low, the model is recommended to speak with their own doctor.

In the event that the model disagrees with the assessment, a second professional assessment can of course be sought elsewhere but at the expense of the agency. If the two assessments are contradictory, a third assessment by an impartial party can be sought.

Funding

The Danish healthcare system is currently unable to offer a uniform, nationwide health check focusing on eating disorders, which is why, until politicians are willing to assist the industry, the steering group, together with the major model agencies in Denmark, has developed the following private-sector solution.

The 2017 pilot project involving health checks for 16-year-olds and individual support sessions cost an estimated DKK 200,000. It is assumed that the cost will increase concurrently with the number of models undergoing health checks. Each health check will be settled between the Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm and the model agency. To mitigate the costs model agencies, incur, model agencies can impose a health check fee on all customer invoices making the fashion industry instrumental in funding health checks. Agencies can independently determine the size of the fee, but the suggested amount is DKK 75.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Danish Fashion Ethical Charter recommends that model agencies and models enter into a formal framework agreement on wages and working conditions.
- Danish Fashion Ethical Charter recommends, based on e.g. the model agency 2PM's experience with teaching, that a short educational course for models working with agencies be designed to teach models about, e.g. diet, nutrition and mental health. The Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm can provide speakers. The format must allow implementation at any model agency, and agencies are recommended to conduct at least one educational course yearly. The purpose is to support and strengthen models to cope with being a model and the reality they are thrown into, often at a young age.
- Danish Fashion Ethical Charter recommends greater transparency and awareness concerning retouched photos in, e.g. fashion magazines.

REPORTING

Note that signatories of the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter undertake to ensure that they have their own policy and procedures for addressing the four general rules 1) age limit, 2) healthy diet, 3) wages and 4) health checks.

If you have a reasonable suspicion or documentation that a signatory has acted in violation of the values and rules of the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter, and does not have its own policy or procedures to addressing the situation, we encourage you to write to us at info@modebranchensetiskecharter.dk

All inquiries are treated confidentially by the steering group.

COMMITMENT – SIGNATORIES

Anyone can commit to the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter by signing it. The aim is to establish broad backing from the fashion industry's relevant stakeholders and companies (such as model agencies, fashion companies, magazines, industry organisations, associations, photographers, ad agencies, PR agencies and trade fairs).

The secretariat for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter receives and files signed agreements. Signatories receive the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter logo pack for use on the signatories' own website, materials and campaigns, insofar as the charter's rules are adhered to.

The names of signatories are listed on the danishfashionethicalcharter.com website

In addition, all companies (e.g. brands, magazines, PR agencies, stores, agencies) that hold shows or events or serve as a supplier/subcontractor during Copenhagen Fashion Week are required to sign the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter.

STEERING GROUP, EVALUATION AND SANCTIONS

The steering group for the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter comprises one permanent representative from:

- Dansk Mode & Textil
- Copenhagen Fashion Week
- Danish Association against Eating Disorders and Self-harm
- One of Denmark's eight largest model/influencer agencies*
- A Danish fashion company*
- A Danish fashion magazine*

As well as one permanent representative for Danish models/influencers.*

Global Fashion Agenda has the option of having a representative in the steering group.

The steering group also consists of one additional temporary representative appointed on a rotating basis from:

- A Danish company*
- A Danish fashion magazine*
- One of Denmark's eight largest model/influencer agencies*

*Appointed by Dansk Mode & Textil and Copenhagen Fashion Week.

As a rule the steering group meets twice a year to evaluate the charter and new initiatives.

The steering group has the authority to penalise signatories that do not adhere to the charter's rules.

The options the steering group has to enact sanctions are adjusted according to the nature and extent of the breach. A normal process occurs as follows:

- 1) Reprimand and admonition
- 2) Warning of exclusion and statement of critique
- 3) Exclusion from Danish Fashion Ethical Charter, cf. below

Upon exclusion the following consequences take effect:

- Publication of violator on a blacklist on the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter website
- Forfeiture of the right to use the Danish Fashion Ethical Charter logo
- Forfeiture of the right to visibility in official Copenhagen Fashion Week programmes, including shows, events, sampling and advertising
- Forfeiture of the right to participate in Copenhagen Fashion Week casting days
- Forfeiture of the right to shows during Copenhagen Fashion Week

The steering group shall determine its own rules of procedure.

Visit <http://danishfashionethicalcharter.com/> to follow Danish Fashion Ethical Charter, its signatories, blacklists, warnings and the steering group's work.