

## Information Concerning the Board of Directors

### Board Leadership Structure and Independent Lead Director

Kroger has a governance structure in which independent directors exercise meaningful and rigorous oversight. The Board's leadership structure, in particular, is designed with those principles in mind and to allow the Board to evaluate its needs and determine, from time to time, who should lead the Board. Our Corporate Governance Guidelines (the "*Guidelines*") provide the flexibility for the Board to modify our leadership structure in the future as appropriate. We believe that Kroger is well-served by this flexible leadership structure.

In order to promote thoughtful oversight, independence, and overall effectiveness, the Board's leadership includes Mr. McMullen, our Chairman and CEO, and an independent Lead Director designated by the Board among the independent directors. The Lead Director works with the Chairman to share governance responsibilities, facilitate the development of Kroger's strategy, and grow shareholder value. The Lead Director serves a variety of roles, consistent with current best practices, including:

- reviewing and approving Board meeting agendas, materials, and schedules to confirm that the appropriate topics are reviewed, with sufficient information provided to directors on each topic and appropriate time is allocated to each;
- serving as the principal liaison between the Chairman, management, and the independent directors;
- presiding at the executive sessions of independent directors and at all other meetings of the Board at which the Chairman is not present;
- calling meetings of independent directors at any time; and
- serving as the Board's representative for any consultation and direct communication, following a request, with major shareholders.

The independent Lead Director carries out these responsibilities in numerous ways, including by:

- facilitating communication and collegiality among the Board members;
- soliciting direct feedback from independent directors;
- overseeing the succession planning process, including meeting with a wide range of associates including corporate and division management associates;
- meeting with the CEO frequently to discuss strategy;
- serving as a sounding Board and advisor to the CEO;
- leading annual CEO evaluation process; and
- discussing Company matters with other directors between meetings.

Unless otherwise determined by the independent members of the Board, the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee is designated as the Lead Director. Ronald L. Sargent, an independent director and the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee, was appointed as our Board's independent Lead Director in June 2018.

Mr. Sargent is an effective Lead Director for Kroger due to, among other things, his:

- independence;
- deep strategic and operational understanding of Kroger obtained while serving as a Kroger director;
- insight into corporate governance;
- experience as the CEO of an international ecommerce and brick and mortar retailer;
- experience on the Boards of other large publicly traded companies; and
- engagement and commitment to carrying out the role and responsibilities of the Lead Director.

With respect to the roles of Chairman and CEO, the *Guidelines* provide that the Board will determine whether it is in the best interests of Kroger and its shareholders for the roles to be combined. The Board exercises this judgment as it deems appropriate in light of prevailing circumstances. The Board believes that this leadership structure improves the Board's ability to focus on key policy and operational issues and helps the Company operate in the long-term interest of shareholders. Additionally, this structure provides an effective balance between strong Company leadership and appropriate safeguards and oversight by independent directors. Our CEO's strong background in finance, operations, and strategic partnerships is particularly important to the Board given Kroger's current growth strategy. Our CEO's consistent leadership, deep industry expertise, and extensive knowledge of the Company are also especially critical in the midst of the rapidly evolving retail and digital landscape. The Board believes that the structure of the Chairman and independent Lead Director position should continue to be considered as part of the succession planning process.

## **Annual Board Evaluation Process**

The Board and each of its Committees conduct an annual evaluation to determine whether the Board is functioning effectively both at the Board and at the Committee levels. As part of this annual evaluation, the Board assesses whether the current leadership structure and function continues to be appropriate for Kroger and its shareholders, including in consideration of director succession planning.

Every year, the Board's goal is to increase the effectiveness of the Board and the results of these evaluations are used for this purpose. The Board recognizes that a robust evaluation process is an essential component of strong corporate governance practices and ensuring Board effectiveness. The Corporate Governance Committee oversees an annual evaluation process led by either the Lead Independent Director or an independent third party.

Each director completes a detailed annual evaluation of the Board and the Committees on which he or she serves and the Lead Director or an independent third-party conducts interviews with each of the directors. This year, the annual evaluation was conducted by the Lead Director.

Topics covered include, among others:

- The effectiveness of the Board and Board Committees and the active participation of all directors
- The Board and Committees' skills and experience and whether additional skills or experience are needed
- The effectiveness of Board and Committee meetings, including the frequency of the meetings
- Board interaction with management, including the level of access to management, and the responsiveness of management
- The effectiveness of the Board's evaluation of management performance
- Additional subject matters the Board would like to see presented at their meetings or Committee meetings
- Board's governance procedures
- The culture of the Board to promote participation in a meaningful and constructive way

The results of this Board evaluation are discussed by the full Board and each Committee, as applicable, and changes to the Board's and its Committees' practices are implemented as appropriate.

Over the past several years, this evaluation process has contributed to various enhancements in the way the Board and the Committees operate, including increased focus on continuous Board refreshment and diversity of its members as well as ensuring that Board and Committee agendas are appropriately focused on strategic priorities and provide adequate time for director discussion and input.

## Director Onboarding and Engagement

All directors are expected to invest the time and energy required to gain an in-depth understanding of our business and operations in order to enhance their strategic value to our Board. We develop tailored onboarding plans for each new director. We arrange meetings for each new director with appropriate officers and associates in order to familiarize him or her with the Company's strategic plans, financial statements, and key policies and practices. We also provide training on fiduciary obligations of board members and corporate governance topics, as well as committee-specific onboarding. From time to time, the Company will provide Board members with presentations from experts within and outside of the Company on topics relevant to the Board's responsibilities. Any member of the Board may attend accredited third-party training and the expenses will be paid by the Company. Board meetings are periodically held at a location away from our home office in a geography in which we operate. In connection with these Board meetings, our directors learn more about the local business environment through meetings with our regional business leaders and visits to our stores, competitors' stores, manufacturing facilities, distribution facilities, and/or customer fulfillment centers.

## Committees of the Board of Directors

To assist the Board in undertaking its responsibilities, and to allow deeper engagement in certain areas of company oversight, the Board has established five standing Committees: Audit, Compensation and Talent Development ("Compensation"), Corporate Governance, Finance, and Public Responsibilities. All Committees are composed exclusively of independent directors, as determined under the NYSE listing standards. Each Committee has the responsibilities set forth in its respective charter, each of which has been approved by the Board. The current charter of each Board Committee is available on our website at [ir.kroger.com](http://ir.kroger.com) under Investors — Governance — Corporate Governance Guidelines.

The current membership, 2022 meetings, and responsibilities of each Committee are summarized below.

Name of Committee, Number of Meetings, and Current Members	Primary Committee Responsibilities
<p><b>Audit Committee</b></p> <p><b>Meetings in 2022: 5</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b></p> <p>Anne Gates, <i>Chair</i></p> <p>Kevin M. Brown</p> <p>Karen M. Hoguet</p> <p>Ronald L. Sargent</p> <p>Ashok Vemuri</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees the Company's financial reporting and accounting matters, including review of the Company's financial statements and the audit thereof, the Company's financial reporting and accounting process, and the Company's systems of internal control over financial reporting</li> <li>• Selects, evaluates, and oversees the compensation and work of the independent registered public accounting firm and reviews its performance, qualifications, and independence</li> <li>• Oversees and evaluates the Company's internal audit function, including review of its audit plan, policies and procedures, and significant findings</li> <li>• Oversees enterprise risk assessment and risk management, including review of cybersecurity risks and regular reports received from management and independent third parties</li> <li>• Reviews significant legal and regulatory matters</li> <li>• Reviews and monitors the Company's operational and third-party compliance programs and updates thereto</li> <li>• Reviews Ethics Hotline reports and discusses material matters</li> <li>• Reviews and approves related party transactions</li> <li>• Conducts executive sessions with independent registered public accounting firm and Vice President, Internal Audit at each meeting</li> <li>• Conducts executive sessions with the Senior Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel, Vice President and Chief Ethics &amp; Compliance Officer, and Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer individually at least once per year</li> </ul>

Name of Committee, Number of Meetings, and Current Members	Primary Committee Responsibilities
<p><b>Compensation Committee</b></p> <p><b>Meetings in 2022: 5</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b>  Clyde R. Moore, <i>Chair</i>  Amanda Sourry  Mark S. Sutton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends for approval by the independent directors the compensation of the CEO and approves the compensation of senior officers</li> <li>• Administers the Company’s executive compensation policies and programs, including determining grants of equity awards under the plans</li> <li>• Reviews annual incentive plans and long-term incentive plan metrics and plan design</li> <li>• Reviews emerging legislation and governance issues and retail compensation trends</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s executive compensation peer group</li> <li>• Reviews CEO pay analysis</li> <li>• Reviews Human Capital Management, including Diversity, Equity, &amp; Inclusion</li> <li>• Has sole authority to retain and direct the Committee’s compensation consultant</li> <li>• Assists the full Board with senior management succession planning</li> <li>• Conducts executive sessions with Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer and independent compensation consultant</li> </ul>
<p><b>Corporate Governance Committee</b></p> <p><b>Meetings in 2022: 3</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b>  Ronald L. Sargent, <i>Chair</i>  Elaine L. Chao  Anne Gates  Clyde R. Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees the Company’s corporate governance policies and procedures</li> <li>• Develops criteria for selecting and retaining directors, including identifying and recommending qualified candidates to be director nominees</li> <li>• Designates membership and Chairs of Board Committees</li> <li>• Oversees and administers Board evaluation process</li> <li>• Reviews the Board’s performance</li> <li>• Establishes and reviews the practices and procedures by which the Board performs its functions</li> <li>• Reviews director independence, financial literacy, and designation of financial expertise</li> <li>• Administers director nomination process</li> <li>• Interviews and nominates candidates for director election</li> <li>• Reviews compliance with share ownership guidelines</li> <li>• Reviews and participates in shareholder engagement</li> <li>• Reviews and establishes independent director compensation</li> <li>• Oversees the annual CEO evaluation process conducted by the full Board</li> </ul>

Name of Committee, Number of Meetings, and Current Members	Primary Committee Responsibilities
<p><b>Finance Committee</b></p> <p><b>Meetings in 2022: 6</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b>  Karen M. Hoguet, <i>Chair</i>  Nora A. Aufreiter  Amanda Sourry  Mark Sutton  Ashok Vemuri</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees the Company’s financial affairs and management of the Company’s financial resources</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s annual and long-term financial plans, capital spending plans, capital allocation strategy, and use of cash</li> <li>• Approves and recommends for approval to the Board certain capital expenditures</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s dividend policy and share buybacks</li> <li>• Reviews strategic transactions, capital structure, including potential issuance of debt or equity securities, credit agreements, and other financing transactions</li> <li>• Monitors the investment management of assets held in pension and profit-sharing plans administered by the Company</li> <li>• Oversees the Company’s policies and procedures on hedging, swaps, risk management, and other derivative transactions</li> <li>• Oversees the Company’s engagement and relationships with, and standing in, the financial community</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Responsibilities Committee</b></p> <p><b>Meetings in 2022: 3</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b>  Nora A. Aufreiter, <i>Chair</i>  Kevin M. Brown  Elaine L. Chao  Ronald L. Sargent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviews the practices of the Company affecting its responsibility as a corporate citizen</li> <li>• Examines and reviews the Company’s practices related to environmental sustainability, and social impact, including but not limited to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ climate impacts</li> <li>✓ packaging</li> <li>✓ food and operational waste</li> <li>✓ food access</li> <li>✓ responsible sourcing</li> <li>✓ supplier diversity</li> <li>✓ people safety, food safety, and pharmacy safety</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Examines and reviews the Company’s ESG strategy</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s community engagement and philanthropy</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s advocacy and public policy</li> <li>• Reviews the Company’s communications and Corporate Brand stewardship</li> <li>• Assesses the Company’s effort in evaluating and responding to changing public expectations and public issues that affect the business</li> </ul>

## Shareholder Engagement

Maintaining ongoing relationships with our shareholders, and understanding our shareholders' views, is a priority for both our Board and management team. We have a longstanding history of engaging with our shareholders and through our investor relations program and our year-round governance outreach program, including participation for our independent directors. In 2022, under the direction of the Board, we requested engagement meetings with 34 shareholders representing 48% of our outstanding shares and subsequently met with 18 shareholders representing 41% of our outstanding shares (many of those shareholders we met with more than once). Some investors we contacted either did not respond or confirmed that a discussion was not needed at that time.



We conduct shareholder outreach throughout the year to engage with shareholders on issues that are important to them and us. During these engagements we discussed and solicited feedback on a range of topics, which informed Board discussions and decisions, including but not limited to:

### Business Strategy

- Kroger's growth strategy, priorities, and value drivers
- Our strong value creation model and recent performance

### ESG Practices & Disclosures

- Discussions with socially conscious investors and NGOs helped inform our new ESG strategy and long-term commitments
- Thriving Together, Kroger's ESG strategy, including long-term environmental sustainability, social impact, and responsible sourcing commitments, progress updates, and steps being taken to achieve our ambitious goals
- Board oversight of ESG strategy and updated Committee responsibilities
- Kroger's ESG reporting and disclosures, including our alignment with the TCFD, SASB, and GRI reporting frameworks
- The centerpiece of our ESG strategy is Zero Hunger | Zero Waste, an industry-leading platform for collective action and systems change to end hunger in our communities and eliminate waste across our company

### Human Capital Management

- Our DE&I Framework for Action and steps we are taking to ensure our workforce reflects the communities we serve
- Our focus on our associates' well-being, including increasing our average hourly associate wage, comprehensive benefits, and opportunities for internal progression and leadership development training
- Workforce diversity reporting, including EEO-1 demographic disclosure
- Robust Board oversight of human rights in our supply chain

### **Compensation Structure**

- Overview of compensation program design and alignment of pay and performance
- Consideration of short- and long-term metrics, including financial and non-financial metrics, such as ESG metrics
- The balance of equity and cash compensation, as well as fixed versus at risk compensation

### **Board and Board Oversight**

- Our Board's approach to board refreshment considering diversity, balance of tenure, and alignment of board skills and experience with Kroger's current and long-term business strategies
- Board and Committee responsibilities for oversight of ESG priorities, and approach to risk management

Discussions with socially conscious investors and NGOs helped inform our ESG strategy and long-term commitments. Overall shareholders expressed appreciation for the opportunity to have an ongoing discussion and were complementary of Kroger's ESG practices. Specifically, shareholders recognized the actions we took to formalize our ESG strategy, Thriving Together, and how our Board oversees this strategy, including our ESG targets and initiatives. These conversations provided valuable insights into our shareholders' evolving perspectives, which were shared with our full Board.

### **Board's Response to Shareholder Proposals**

Accountability to our shareholders continues to be an important component of our success. We actively engage with our shareholder proponents. Every year, following our Annual Shareholders' Meeting, our Corporate Governance Committee considers the voting outcomes for shareholder proposals. In addition, our Corporate Governance Committee and other Committees, as appropriate, consider proposed courses of action in light of the voting outcomes for shareholder proposals under their oversight, as well as feedback provided directly from our shareholders.

### **Director Nominee Selection Process**

The Corporate Governance Committee is responsible for recommending to the Board a slate of nominees for election at each annual meeting of shareholders. The Corporate Governance Committee recruits candidates for Board membership through its own efforts and through recommendations from other directors and shareholders. In addition, the Corporate Governance Committee retains an independent, third-party search firm to assist in identifying and recruiting director candidates who meet the criteria established by the Corporate Governance Committee.

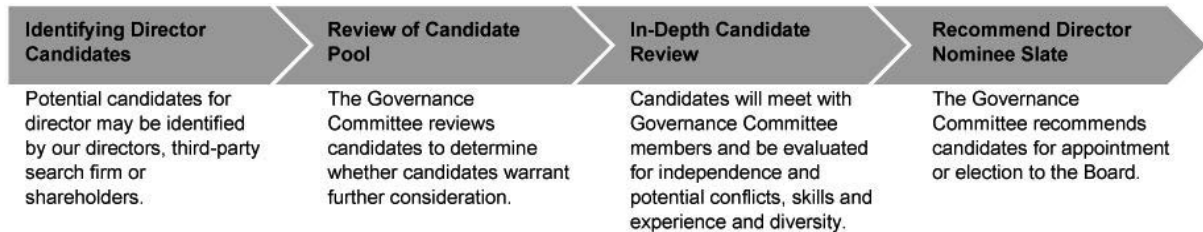
These criteria are:

- demonstrated ability in fields considered to be of value to the Board, including business management, retail, consumer, operations, technology, financial, sustainability, manufacturing, public service, education, science, law, and government;
- experience in high growth companies and nominees whose business experience can help the Company innovate and derive new value from existing assets;
- highest standards of personal character and conduct;
- willingness to fulfil the obligations of directors and to make the contribution of which he or she is capable, including regular attendance and participation at Board and Committee meetings, and preparation for all meetings, including review of all meeting materials provided in advance of the meeting; and
- ability to understand the perspectives of Kroger's customers, taking into consideration the diversity of our customers, including regional and geographic differences.

Additionally, in connection with the use of an independent, third-party search firm to identify director candidates, the Corporate Governance Committee will instruct the firm to include in its initial list qualified female and racially/ethnically diverse candidates.

The Corporate Governance Committee also considers diversity, as discussed in detail under “Board Diversity” above, and the specific experience and abilities of director candidates in light of our current business, strategy, and structure, and the current or expected needs of the Board in its identification and recruitment of director candidates.

The criteria for Board membership applied by the Corporate Governance Committee in its evaluation of potential Board members does not vary based on whether a candidate is recommended by our directors, a third-party search firm, or shareholders.



### Candidates Nominated by Shareholders

The Corporate Governance Committee will consider shareholder recommendations for director nominees for election to the Board. If shareholders wish to nominate a person or persons for election to the Board at our 2024 annual meeting, written notice must be submitted to Kroger’s Secretary, and received at our executive offices, in accordance with Kroger’s Regulations, not later than March 28, 2024. Such notice should include the name, age, business address, and residence address of such person, the principal occupation or employment of such person, the number of Kroger common shares owned of record or beneficially by such person and any other information relating to the person that would be required to be included in a proxy statement relating to the election of directors. The Secretary will forward the information to the Corporate Governance Committee for its consideration. The Corporate Governance Committee will use the same criteria in evaluating candidates submitted by shareholders as it uses in evaluating candidates identified by the Corporate Governance Committee, as described above. See “Director Nominee Selection Process.”

Additionally, to comply with the universal proxy rules, shareholders who intend to solicit proxies in support of director nominees other than our nominees must provide notice to Kroger’s Secretary that sets forth the information required by Rule 14a-19 of the Exchange Act no later than April 23, 2024, and must comply with the additional requirements of Rule 14a-19(b).

Eligible shareholders have the ability to submit director nominees for inclusion in our proxy statement for the 2024 annual meeting of shareholders. To be eligible, shareholders must have owned at least 3% of our common shares for at least three years. Up to 20 shareholders are able to aggregate for this purpose. Nominations must be submitted to our Corporate Secretary at our principal executive offices no earlier than December 14, 2023 and no later than January 13, 2024.

### Corporate Governance Guidelines

The Board has adopted the *Guidelines*, which provide a framework for the Board’s governance and oversight of the Company. The *Guidelines* are available on our website at [ir.kroger.com](http://ir.kroger.com) under Investors — Governance — Corporate Governance Guidelines. Shareholders may also obtain a copy of the *Guidelines*, at no cost, by making a written request to Kroger’s Secretary at our executive offices. Certain key principles addressed in the *Guidelines* are summarized below.

## Independence

The Board has determined that all of the current independent directors and nominees have no material relationships with Kroger and satisfy the criteria for independence set forth in Rule 303A.02 of the NYSE Listed Company Manual. Therefore, all independent directors and nominees are independent for purposes of the NYSE listing standards. The Board made its determination based on information furnished to the Company by each of the directors regarding their relationships with Kroger and its management, and other relevant information. The Board considered, among other things, that

- the value of any business transactions between Kroger and entities with which the directors are affiliated falls below the thresholds identified by the NYSE listing standards, and
- no directors had any material relationships with Kroger other than serving on our Board.

## Audit Committee Independence and Expertise

The Board has determined that Anne Gates, Karen M. Hoguet, Ronald L. Sargent, and Ashok Vemuri, independent directors, each of whom is a member of the Audit Committee, are “Audit Committee financial experts” as defined by applicable Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) regulations and that all members of the Audit Committee are “financially literate” as that term is used in the NYSE listing standards and are independent in accordance with Rule 10A-3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

## Code of Ethics

The Board has adopted *The Kroger Co. Policy on Business Ethics*, applicable to all officers, associates, and directors, including Kroger’s principal executive, financial, and accounting officers. The *Policy on Business Ethics* is available on our website at [ir.kroger.com](http://ir.kroger.com) under Investors — Governance — Policy on Business Ethics. Shareholders may also obtain a copy of the *Policy on Business Ethics* by making a written request to Kroger’s Secretary at our executive offices.

## Communications with the Board

The Board has established two separate mechanisms for shareholders and interested parties to communicate with the Board. Any shareholder or interested party who has concerns regarding accounting, improper use of Kroger assets, or ethical improprieties may report these concerns via the toll-free hotline (800-689-4609) or website ([ethicspoint.com](http://ethicspoint.com)) established by the Board’s Audit Committee. The concerns are investigated by Kroger’s Vice President, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, and the Vice President of Internal Audit and reported to the Audit Committee as deemed appropriate.

Shareholders or interested parties also may communicate with the Board in writing directed to Kroger’s Secretary at our executive offices. Communications relating to personnel issues, ordinary business operations, or companies seeking to do business with us, will be forwarded to the business unit of Kroger that the Secretary deems appropriate. Other communications will be forwarded to the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee for further consideration. The Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee will take such action as he or she deems appropriate, which may include referral to the full Corporate Governance Committee or the entire Board.

## Executive Officer Succession Planning

The *Guidelines* provide that the Compensation Committee will review Company policies and programs for talent development and evaluation of executive officers, and will review management succession planning. In connection with the use of a third-party search firm to identify external candidates for executive officer positions, including the chief executive officer, the Board and/or the Company, as the case may be, will instruct the third-party search firm to include in its initial list qualified female and racially/ethnically diverse candidates.

## Attendance

The Board held 14 meetings in fiscal year 2022. During fiscal 2022, all incumbent directors attended at least 75% of the aggregate number of meetings of the Board and Committees on which that director served. Members of the Board are expected to use their best efforts to attend all annual meetings of shareholders. All Board members attended last year’s virtual annual meeting.

## **Independent Compensation Consultants**

The Compensation Committee directly engages a compensation consultant to advise the Compensation Committee in the design of Kroger's executive compensation. The Committee retained Korn Ferry Hay (US) ("Korn Ferry") beginning in December 2017. Retained by – and reporting directly to – the Compensation Committee, Korn Ferry provided the Committee with assistance in evaluating Kroger's executive compensation programs and policies.

In fiscal 2022, Kroger paid Korn Ferry \$402,007 for work performed for the Compensation Committee. Kroger, on management's recommendation, retained Korn Ferry to provide other services for Kroger in fiscal 2022 for which Kroger paid \$69,500. These other services primarily related to salary surveys, benchmarking, integrated reporting, and operational finance review. The Compensation Committee expressly approved Korn Ferry performing these additional services. After taking into consideration the NYSE's independence standards and the SEC rules, the Compensation Committee determined that Korn Ferry was independent, and their work has not raised any conflict of interest.

The Compensation Committee may engage an additional compensation consultant from time to time as it deems advisable.

## **Compensation Committee Interlocks and Insider Participation**

No member of the Compensation Committee was an officer or associate of Kroger during fiscal 2022, and no member of the Compensation Committee is a former officer of Kroger or was a party to any related person transaction involving Kroger required to be disclosed under Item 404 of Regulation S-K. During fiscal 2022, none of our executive officers served on the Board of directors or on the compensation Committee of any other entity that has or had executive officers serving as a member of Kroger's Board of Directors or Compensation Committee of the Board.

## **The Board's Role in Risk Oversight**

While risk management is primarily the responsibility of Kroger's management team, the Board is responsible for strategic planning and overall supervision of our risk management activities. The Board's oversight of the material risks faced by Kroger occurs at both the full Board level and at the Committee level, each of which may engage advisors and experts from time to time to provide advice and counsel on risk-related matters.

We believe that our approach to risk oversight optimizes our ability to assess inter-relationships among the various risks, make informed cost-benefit decisions, and approach emerging risks in a proactive manner for Kroger. We also believe that our risk oversight structure complements our current Board leadership structure, as it allows our independent directors, through the five fully independent Board Committees, and in executive sessions of independent directors led by the Lead Director, to exercise effective oversight of the actions of management's identification of risk and implementation of effective risk management policies and controls.

The Board receives presentations throughout the year from various department and business unit leaders that include discussion of significant risks, including newly identified and evolving high priority risks. When new risks are identified, management conducts, and either the full Board or the appropriate Board committee reviews and discusses, an enterprise risk assessment related to such new risks which may include human capital, supply chain, associate and customer health and safety, legal, regulatory, and other risks. Management and the Board then discuss the relative severity of each category of risk as well as mitigating actions and considerations relating to disclosures of material risks.

At each Board meeting, the CEO addresses matters of particular importance or concern, including any significant areas of risk, such as newly identified risks, that require Board attention. Additionally, through dedicated sessions focusing entirely on corporate strategy, the full Board reviews in detail Kroger's short- and long-term strategies, including consideration of significant risks facing Kroger – either immediately or longer term – and their potential impact. The independent directors, in executive sessions led by the Lead Director, address matters of particular concern, including significant areas of risk, that warrant further discussion or consideration outside the presence of Kroger employees. At the committee level, reports are given by management subject matter experts to each Committee on risks within the scope of their charters. Each Committee reports to the full Board at each meeting, including any areas of risk discussed by the Committee.

The Audit Committee has oversight responsibility not only for financial reporting of Kroger's major financial exposures and the steps management has taken to monitor and control those exposures, but also for the effectiveness of management's processes that monitor and manage key business risks facing Kroger, as well as the major areas of risk exposure, and management's efforts to monitor and control the major areas of risk exposure. The Audit

Committee incorporates its risk oversight function into its regular reports to the Board and also discusses with management its policies with respect to risk assessment and risk management.

Our Vice President, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer provides regular updates to the Audit Committee on our compliance risks and actions taken to mitigate that risk. In addition, the Audit Committee is charged with oversight of data privacy and cybersecurity risks. Protection of our customers' data is a fundamental priority for our Board and management team. Our Chief Information Officer and our Chief Information Security Officer provide updates at each quarterly Committee meeting on our cybersecurity risks and actions taken to mitigate that risk to the Audit Committee and meet with the full Board at least annually. The Chief Information Security Officer reports on compliance and regulatory issues, continuously evolving threats and mitigating actions, and presents a NIST Cybersecurity Framework Scorecard to the Audit Committee. In overseeing cybersecurity risks, the Audit Committee focuses on thematic issues within an aggregated strategic lens and uses a risk-based approach. Oversight of cybersecurity risk incorporates strategy metrics, third party assessments, and internal audit and controls. Finally, an independent third party also regularly reports to the Audit Committee/Board on cybersecurity and outside counsel advises the Board about best practices for cybersecurity oversight by the Board, and the evolution of that oversight over time. Management also reports on strategic key risk indicators, ongoing initiatives, and significant incidents and their impact.

### ***Board Oversight of Environmental, Sustainability, and Governance***

We are aligned with the desire of our customers, associates, and shareholders to engage in our communities and reduce our impacts on the environment while continuing to create positive economic value over the long-term. Given the breadth of topics and their importance to us, all of our Board Committees have direct oversight of environmental, social, and governance topics. ESG topics our Board Committees oversee are as follows:

<b>Audit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal &amp; Regulatory</li> <li>• Ethics</li> <li>• Operational and Third-Party Compliance</li> <li>• Data Privacy &amp; Cyber Security</li> <li>• Financial Integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Compensation &amp; Talent Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Capital Management</li> <li>• Talent Development</li> <li>• Executive Compensation</li> <li>• Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board recruitment/diversity</li> <li>• Board succession</li> <li>• Shareholder engagement program</li> <li>• Shareholder advisory votes &amp; shareholder proposals</li> <li>• Independent director compensation</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital spending to ensure consistency with ESG strategy and goals</li> </ul>
<b>Public Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Climate Impacts</li> <li>✓ Packaging</li> <li>✓ Food Waste (<i>Zero Waste</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Social Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Food Access and Affordability (<i>Zero Hunger</i>)</li> <li>✓ Local Communities</li> <li>✓ Philanthropy</li> <li>✓ Responsible Sourcing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Human Rights</li> <li>➢ Animal Welfare</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Food</li> <li>✓ People</li> <li>✓ Pharmacy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Advocacy &amp; Public Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government Relations</li> <li>✓ Political action (KroPAC)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Communications &amp; Brand Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Associate &amp; External Communications</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Stakeholder Relations</li> </ul>

Our commitment to ESG matters is not new. Our Public Responsibilities Committee was established in 1977. For the past 16 years, our Company has prepared and produced an annual report describing our progress and initiatives regarding sustainability and other ESG matters. For the most recent information regarding our ESG initiatives and related matters, please visit <https://www.thekrogerco.com/esgreport/>. The information on, or accessible through, this website is not part of, or incorporated by reference into, this proxy statement.

In addition, our full Board oversees issues related to diversity and inclusion within the Kroger workplace. Diversity and inclusion have been deeply rooted in Kroger's values for decades. We are committed to fostering an environment of inclusion in the workplace, marketplace, and workforce where the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and ideas are valued and appreciated. Kroger's corporate team and retail divisions have strategic collaborations with universities, educational institutions, and community organizations to improve how we attract candidates from all backgrounds and ethnicities for jobs at all levels. Diversity and inclusion will continue to be a key ingredient in feeding Kroger's innovation, long-term sustainability, and the human spirit.

The Kroger family of companies provides inclusion training to all management and all hourly associates. Most work locations (stores, plants, distribution centers, and offices) have an inclusion-focused team, called Our Promise team. The teams work on projects that reflect Kroger's values, offer leaders valuable feedback and suggestions on improving diversity and inclusion, and facilitate communication to champion business priorities.

### *Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*

Kroger's Chief People Officer leads Human Resources & Labor Relations, which includes our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion team. This function — with human resources professionals in place across our lines of business and retail divisions — advocates for and fosters an associate experience that reflects our Values. It also monitors and measures progress toward goals and identifies potential opportunities for improvement.

Kroger publicly affirmed our commitment with our Framework for Action: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, a 10-point plan outlining short- and longer-term steps developed with associates and leaders to promote greater change in the workplace and the communities we serve. This framework outlines five focus areas: Create More Inclusive Culture, Develop Diverse Talent, Advance Diverse Partnerships, Advance Equitable Communities, and Deeply Listen and Report Progress. More details about the plan are available here: <https://www.thekrogerco.com/community/standing-together/>. The information on, or accessible through, this website is not part of, or incorporated by reference into, this proxy statement.

### *Enabling Connections*

As part of the framework, we committed to provide inclusion training for our associates. More than 661,000 leaders and associates have completed diversity and inclusion training since 2020. In 2020, Kroger formed an internal Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Advisory Council comprised of leaders from across the organization. The Council works closely with our executive leadership team and other business leaders to identify opportunities and action steps for improvement. We also created an Associate Influencer Group to facilitate representation and input from all levels of the company.

Kroger also operates 15 internal Associate Resource Groups (ARGs), or affinity groups, some of which also have local chapters. These groups enable stronger connections across our family of companies, lift up shared experiences, promote personal and professional growth, and influence business decisions. Kroger leaders sponsor and personally engage with the ARGs.

### *Workplace Equity*

Kroger strives to attract, retain, and develop diverse leaders and associates who reflect the communities we serve. We offer accessible employment for a wide range of people across the country. Because of our unique business model, we help unlock economic opportunity for more than 430,000 people of all ages and aspirations, from those wanting an entry-level part-time job to graduate-degree specialists across corporate functions.

Kroger strategically invests in our associates' growth and movement across levels, lines of business, and geographies. Our goal is to shift the demographic representation of women and people of color at company-wide and local levels to reflect our changing country, communities, and neighborhoods. The Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Advisory Council helps define aspirations for our workforce of the future.

### *Community Engagement*

As part of our Framework for Action, the Company also pledged to invest in advancing equitable communities. Kroger directed a total of \$10 million to establish and advance The Kroger Co. Foundation's Racial Equity Fund in 2020. To date, the Foundation has directed \$5.7 million in grants to organizations driving positive change at national and local levels.

In 2022, the Foundation directed \$1 million to The Asian American Foundation to support the Asian-American community. As part of its continuing relationship with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, the Foundation also hosted its second annual Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Innovation Challenge. During the three-day business pitch competition with 36 students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the U.S., the Foundation awarded a total of \$75,000 in scholarships. In collaboration with Proctor & Gamble, the Foundation also introduced the Game Changers Scholarship program and awarded \$25,000 in scholarships to five diverse female students in the Greater Cincinnati area.

## Director Compensation

### 2022 Director Compensation

The following table describes the fiscal year 2022 compensation for independent directors. Mr. McMullen does not receive compensation for his Board service.

Name	Fees Earned or Paid in		Change in Pension Value and Nonqualified Deferred Compensation <sup>(2)</sup>	Total
	Cash	Stock Awards <sup>(1)</sup>		
Nora A. Aufreiter	\$114,691	\$186,382	\$0	\$301,073
Kevin M. Brown	\$109,704	\$186,382	\$0	\$296,086
Elaine L. Chao	\$99,731	\$186,382	\$0	\$286,113
Anne Gates	\$134,637	\$186,382	\$0	\$321,019
Karen M. Hoguet	\$124,664	\$186,382	\$0	\$311,046
Clyde R. Moore	\$119,677	\$186,382	—	\$306,059
Ronald L. Sargent	\$162,063	\$186,382	\$5,282	\$353,727
Amanda Sourry	\$99,731	\$186,382	\$0	\$286,113
Mark S. Sutton	\$99,731	\$186,382	\$0	\$286,113
Ashok Vemuri	\$109,704	\$186,382	\$0	\$296,086

- (1) Amounts reported in the Stock Awards column represent the aggregate grant date fair value of the annual incentive share award, computed in accordance with FASB ASC Topic 718. On July 13, 2022, each independent director then serving received 3,887 incentive shares with a grant date fair value of \$186,382.
- (2) The amount reported for Mr. Sargent represents preferential earnings on nonqualified deferred compensation. For a complete explanation of preferential earnings, please refer to footnote 4 to the Summary Compensation Table. Mr. Moore's pension value decreased by \$210,996 which represents the change in actuarial present value of his accumulated benefit under the pension plan for independent directors. This change in value of accumulated pension benefits is not included in the Director Compensation Table because the value decreased. Pension values may fluctuate significantly from year to year depending on a number of factors, including age, average annual earnings, and the assumptions used to determine the present value, such as the discount rate. The decrease in the actuarial present value of his accumulated pension benefit for 2022 is primarily due to the increase in the discount rate as well as the change in value due to aging.

### Annual Compensation

Each independent director receives an annual cash retainer of \$100,000. The Lead Director receives an additional annual retainer of \$37,500 per year; the members of the Audit Committee each receive an additional annual retainer of \$10,000; the Chair of the Audit Committee receives an additional annual retainer of \$25,000; the Chair of the Compensation Committee receives an additional annual retainer of \$20,000; and the Chair of each of the other Committees receives an additional annual retainer of \$15,000. Each independent director also receives an annual grant of incentive shares (Kroger common shares) with a value of approximately \$185,000.

The Board has determined that compensation of independent directors must be competitive on an ongoing basis to attract and retain directors who meet the qualifications for service on the Board. Independent director compensation was adjusted in 2021 and will be reviewed from time to time as the Corporate Governance Committee deems appropriate.

### **Pension Plan**

Independent directors first elected prior to July 17, 1997 receive an unfunded retirement benefit equal to the average cash compensation for the five calendar years preceding retirement. Only Mr. Moore is eligible for this benefit. Benefits begin at the later of actual retirement or age 65.

### **Nonqualified Deferred Compensation**

We also maintain a deferred compensation plan for independent directors. Participants may defer up to 100% of their cash compensation and/or the receipt of all (and not less than all) of the annual award of incentive shares.

#### ***Cash Deferrals***

Cash deferrals are credited to a participant's deferred compensation account. Participants may elect from either or both of the following two alternative methods of determining benefits:

- interest accrues until paid out at the rate of interest determined prior to the beginning of the deferral year to represent Kroger's cost of ten-year debt; and/or
- amounts are credited in "phantom" stock accounts and the amounts in those accounts fluctuate with the price of Kroger common shares.

In both cases, deferred amounts are paid out only in cash, based on deferral options selected by the participant at the time the deferral elections are made. Participants can elect to have distributions made in a lump sum or in quarterly installments, and may make comparable elections for designated beneficiaries who receive benefits in the event that deferred compensation is not completely paid out upon the death of the participant.

#### ***Incentive Share Deferrals***

Participants may also defer the receipt of all (and not less than all) of the annual award of incentive shares. Distributions will be made by delivery of Kroger common shares within 30 days after the date which is six months after the participant's separation of service.

#### ***Director Stock Ownership Guidelines***

Independent directors are required to own shares equivalent to five times their annual base cash retainer. For more details on the Stock Ownership Guidelines, see page 60.

### Beneficial Ownership of Common Stock

The following table sets forth the common shares beneficially owned as of April 24, 2023 by Kroger's directors, the NEOs, and the directors and executive officers as a group. The percentage of ownership is based on 723,532,073 of Kroger common shares outstanding on April 24, 2023. Shares reported as beneficially owned include shares held indirectly through Kroger's defined contribution plans and other shares held indirectly, as well as shares subject to stock options exercisable on or before June 23, 2023. Except as otherwise noted, each beneficial owner listed in the table has sole voting and investment power with regard to the common shares beneficially owned by such owner. Unless otherwise indicated, the address of each of the beneficial owners listed below is c/o The Kroger Co., Corporate Secretary, 1014 Vine Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202.

Name	Amount and Nature of Beneficial Ownership <sup>(1)</sup>	Options Exercisable on or before June 23, 2023 – included in column (a)
Stuart W. Aitken <sup>(2)</sup>	441,766	260,420
Nora A. Aufreiter <sup>(3)</sup>	48,543	—
Kevin M. Brown	11,004	—
Elaine L. Chao <sup>(3)</sup>	8,036	
Yael Cosset	399,835	248,377
Anne Gates <sup>(3)</sup>	43,125	—
Karen M. Hoguet <sup>(4)</sup>	19,552	—
Timothy A. Massa	506,660	311,704
W. Rodney McMullen	6,353,306	2,772,130
Gary Millerchip	540,043	354,620
Clyde R. Moore	121,423	—
Ronald L. Sargent <sup>(3)</sup>	180,871	—
Amanda Sourry	11,004	—
Mark S. Sutton <sup>(3)</sup>	38,452	—
Ashok Vemuri	24,900	—
Directors and executive officers as a group (22 persons, including those named above)	9,988,204	4,579,577

- 
- (1) No director or officer owned as much as 1% of Kroger common shares. The directors and executive officers as a group beneficially owned 1.4% of Kroger common shares.
- (2) This amount includes 3,018 shares held by Mr. Aitken's spouse. He disclaims beneficial ownership of these shares.
- (3) This amount includes incentive share awards that were deferred under the deferred compensation plan for independent directors in the following amounts: Ms. Aufreiter, 10,037; Ms. Chao, 3,952; Ms. Gates, 12,100; Mr. Sargent, 55,960; Mr. Sutton, 6,909.
- (4) This amount includes 2,075 shares held by Ms. Hoguet's spouse. She disclaims beneficial ownership of these shares.

The following table sets forth information regarding the beneficial owners of more than five percent of Kroger common shares as of April 24, 2023 based on reports on Schedule 13G filed with the SEC.

Name	Address	Amount and Nature of Ownership	Percentage of Class
Berkshire Hathaway Inc.	3555 Farnam Street Omaha, NE 68131	50,000,000 <sup>(1)</sup>	7.0%
BlackRock, Inc.	55 East 52nd Street New York, NY 10055	65,963,885 <sup>(2)</sup>	9.2%
The Vanguard Group	100 Vanguard Blvd. Malvern, PA 19355	82,426,702 <sup>(3)</sup>	11.51%

- (1) Reflects beneficial ownership by Berkshire Hathaway Inc. as of December 31, 2022, as reported on Schedule 13G filed with the SEC on February 14, 2023, reporting shared voting power with respect to 50,000,000 common shares, and shared dispositive power with regard to 50,000,000 common shares.
- (2) Reflects beneficial ownership by BlackRock Inc., as of December 31, 2022, as reported on Amendment No. 15 to Schedule 13G filed with the SEC on January 24, 2023, reporting sole voting power with respect to 59,579,943 common shares, and sole dispositive power with regard to 65,963,885 common shares.
- (3) Reflects beneficial ownership by The Vanguard Group as of December 30, 2022, as reported on Amendment No. 8 to Schedule 13G filed with the SEC on February 9, 2023, reporting shared voting power with respect to 931,562 common shares, sole dispositive power of 79,719,502 common shares, and shared dispositive power of 2,707,200 common shares.

### Related Person Transactions

The Board has adopted a written policy requiring that any Related Person Transaction may be consummated or continue only if the Audit Committee approves or ratifies the transaction in accordance with the policy. A “Related Person Transaction” is one (a) involving Kroger, (b) in which one of our directors, nominees for director, executive officers, or greater than five percent shareholders, or their immediate family members, have a direct or indirect material interest; and (c) the amount involved exceeds \$120,000 in a fiscal year.

The Audit Committee will approve only those Related Person Transactions that are in, or not inconsistent with, the best interests of Kroger and its shareholders, as determined by the Audit Committee in good faith in accordance with its business judgment. No director may participate in any review, approval, or ratification of any transaction if he or she, or an immediate family member, has a direct or indirect material interest in the transaction.

Where a Related Person Transaction will be ongoing, the Audit Committee may establish guidelines for management to follow in its ongoing dealings with the related person and the Audit Committee will review and assess the relationship on an annual basis to ensure it complies with such guidelines and that the Related Person Transaction remains appropriate.