



Food Delivery Workers Coronavirus Demands

Australian food delivery workers are at the forefront of Australia's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The service which food delivery workers are providing is invaluable to stopping the spread of the virus and enabling people to stay safe in isolation. While doing so, food delivery workers are placing themselves at great personal risk. Most concerning is that despite the importance of their contribution, food delivery workers are being forced into desperate and life-threatening circumstances. These unsung heroes of Australia's Coronavirus response deserve our help and support.

Notwithstanding the attempts of some companies, food delivery workers still do not have access to workers compensation or sick leave if they contract the virus or need to isolate. Food delivery workers are not being provided basic safety equipment like masks and sanitisers or the ability to effectively minimise contact during deliveries. Food delivery workers continue to earn below minimum wage, and many are living below the poverty line. And recently announced Government support provisions are failing most food delivery workers who are on Student or Working-Holiday visas and unable to access financial and medical safety nets.

The Transport Workers Union, in conjunction with the Delivery Riders Alliance, urgently calls on the Australian Government and all Food Delivery Companies to act immediately to safeguard the crucial service food delivery workers are providing during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

1. Companies.

Food delivery companies are failing to take the necessary measures to protect delivery workers and the general public. A lack of safety protections, unsustainable pay, poor rostering, insurance and sick leave entitlements are threatening lives. All companies must ensure that:

- **Living wage.** Food delivery work is an essential service and should be treated as such. The industry as a whole must immediately lift pay to ensure that workers can make a living wage.
 - Workers must have access to a base hourly rate to improve their security.
 - An additional 'risk allowance' should be paid to ensure that workers who place themselves at danger in this time are adequately compensated for doing so.
- **Protective safety equipment.**
 - Food delivery companies must provide full safety equipment to all delivery workers. At a minimum this includes access to disposable gloves, hand sanitisers & face masks.
 - It is the responsibility of companies to purchase and distribute this equipment.



- **Paid sick leave.**
 - Workers who contract the virus, are exposed to the virus or display virus-like symptoms must be provided paid sick leave to isolate. Not doing so is placing workers and the public at risk.
 - Workers with health conditions making them particularly susceptible to the virus should be provide indefinite paid sick leave throughout the pandemic.
- **Workers compensation.** If workers are injured during this period they are left to fend for themselves. Medical costs including those for treating suspected Coronavirus may not be covered for the many visa holders who perform delivery work.
 - Food delivery companies must provide workers compensation insurance to cover injury and medical expenses associated with Coronavirus.
- **Contactless Delivery.** Food delivery workers must be able to work safely.
 - All delivery workers must be able to make contactless delivery. To date, some companies have only extended this option to customers and this has been a shocking disregard for the personal wellbeing and safety of delivery workers.
 - Steps must be taken to ensure that delivery workers can minimise all forms of contact, including that associated with access and egress of buildings.
- **Support for restaurants.** Delivery workers are seeing first-hand the devastation this virus is having for small restaurant business.
 - Food delivery companies must urgently reduce commissions to help support restaurants.

2. Government.

The Australian Government is failing to set standards throughout the food delivery industry, leading to increased risk for workers and the broader public. The Government must act to ensure that:

- **Legislation to Set Minimum Standards in Food Delivery.** Food delivery companies must be compelled to provide all the basic requirements discussed above. The best way to achieve this is to regulate to ensure a living wage, rights to sick leave, workers compensation, protective safety equipment and basic other rights for food delivery workers.
- **Extend Support for Visa-Holders.** Government income subsidies and benefits must be extended to all workers, regardless of visa status, to ensure that the livelihoods of migrant workers who are at the frontline of the Coronavirus response are supported. This must include access to wage and job seeker supplements.