

Amazon workers speak out

Ex-worker: I was close to heatstroke and Amazon forced me to keep working

Our reporters
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Hundreds of Amazon workers have signed up for the *International Amazon Workers Voice* newsletter in recent days. Workers continue to send in their horror stories of exploitation, and workers in fulfillment centers in North America, Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa are discussing the need for an international strategy to fight back.

Here is what workers are saying:

Amazon to worker on verge of heatstroke: keep working

Amazon tries to keep the lid on scenes like this one, described by an ex-Amazon worker who feared he would die on the job.

“I worked there [for Amazon] for a year and I was treated like complete trash,” the young worker said. “One day I actually got really bad heat exhaustion from there when I was trying to keep myself hydrated. I was on water bottle number seven by lunchtime and that still wasn’t cutting it. Everyone agreed at my fulfillment center that it was hotter than usual, and the managers weren’t doing anything about it.”

The company only cared about shipping its goods and making profit.

The worker continued, “I almost passed out while rebinning. I was taken to Amcare [the company medical team] and was told I was only allowed there for 20 minutes because I had to get back on the floor when they knew I was getting very close to having a heat stroke. They even said I was very close to having a

heat stroke. So I left Amazon that night and never returned because I felt like my life was more important than dying at the job. If I died there that night I would be number four on the list of people who died while working at my fulfillment center, and I didn’t want that.”

“Why not share the benefits of industrial progress, instead of accepting our fate as slaves for the rich?”

One former warehouse worker in the UK explained: “I worked in a warehouse in Manchester as a picker for XPO/Missguided under conditions very similar to those recounted by Amazon workers. Workers were demeaned with a barrage of dictatorial policies and pushed to the limit of physical and mental endurance. A few workers passed out due to overexertion.”

The worker continued, “Why shouldn’t society share equally the benefits of productive development? After all, it was the workers who built the warehouses, and the means of production and operations, not Bezos. Why not share the benefits of industrial progress, instead of accepting our fate as slaves for the rich? The social condition today is appalling and given the productive forces available, entirely medieval.”

No to nationalism! Unite Amazon workers across the world!

One worker in the UK messaged the *International Amazon Workers Voice* to report stressful and dangerous conditions at their facility. The worker thanked the IAWV for exposing Bezos' wealth, but said that part of the problem is that English workers are mistreated while Polish workers are favored.

The *International Amazon Workers Voice* responded:

“The rich want you to compete with workers of different national origins so that all workers don't unite and fight the real enemy: the rich. We are socialists, that means we're for the international unity of the working class, regardless of national origin. English workers have much more in common with workers from Poland than they do with David Cameron, and the Polish workers have more in common with you than they do with Polish oligarchs, too.

“Imagine how much power Amazon workers would have if they united in the US, UK, Poland, Germany, Mexico, China, Germany, India, and all over, in a common struggle for social equality. Divided by nationality, the workers are powerless. But united across the world, the working class is a powerful force that can change the course of history.”

The worker responded with a “thumbs-up.”

Amazon workers, if you have stories to share, sign-up for our newsletter and send them in the comments field. We keep all sources anonymous to protect from arbitrary firing.



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