

# UPS employee falls to her death at Worldport air hub in Louisville, Kentucky

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*Update 10/17: The original version of this story contained inaccuracies about the circumstances of the worker's death, which have been removed.*

A UPS worker fell to her death on Wednesday, October 5th, at the company's massive Worldport air hub in Louisville, Kentucky. The incident was ruled a suicide by Louisville Metro police, according to a short article by WLKY, a local TV station.

Several employees who contacted the station informed them that it happened shortly before 11 p.m. WLKY said they had reached out to the company, but they declined to release any details.

UPS spokesperson Jim Mayer said, "We worked with authorities last night to investigate an incident at Worldport" but refused to share any more information with local stations WDRB and WLKY.

The pandemic-induced online shopping boom had been a windfall for UPS. Gross revenue rose to nearly \$72 billion, and its U.S. workforce had increased to 396,000, making UPS one of the nation's largest employers. Since the pandemic began, their profits have risen by 37 percent, according to Macrotrends.

A UPS loader said on Facebook: "My heart is broken for this young woman's family and friends. All because UPS swept her mental health under the rug when she asked for help MULTIPLE times. They didn't even stop production in that building during the cleanup. Do better, PLEASE!"

One worker said, "So while we were working, supervisors came and passed out mental health pamphlets to reach out to counselors. That was always offered but not advertised like this until that happened. And they did not explain why they were passing them out. I heard from another employee that the suicide happened!"

The worker continued, "What makes me so mad is

that employees had to reach out to the news, not UPS. This girl was a human being." She continued, "No one knows her name either, and I understand the family might not want all details released, but the area this girl worked in didn't even stop production."

This is another tragic example of UPS's disregard for workers' safety and mental health. 24-year-old UPS driver Esteban Chavez Jr. of Downey, California, died from a heat stroke on June 26th. There is no air conditioning in UPS delivery vehicles, which resulted in numerous serious incidents during summer heat waves across the country.

The tragedy in Louisville is the latest in a series of workplace deaths. In another death with disturbing parallels, 67-year-old Thomas "Tank" McAuliffe fell to his death from a roof at the Stellantis Sterling Stamping plant in Detroit, in a suspected suicide. According to co-workers, he had been under stress. Several workers have died at the plant due to Covid or industrial accidents over the past three years.

Two brothers, Ben and Max Morrissey, died on September 20 in a BP Husky oil refinery in Oregon, Ohio. They were 32 and 34 years old. The company issued a statement expressing "deep sadness." BP has a terrible record of workplace deaths.

According to the AFL-CIO, there are 340 workplace deaths per day in the United States. In 2020, 4,700 workers died on the job. That year there were 3.2 million injuries due to hazardous workplace conditions.

There are only 1,700 OSHA inspectors for 10.4 million workplaces in the U.S, and the average federal penalty for a worker's death is only \$9,753. There have only been 115 deaths prosecuted since OSHA's inception in 1970.



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