

UPS workers speak out against company demands for massive concessions

Our reporters
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The World Socialist Web Site has received a significant amount of correspondence from UPS workers since it published an article Friday detailing the company's wage demands. The company's proposal would effectively create new tiers for both full- and part-time workers, cut wages for new full-time employees and freeze pay for new part-time workers, who make up two-thirds of the 340,000-strong workforce. At the same time, behind a screen of militant and angry-sounding rhetoric, the Teamsters bureaucracy is maneuvering to impose a contract that accepts all of the company's essential demands.

We are publishing a selection of comments below. If you want your voice to be heard, contact us by filling out the form at the bottom of this article. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

A driver in the Denver, Colorado area: I want UPS to get rid of 60 hour work weeks. Driving a truck for 12 hours a day for 5 days a week is absolutely ridiculous and unfair. They literally rape the drivers. Then sometimes they demand 6 days from us. This is a violation of our lives. They act as though we have no families. I [typically] expect two 14 hour shifts, two 12 hour shifts, and an 8 hour for my maximum 60 hours that UPS can get out of me most weeks.

A warehouse worker from Virginia: I am fairly certain I work in the same hub as this gentleman ... Everything he spoke of is true. The bathrooms and water issues are a constant problem, not to mention the time clocks. They are antiquated and don't work correctly sometimes. In the area I work in, we don't even have a time clock. We write in our name and start time, and pray that at some point a supervisor transcribes it all correctly. Many times that doesn't happen. I have lost countless paid time. The start times are also rarely posted on time, and can change at a

moments notice. I don't think a strike is a good thing for either side, but I will be happy to lay it all down and join the picket line ... Solidarity!

A warehouse worker from Northern California: Working conditions are pretty brutal, with start times being pushed as far as 5:15 AM and us not getting our guaranteed 3.5 hours. We are being pushed to get these trucks loaded. We are not allowed to stop the conveyor belt if we have bulk items that are big and heavy. All the other packages coming down behind them, we end up stacking outside the trucks and under the belt, but we can't get in a second or two to catch our breath once we get the bulk off the belt before we are hit with an abundance of packages again.

Yes this is the job requirement, but we really are busting our behinds in loading trucks in numerical order for drivers to get deliveries. Also, a lot of time there was supposed to be double time but we were not paid double time. And when we request a sick day, those requests are not being met.

Working conditions aren't too bad at our center, but the ways in which UPS goes about the guaranteed 3.5 is, they ask you if you want to go home, and if we don't say we want our 3.5 hours, we won't get them. I feel like, yes, they are giving us an option without being clear about the guaranteed hours.

A part-timer near Columbus, Ohio: I sincerely hope you are wrong about Sean O'Brien and the Teamsters. I work at UPS and work conditions are terrible. We as part timers are paid \$20.25 an hour. When I started we got paid \$22.50 an hour. If this contract doesn't bump us up to \$25, I can promise you not only will workers in our building strike but we will quit and find other careers. We aren't going to be beaten up by UPS any longer. And if the union isn't fighting for us we don't want any part of them either.

But like I said, I hope you are wrong about that.

A warehouse worker from Massachusetts:

Working conditions at UPS have become a big problem. I have worked in the UPS warehouse as a package handler, sorter as well as an irregular package handler. Harassment from management has gotten out of control. UPS used to be a great place to work, but ever since the pandemic, harassment has gotten worse. I've been with UPS for 16 years and was terminated more than 3 times for petty things. Giving one person over five different jobs throughout the building and demanding you get the job done, I think other UPSers would agree with me on that, enough is enough!

A worker from North Texas: I work on the 3rd story of a metal building with NO climate control in Texas. I have collapsed twice in the summer heat, and still have trouble working through the whole summer. It's a hostile work environment ... Supervisors either do nothing about it or their reports are ignored. The union has done nothing to help with our complaints ...

We haven't worked a full week of normal hours since January. We don't bring home enough on our pay checks to pay more than one bill, if even that, per check. And that's WITH the [market rate adjustment] in place.

We haven't been able to rely on the union backing us with the company for a few years now. We've been on our own to fight for ourselves with any problem that we have. All we want is to work in peace and safety. We want to be able to support ourselves and our families, without worrying where our next meal is coming from or how we'll put gas in our cars to get to work.

You want an idea of our working conditions? You come do our job for a week then take our paycheck and try to live on it, let's see how fast our working conditions and wages improve.

Another worker from Texas: The 22.4 [i.e., "hybrid driver"] idea was sold as inside workers that would occasionally do delivery work. We all knew that wouldn't happen. They are basically full-time package car drivers with lower pay and less protections than full time drivers.

The company creates such a stressful work environment with the harassment. Sensors on horns, brakes, doors, etc, and inward facing cameras in the cab, with managers following you to write you up if you didn't place your hand properly on the hand rail

when getting on or off the truck. Now they want drivers to park 20 feet away from anything, meaning more walking to and from the vehicle.

More packages, more stops, higher production requirements. And the company has started a new program in which they just don't deliver certain zip codes on certain days, even if the customer paid for next day delivery. It's disgraceful.

A part-time worker from southeast Michigan: I would love to see myself and all the part time workers that come in early in the morning to get the day started for deliveries paid at least \$25.00. If it wasn't for us coming early as 4 AM to get packages out, whether it's cold or hot [nothing would get done]. We deserve to be recognized as why the customers are getting their packages on time.

Also, with the economy so high now, most are struggling from paycheck to paycheck like myself. If UPS can't recognize that the people inside their facilities are making their business grow and moving their deliveries, then I'm all in for a strike. It's not fair for any of us to be treated like we're not the muscle behind the business!



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