

# COMMUNIQUE

Canadian Union of Postal Workers  
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## Gig Workers Await Historical Decision from Labour Board

*Final arguments made in hearings to determine the classification of Foodora workers*

**For immediate Release**

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TORONTO - The Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) today heard final arguments from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and Foodora Inc. in a case that will set precedents for gig workers in Ontario.

The misclassification of gig workers as independent contractors instead of dependent contractors or employees is being fought by Foodora couriers who are unionizing with CUPW.

“This is a historical moment for gig workers, not only in Ontario, but across the country and around the world,” says Jan Simpson, CUPW national president. “The labour board has the chance to do the right thing, end the misclassification of Foodora couriers, and allow these workers to join a union and fight for their rights.”

Foodora couriers and drivers announced their plans to unionize with CUPW in May 2019. In July, CUPW filed for union certification with the OLRB. A vote was held in August but the results remain sealed as contested issues, like the classification of workers, are now being discussed with the Board.

Since then, other gig workers have joined the struggle. Uber Black drivers at the Toronto airport recently voted to unionize with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and have stood side by side with the foodsters during OLRB hearings.

“Our campaign was just the beginning,” says Ivan Ostos, a Foodora courier and union organiser. “We’ve already inspired other workers like the Uber drivers in Toronto to stand up for their rights, and we will not stop until all gig and precarious workers have the rights and protections that all workers deserve.”

Companies like Foodora promise flexibility to couriers, saying that they’re independent contractors - their own boss. In doing so, they skirt standard labour rights, protections and avoid paying for even the most basic employment benefits like employment insurance. The couriers and drivers argue that they are dependent contractors since the companies control much of their work and administer discipline like any other boss.

“The labour movement is united in calling for decent work for all. The Ford Conservatives took away increased protections on misclassification that could have helped thousands of workers when he cut Bill 148,” said Janice Folk-Dawson, executive vice-president at the Ontario Federation of Labour. “We need provincial legislation that will protect all precarious workers including temporary, contract, and gig workers.”

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