

Foodora Canada and Delivery Hero Accused of Union-busting

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OTTAWA – The Canadian Union of Postal Workers alleges that Foodora Canada and its parent company Delivery Hero are breaking several sections of Ontario labour law, by closing down in order to defeat a union organizing drive.

The unfair labour practices complaint has been filed today with the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB). Anti-union actions, as CUPW alleges the closure to be, are illegal.

“Foodora may try to cut and run, but they can’t hide from their responsibilities,” says Jan Simpson, National President of CUPW. “Delivery Hero and Foodora made lots of money in this country on the backs of the couriers’ hard work in treacherous conditions, and these couriers don’t deserve to be abandoned in the uncertainty of a pandemic. They have rights and we’ll stand up for them.”

Delivery Hero posted revenue over \$1.4 Billion in 2019, and announced recently that sales had almost doubled in the first quarter of 2020, as the COVID-19 lockdowns took effect, and they expect the boost to their revenues to be long-lasting.

“It’s suspicious timing, then, for Foodora Canada to claim they can’t survive in this market. Couriers have been working hard to deal with the surge in demand, and now suddenly they don’t know how they’ll make ends meet in two weeks,” continued Simpson.

One of the reasons couriers wanted to unionize was that they had been repeatedly ignored when they raised concerns and suggested improvements to the business, and to their own safety. The Foodora couriers and CUPW won a landmark decision in February 2020 that affirmed their legal right to organize, for which the union had been arguing before the OLRB. Hearings are ongoing, and the board has not yet released the results of last August’s representation vote among the couriers.

A yes vote would have led to certification of CUPW as the couriers’ bargaining agent – one of the major objectives of the *Justice for Foodora Couriers* campaign.

During the voting – a five-day online ballot process – Foodora engaged in an anti-union campaign including threats to their livelihood via the very app that couriers use to interact with their employer – bringing about an unfair labour practices complaint from CUPW at the time, which has yet to be resolved.

The couriers themselves – who use the nickname foodsters, originally applied to them by Foodora – promptly regrouped to plan the future of their organizing drive.

“We’ll get each other through this,” said foodster Iván Ostos. “After this crisis passes, and after the COVID-19 pandemic passes, we’re still a dedicated group of workers prepared to step up and demand better conditions and rights for gig workers. We’ve built something together, something valuable. Our goals and our values mean as much as ever. Employers come and go but somebody has to deal with the gig economy. It’s about our survival and our future.”

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