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LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT



Amazon is launching a new delivery program and hiring thousands of drivers, with a warning against 'peeing in bottles'

Hayley Peterson November 6, 2018

Amazon is launching a new last-mile shipping program this holiday season.

For the first time, the company is planning to hire and manage thousands of full-time drivers to transport packages to customers from Amazon delivery outposts across the US, the company confirmed to Business Insider on Monday.

Amazon will manage these drivers directly, meaning the company will set their wages, provide them delivery vehicles, and schedule their routes. The drivers are seasonal but will have the option to apply to continue their employment with Amazon following the holiday season.

"Seasonal employees have long been utilized to supplement capacity during peak shopping periods," an Amazon spokeswoman said. "This holiday, thousands of full-time, seasonal Delivery Associates will deliver to customers during the busy retail shopping season."

In the past, instead of hiring drivers, Amazon has relied on delivery services provided by UPS, FedEx, and the US Postal Service, as well as contractors employed through its Flex delivery program and third-party courier companies it calls delivery service partners, or DSPs.

The company's move to hire its own drivers follows [a recent push to expand its network of DSPs](#). Amazon has been trying to grow its delivery options as the company's shipping costs have exploded, nearly doubling from 2015 to 2017, to \$21.7 billion.

The new delivery roles, however, could create some competition between Amazon and its contracted DSPs.

[Unlike drivers employed by DSPs](#), drivers employed by Amazon will qualify for the retailer's recently implemented [\\$15 minimum hourly wage](#).

Job postings for the new Amazon delivery jobs advertise hourly wages of \$16.25 to \$17.25. This could put some pressure on Amazon's DSPs to raise theirs to at least \$15.

Amazon also appears to be trying to create a more reasonable working environment for its own drivers.

At a training last week for new hires of the delivery program, an Amazon manager addressed [Business Insider's reporting on Amazon-affiliated drivers](#) who said they had urinated in bottles and skipped breaks on their delivery routes, according to an attendee, who asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution.

"They said they didn't want people peeing in bottles," this person said. "They also said that people weren't taking lunch breaks, and they said we have to take those."

Read more: [The disturbing accounts of Amazon delivery drivers may reveal the true human cost of 'free' shipping](#)

Shifts could still be strenuous and long, with the potential to last up to 12 hours, according to job postings for the new roles.

A job posting describes Amazon's new delivery role: "Under tight deadlines, drives a delivery van up to 10,000 pounds to many customer residences and businesses, climbs in and out of van, and walks up and down stairs as required to deliver packages according to established procedures in all weather conditions." It adds that candidates must have the "ability to lift, bend, reach above the head, kneel, crouch, and/or stretch during shifts up to 12 hours long."

