



December 27, 2023

The Honorable Olivier De Schutter  
Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights  
United Nations  
405 E 45th St.  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Special Rapporteur De Schutter,

We are writing in response to your letter, dated August 31, 2023. We appreciate the opportunity to share how the DoorDash platform offers greater financial security to millions of people in the United States and around the globe, while supporting hundreds of thousands local businesses that are the backbones of local economies the world over. We are particularly eager to do so because so many of the statements in the letter are based on grave misconceptions and inaccuracies about our business and the stakeholders we serve. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss further.

***DoorDash Powers Local Economies by Supporting Dashers with Respect and Dignity***

DoorDash co-founder and CEO Tony Xu moved to the United States from China as a child and grew up working in a restaurant alongside his mother, showing him first-hand the challenges—and opportunities—facing local businesses. The concept for DoorDash grew not only out of this experience but also from conversations he and his co-founders had with local merchants, asking what hurdles they faced in growing their own businesses. They heard again and again that small business owners were unable to fulfill delivery orders—they didn't have enough delivery orders consistently to hire staff on a full- or part-time basis—but that those orders could help them make payroll, pay rent, and even expand to additional locations. This provided the vision for DoorDash, and since our earliest days, we have worked to ensure that every business in the neighborhood can succeed and every community can flourish. To achieve this vision, we must ensure that our platform works for all of the people we serve: Dashers, merchants, and consumers. We provide Dashers the opportunity to earn on their own terms, offer local merchants of all kinds more ways to reach new consumers and grow their business, and connect consumers to the best of their neighborhoods.

Respect and dignity for all Dashers are core to our mission of empowering local economies. We are proud that throughout our 10-year history, the DoorDash platform has been able to drive

economic impacts that start locally and rise up through communities across the United States and around the world. Last year, millions of people used the DoorDash platform to “dash,” delivering for less than four hours per week on average. U.S. Dashers earned, on average, over \$25 per hour on delivery, and Dashers globally earned \$13 billion last year alone.<sup>1</sup> Unsurprisingly, an overwhelming majority of Dashers consistently say that they prefer to remain independent contractors,<sup>2</sup> and it's because this is supplemental work that enables them to earn extra income. The unique flexibility DoorDash offers is critical because nearly 9 in 10 Dashers have other priorities and commitments, from a full- or part-time job, to their own business, to school. And 60% of Dashers report combining dashing with other activities like running errands, commuting, or waiting to pick up their kids.<sup>3</sup>

DoorDash regularly makes data from our [Economic Impact Report](#) available to the public. From that data, we've learned that dashing provides important economic opportunity for millions of people:

- **87% of Dashers say they prefer to remain independent contractors;**
- **84% of Dashers already have a full- or part-time job or are primary caregivers, students, self-employed, or retired;**
- The average time Dashers spend on delivery across the U.S. is less than 4 hours per week;
- 75% of Dashers say dashing represents less than half of their household income;
- **35% of Dashers surveyed have dashed to avoid needing government benefits or payday loans;**
- 67% of Dashers surveyed have dashed to make up for lost income or reduced hours at their full- or part-time job;
- 76% of Dashers surveyed agree that they feel less stressed and anxious about their financial situation because they can dash whenever they need;
- Nearly all Dashers surveyed agree that dashing provides them with the opportunity to earn on their own schedule, with 94% of Dashers surveyed saying that dashing allows them more flexibility compared with other earnings opportunities they've had; and
- 86% of Dashers agree that dashing makes them feel more in control of their circumstances.

The DoorDash platform offers Dashers something that didn't exist even a few years ago: a flexible form of work that gives them a way to open an app and tap into a source of supplemental income that's there when they choose to work, but out of mind when they close the app.

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<sup>1</sup> *Measuring Our Impact* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), <https://about.doordash.com/en-us/impact/measuring-our-impact>.

<sup>2</sup> DoorDash, *Delivering the Goods The Impact of DoorDash in the United States*, at 16 (2023) [hereinafter *DoorDash Economic Impact Report*], <https://downloads.ctfassets.net/trvmqu12jq2l/6zLcMwJ9xOG7CtnYyovCMo/b87905ee2ee48b90abe7b471f4eabbc2/DoorDash-EIR-2022.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> *Behind the Dash: Insights into the Flexibility and Freedom of Dashing* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), <https://about.doordash.com/en-us/news/insights-into-the-flexibility-and-freedom-of-dashing>.

## ***DoorDash Supports Dashers with Flexible, Transparent Earnings Opportunities***

We want dashing to be economically rewarding and to appeal to even more people who are seeking greater financial security. That's why we prioritize communication and transparency with Dashers surrounding how they work on the platform and, importantly, how they are paid. We equip Dashers with the information they need to assess each offer to ensure they have control over their work. As described above, Dashers choose to earn with DoorDash because dashing offers them a way to earn extra income on their time. Dashers get paid for the work they choose to do when and where they choose to do it. Dashing works for millions of people because our platform is easy to understand and it's easy to get started. On our Dasher sign-up page,<sup>4</sup> we show exactly how pay works, including that DoorDash passes 100% of the customer tips that it receives to Dashers.

DoorDash looks to match each consumer order to a Dasher who is best positioned to make the delivery efficiently, based on factors like the location of the Dasher, the Dasher's mode of transportation, and whether the Dasher has any special equipment (e.g., a pizza bag) or special certifications (e.g., a military identification to deliver to a military base). When a Dasher decides to start dashing and receives an offer, they see on the screen the key details they need to decide whether they want to do that work - including the pick-up and drop-off locations, an estimate of the time the delivery would take, and a guaranteed amount of pay they'll receive if they complete that offer. This means that Dashers have the key information they need before deciding whether they want to accept any particular offer and, while the app can suggest a delivery route, if helpful, Dashers can always choose their own preferred route for delivery. Sometimes, the total amount of pay will end up being higher than this guaranteed amount, but it will never be lower.

After every dash, the Dasher can see an itemized earnings breakdown that shows how much of their earnings came from base pay, promotions or incentives, and 100% of customer tips. Base pay is higher for deliveries that require Dashers to travel a longer distance, that are expected to take more time, and that are less popular with Dashers. DoorDash's contribution to base pay or promotions does not vary based on the tip amount, and tips are not used to offset the base pay for any order. This and other information on Dasher pay are publicly available on our "How Dasher Pay Works" page.<sup>5</sup>

Dashers choose whether to work, when to work, and how much to work. Dashers are not asked to commit to any particular schedule. Even when they're logged into the Dasher app, Dashers do not have to do any work unless they choose to accept a delivery. And as long as a Dasher isn't in the middle of a delivery, they can take a break from dashing and have no obligation to return.

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<sup>4</sup> *Become a Dasher* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), <https://dasher.doordash.com>.

<sup>5</sup> *How Dasher Pay Works* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), <https://help.doordash.com/dashers/s/article/How-is-Dasher-pay-calculated>.

Dashers' time is theirs – even when dashing. Dashers can work for themselves or others (including DoorDash's competitors), even at the same time they're logged into the Dasher app.

### *Earn-by-Time*

For Dashers who prefer alternative earnings opportunities, we have begun offering Dashers in some areas the option to choose an alternative way to “earn-by-time,” which calculates base pay using a guaranteed hourly rate for the time Dashers spend on delivery (from accepting to completing the delivery). It's up to Dashers to choose which earning method they'd prefer, and DoorDash always passes 100% of customer tips it receives to Dashers, no matter which earning method they choose. We explain this new earning option on our website<sup>6</sup> and where it's available, in the Dasher application and through other communications to Dashers.

### *Occupational accident insurance*

Lastly, and importantly, DoorDash provides occupational accident insurance, at no cost, to cover Dashers for on-the-job injuries and resulting lost income. We are proud to have been the first company to provide that coverage to all US Dashers who use our platform.<sup>7</sup> That insurance provides each Dasher with \$1 million in coverage for medical expenses, plus coverage for income replacement.<sup>8</sup>

### ***DoorDash's Vision for the Future of Work is for Dashers to have Choice, Access, and Security***

Today, Dashers are independent contractors who enjoy unique flexibility. They choose when, where, and how to work. As described above, they can work as much or as little as they like, taking off weeks or months at a time, without checking with a boss. While nearly 90% of Dashers want to remain independent, DoorDash believes in making independent work even better for millions of people. We want to create a system where independent workers can accrue benefits that are proportional to the amount that they choose to work, portable between work on different platforms, and flexible to meet their unique needs - without sacrificing the independence that defines this kind of work.

- **Access:** Workers deserve the ability to access strong earning opportunities with low barriers to entry. We believe communities thrive when economic opportunity is readily available, which is why we're focused on creating a variety of work opportunities in markets where we operate.
- **Choice:** Workers should be able to earn in the way that best suits their needs, whether as

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<sup>6</sup> *Earn by Time Mode* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), <https://help.doordash.com/dashers/s/article/Time-Earnings-Mode>.

<sup>7</sup> DoorDash, Inc., *DoorDash Launches SafeDash: New Technology for Dasher Safety and Peace of Mind* (Nov. 3, 2021), <https://doordash.news/dasher/doordash-launches-safedash>.

<sup>8</sup> DoorDash, *Occupational Accident Policy FAQ* (last visited Dec. 14, 2024), [https://help.doordash.com/dashers/s/article/Occupational-Accident-Policy-FAQ?language=en\\_US](https://help.doordash.com/dashers/s/article/Occupational-Accident-Policy-FAQ?language=en_US).

an independent contractor or as an employee.

- *Security:* All workers should have access to benefits and protections. Under current law, independent contractors are not entitled to certain benefits and protections, and we believe that laws must be updated to make accessing benefits and protections easier.

While we firmly believe that all workers should have choice, access, and security no matter how they work, DoorDash has been engaged in conversations at all levels of government to solve these challenges for Dashers. We've identified legislative solutions that reflect the nature of app-based work, and enable DoorDash and platforms like it to ensure the independent contractors who work with us can continue working with the utmost flexibility, and gain access to new benefits and protections.

A promising approach is the concept of “portable benefits.” Under a portable-benefits model, workers like Dashers who work as independent contractors would be able to receive contributions toward benefits from the companies who contract with them. That means DoorDash, other app-based platforms (like rideshare), and other entities that work with independent contractors would contribute an additional amount – tied to a percentage of each worker’s earnings – to a portable-benefits account that belongs to the worker. A portable-benefits model would also give the worker, rather than the companies they work with, the power to decide how to deploy their benefits resources toward the benefits they want.

Dashers’ desire for control over their benefits is unsurprising, given that the vast majority dash just to supplement their income. Many Dashers already access benefits from other sources, so they don’t want benefits they could receive from dashing to duplicate benefits they already have. A portable-benefits model would let Dashers choose, based on their needs and circumstances, which benefits matter to them - such as retirement savings, plans for health, vision, or dental care, or lost-income protection.

We’ve supported portable-benefits proposals that have been introduced in several US states, including Massachusetts,<sup>9</sup> Pennsylvania,<sup>10</sup> and Wisconsin,<sup>11</sup> as well as bipartisan US federal legislation that would allocate funding for experiments with portable-benefits models.<sup>12</sup> These proposals would enable app-based workers like Dashers to earn benefits funds from multiple sources and control how those funds are used, without having to trade in their ability to work independently. More details on portable benefits and our vision for the future of work can be

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<sup>9</sup> H. 961, 193rd Gen. Ct., 30th Sess. (Mass. 2023), <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H961>.

<sup>10</sup> S. 967, 206th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Pa. 2023), <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/billinfo.cfm?year=2023&sind=0&body=S&type=B&bn=967>.

<sup>11</sup> S. 559, 2021 Leg., 106th Reg. Sess. (Wisc. 2023), <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/reg/sen/bill/sb559>.

<sup>12</sup> Sen. Mark R. Warner, *Lawmakers Reintroduce Bipartisan, Bicameral Legislation to Test Portable Benefit Models* (Feb. 17, 2022), <https://www.warner.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2022/2/lawmakers-reintroduce-bipartisan-bicameral-legislation-to-test-portable-benefit-models>.

found in our white paper.<sup>13</sup>

Thank you for affording us this opportunity to show how respect and dignity for all Dashers is core to our mission of empowering local economies and to outline DoorDash's vision for a future of work that affords access, choice, and security for Dashers and gig workers globally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max Rettig". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Max Rettig  
Vice President, Public Policy and Social Impact  
DoorDash, Inc.

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<sup>13</sup> DoorDash, *Our Vision for the Future of Work* (2022), [https://assets.ctfassets.net/trvmqu12jq2l/2arS7Vk1FDCCyJMaqdal4z/ab316b999f69f651efada43ce23cb992/DoorDash-Future\\_of\\_Work.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/trvmqu12jq2l/2arS7Vk1FDCCyJMaqdal4z/ab316b999f69f651efada43ce23cb992/DoorDash-Future_of_Work.pdf)