

Many Instacart shoppers reportedly still waiting on safety kits the company promised

Some workers for grocery delivery platform Instacart are still waiting on the safety kits the company promised two weeks ago, according to a new report in *Wired*. And, according to shoppers *Wired* spoke with, the process to receive the kits was confusing and cumbersome.

Instacart said March 29th it would distribute hand sanitizer to all its full-service shoppers, most of whom are independent contractors. On April 2nd, the company said the shoppers would get “health and safety kits” that included a reusable face mask, hand sanitizer, and a thermometer. Workers were to order the kits through an internal Instacart website.

But according to *Wired*, workers said the website was confusing to navigate, and left them uncertain of when or if the kits would arrive. The company told *Wired* it had limited the daily number of orders allowed so that it would be able to verify everyone applying was a legitimate Instacart worker.

An Instacart spokesperson said in a statement emailed to *The Verge* on Saturday that the company was “singularly focused on the health and safety of our shopper community,” and was working with health officials to take necessary precautions.

“Our teams have proactively secured personal protective equipment for the Instacart shopper community including health and safety kits of face masks and thermometers, as well as

worked with a third-party to manufacture hand sanitizer,” the spokesperson said. “We began shipping these items over the last two weeks and are moving quickly to get them in the hands of Instacart shoppers.”

The kits apparently started arriving for some shoppers:

Today's the first day some Instacart workers are receiving their PPE kits (masks, hand sanitizer and thermometer) and the reactions are priceless pic.twitter.com/7Cnf08G2X5

– Sarah Clarke #deleteinstacart (@Sarah__Clarke) April 18, 2020

Instacart announced on March 9th it was giving 14 days of paid leave to any part-time workers or shoppers who had been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who were put into mandatory quarantine, later extending that benefit through May 8th. It also introduced a bonus program and additional promotions for full-service shoppers to earn more based on regional demand.

Instacart shoppers staged a one-day work stoppage March 30th to protest what they viewed as unsafe working conditions, and demanded the company not only provide personal protective equipment for shoppers but hazard pay as well.

The company said last month it was hiring 300,000 new shoppers due to the overwhelming demand for grocery delivery during the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/18/21226481/instacart-shoppers-safety-kits-coronavirus-masks>