

Singapore's gig workers to get work injury, pension coverage

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SINGAPORE, Nov 24 (Reuters) - Singapore will extend work injury insurance and pension coverage to food delivery and ride-hailing workers under proposed legislative changes that it aims to implement as early as late 2024, the Manpower Ministry said.

The new rules will affect about 73,000 workers who deliver food or drive passengers for companies such as Grab (GRAB.O) , Gojek (GOTO.JK), Deliveroo (ROO.L) and Delivery Hero's (DHER.DE) Foodpanda.

Workers would gain coverage under the national pension system, which collects contributions from both workers and companies, and receive work injury insurance covering medical expenses, income loss, and lump sum compensation for permanent disability or death.

Gig workers would not, however, be considered full-time employees entitled to paid leave and other benefits.

The changes, based on recommendations from an advisory committee set up to create standards for gig worker protections, were approved by the government on Wednesday.

Grab, Foodpanda and Deliveroo said in a joint statement that the roll-out should be "evenly paced" given the "complexities of business operations and economic pressures".

Rights groups and governments around the world have voiced concerns about the interests of contract workers, whose ranks swelled significantly during COVID-19 lockdowns but who do not typically receive benefits available to full-time employees.

A report released by the Institute of Policy Studies in Singapore early this month found that 16.1% of 1,002 food delivery riders it surveyed had been in an accident serious enough to require medical treatment.