

Uber expands delivery options for retail, personal items

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Uber will put some of its delivery operators to work for groceries, medicines and other items in response to the coronavirus lockdowns

Uber unveiled plans to expand delivery of groceries and other goods from retailers as part of its response to the global coronavirus lockdowns.

The ridesharing giant said a new service called Uber Direct would focus on grocery and convenience store deliveries—where social distancing and other obstacles have made shopping more difficult.

"We've heard from retailers and manufacturers around the world looking to introduce delivery through Uber, as an operationally efficient way to reach their customers or manage internal delivery needs," San Francisco-based Uber said in a statement late Sunday.

"Shoppers can now place orders from select retailers and get their items delivered right to their doorstep—without contact."

The new Uber service is working with the retail startup Cabinet to deliver over-the-counter medicines and other items in New York.

It also will partner with Portugal's postal service to deliver parcels, and in Australia with pet supply retailers.

Uber said it has already delivered medication to some 25,000 people in South Africa as part of a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The US ridesharing giant has taken a massive hit as people remain home due to the pandemic, but it has been expanding services such as its Uber Eats program with restaurants.

Uber also unveiled a new personal package delivery option called Uber Connect to allow people to send items to family and friends in the same area.

"Whether it's a care package, a [board game](#), or an extra roll of much-needed [toilet paper](#), you can send it by requesting 'Uber Connect' in the Uber app," the statement said.

"This option is now available in more than 25 cities in Australia, Mexico, and the US."

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