

Amazon extends its US and Canada returns window to May 31

The change comes as Amazon has worked to overhaul many of its operations during the coronavirus crisis.

Amazon has temporarily extended its returns window for US and Canada customers to May 31 to give people more time to ship back their items during the coronavirus pandemic.

The online retailer's returns policy is typically 30 days, but the company added a new note in its returns policy pages to let customers know most orders made between March 1 and April 30 can be returned until the end of May. An Amazon spokesperson on Friday confirmed this change happened this week.



"The health and well-being of our customers, employees, and the communities we serve are of upmost importance to us," a statement at the top of the US returns policy page now says. "Therefore, we are temporarily extending the return window to give you more time to send items back."

A similar note was added to a page for independent merchants selling on Amazon on Thursday night. In that note, Amazon requested these sellers match Amazon's new returns window. Amazon last month instituted a similar extended returns policy for several European markets.

Many other retailers have also extended their returns windows. For instance, Apple will allow returns for up to 14 days after it reopens stores and Gap lengthened its return window to July 1. Other retailers, like CVS, have suspended many of their returns, saying most sales are now final.

Amazon, the world's biggest e-commerce company, has been overhauling much of its huge logistics network to respond to the pandemic, which has resulted in a surge of new customer orders as people are asked to stay home. To accommodate that spike in demand, Amazon already delayed orders of nonessential items like toys and musical instruments so it can focus on deliveries of basic needs like food and sanitizing wipes. Adding a longer returns window may help Amazon avoid having to organize many shipments back while also getting more products out the door.

Adding to this complex job, more Amazon warehouse workers are being sickened by the virus across the country, which could potentially spread the virus to customers. This week brought several worker protests at Amazon, as warehouse employees called for better protections. One of these groups also called out Amazon for still allowing sales and shipments of many nonessential goods, like rubber chickens, while they say they are risking their lives to complete orders.

The company said Thursday it's rolling out more health and safety protocols, including providing face masks to warehouse workers and instituting temperature checks.

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