

LEGAL

Uber Drivers Score Small Victory In Fight To Be Treated As Employees



By PYMNTS  

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Uber was dealt a bit of a blow Thursday (July 13) when its drivers won a victory in its fight to be counted as employees rather than independent contractors.

According to a report in the New York Times, a federal court in North Carolina gave conditional certification this week to the class-action suit lodged by Uber drivers. The suit came under the Fair Labor Standards Act, and with the ruling the plaintiffs can find the roughly 18,000 drivers who decided against arbitration and can join the case. Uber, noted the New York Times, has more than 600,000 drivers in the U.S. “The ruling today is going to allow drivers across the country to band together to challenge Uber’s misclassification of them,” said Paul B. Maslo, a lawyer for the plaintiffs in the New York Times report.. “They are employees and should be getting minimum wage and overtime as required by federal law.”

Uber expressed disappointment with the ruling in a statement to the New York Times, with a spokesperson saying the company was disappointed given that a federal district court recently denied the action the judge has approved. The **Uber** drivers won a little victory, but the New York Times noted the drivers in North Carolina have a lengthy battle in front of them. The plaintiffs only had to show a reasonable basis for their argument to get the conditional certification, but that easy street might not happen with other aspects of the case. Once the discovery portion of the case is complete the court will make a final ruling as to whether a class-action lawsuit can move ahead. Uber is aiming to decertify the class status, noted the report.

The ride-hailing app company and its drivers have had a contentious relationship for some time, and it isn’t only in North Carolina. Early this year, Uber agreed to **pay \$20 million** in a settlement with the U.S. government over charges it exaggerated potential earnings when trying to recruit drivers.

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