



Target says worker who started online petition wasn't scheduled to work on Thanksgiving

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Janet Cho, The Plain Dealer

By

CLEVELAND, Ohio - **Target Stores** said the Nebraska worker who started the online petition protesting its plans to open at midnight on Thanksgiving was never scheduled to work that day.

Anthony Hardwick, a shopping cart attendant at a Target store in Omaha, Neb., started an **online petition called "Tell Target to Save Thanksgiving"** asking the discount retailer to push its midnight opening back to 5 a.m. Friday.

"A midnight opening robs the hourly and in-store salary workers of time off with their families on Thanksgiving Day," he wrote on **Change.org**.

"By opening the doors at midnight, Target is requiring team members to be in the store at 11 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. . . All Americans should be able to break bread with loved ones and get a good night's rest on Thanksgiving!

The petition quickly gathered steam and had garnered more than 122,400 signatures by 6:30 p.m. Wednesday.

But Target spokeswoman Molly Snyder said Hardwick "is not now, and has never been, scheduled to work on Thanksgiving or Black Friday at Target."

"Our understanding is that this team member also works full-time for another retailer. In early November, he informed his Target managers that he was scheduled to work at his other job on Black Friday and indicated that he needed the day off from Target," she said. "We honored that request."



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Associated Press

Anthony Hardwick, a part-time shopping cart attendant at the Target store in Omaha, Neb., started an online petition asking the discount chain to push back its midnight Thanksgiving opening to 5 a.m. on Black Friday.

"Target does our best to work around the schedules of all of our team members, making every effort to accommodate their requests. Target will offer holiday pay to all hourly team members who work on Thanksgiving Day."

Change.org spokeswoman Charlotte Hill sided with Hardwick.

"Anthony was directly asked by his supervisor to report for a night shift beginning at 11 p.m. on Thanksgiving night. If the management of Target has decided to switch the schedules, they have yet to inform Anthony of the change," she said.

Target **isn't the only store asking employees to work on Thanksgiving.**

Big Lots, CVS, Gander Mountain, Michael's, Old Navy, Rite Aid, Toys R Us, Walgreens, and Walmart are all open on Thanksgiving, and more stores will start their Black Friday sales at midnight.

Hill said Hardwick's petition inspired more than 50 others, including ones **asking Old Navy to close on Thanksgiving** and **Best Buy to push back its midnight opening to 5 a.m. Friday.**

Cleveland labor and employment lawyer Anthony Lazzaro of **The Lazzaro Law Firm LLC** said more retailers are making employees work longer hours during the holidays.

"Requiring them to work on holidays is just another attempt to squeeze more productivity and profit out of employees," he said.

"Employees call us and complain that they feel like they don't have a choice, and unfortunately, they don't. If an employee refuses to work over a holiday, he or she could be legally terminated.

"Although Target would probably not be in this category, we see many employers fail to pay employees overtime when they work extra hours over the holidays," he added.

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