

Woman raped by Uber driver sues for misuse of medical records

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by: [Leslie Hook](#) in San Francisco

Uber has been sued over allegations that its top executives mishandled the medical records of a rape victim who was assaulted by her [Uber](#) driver in India in 2014.

The lawsuit accuses co-founder Travis Kalanick, business head Emil Michael, and Asia vice-president Eric Alexander of infringing on the privacy of the victim by obtaining her medical records and espousing conspiracy theories linking the assault to Uber's business competitor.

The assault occurred in India in 2014 and sparked a nationwide outcry, including a temporary ban on Uber in New Delhi and subsequently the introduction of a "panic button" in Uber's Indian app.

The new lawsuit alleges that Mr Alexander went to India and illegally obtained the records of the victim's medical examination, which he subsequently brought back to the US and showed to other Uber employees.

"In the United States, Uber executives violated her a second time by unlawfully obtaining and sharing her medical records from that vicious sexual assault and have failed, as of the date of this filing, to apologise to her for this outrageous conduct," reads the complaint.

Uber said in a statement that: "No one should have to go through a horrific experience like this, and we're truly sorry that she's had to relive it over the last few weeks." None of the three executives named in the lawsuit responded to requests for comment.

The alleged mishandling of the medical records came to light through a series of company-wide probes conducted over the past three months, following revelations about sexism and harassment from former employee Susan Fowler.

However, the executives who were allegedly involved continued to be employed at [Uber](#) until accounts of the way the medical records were handled leaked out in the media earlier this month.

Mr Alexander was fired last week after those reports became public, and Mr Michael was ousted on Monday after the Uber board reviewed the recommendations of a report on governance and diversity issues prepared by former US attorney Eric Holder and his colleague Tammy Albarran.

Mr Kalanick stepped back from his role as chief executive on Tuesday, going on indefinite leave without appointing a replacement.

Over the past several months Uber has grappled with a series of unsavoury revelations about its corporate culture as well as a stream of executive departures.

An out-of-control corporate culture is not the product of one man

The alleged mishandling of the medical records has come to be seen, both inside and outside the company, as one of the most egregious examples of Uber's male-dominated Silicon Valley culture gone awry.

“Uber has taken start-up culture, in which ‘fierceness’ and ‘always be hustling’, two key ‘Uber Competencies’, are prioritised above people to a new extreme, perpetuating rape culture and violating all bounds of decency as to customer privacy,” the lawsuit alleges.

It accuses the defendants of discussing and spreading the idea that the rape had been “made up”.

“Shockingly, it is not possible to estimate the number of times that Alexander waved Ms. Doe’s medical information around Uber office’s during this time period,” reads the complaint.

The lawsuit has been filed in the northern district of California, where Uber is headquartered, and the plaintiff is a resident of Texas. The lawyers representing the plaintiff have asked for a trial by jury.