


Women claiming assault sue Uber over driver-screening practices

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by Dan
Corey

Two women are asking a court to force Uber to improve practices like driver screening on behalf of any riders who might have been "subjected to rape, sexual assault or gender-motivated violence or harassment" in the past four years, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday.

The new suit, filed in the Northern District of California, seeks class-action status and compensation for alleged rapes suffered by the anonymous women who filed the suit, Jane Doe 1 of Miami and Jane Doe 2 of Los Angeles.

The women claim that they were sexually assaulted by their Uber drivers, and claim that the company engaged in "unlawful, fraudulent and unfair practices," such as duping them into believing that the drivers would safely bring them to their respective destinations. The lawsuit also argues that the ride-sharing company misrepresents the safety of being an Uber passenger in general.

The women also claim that Uber has created a "system for bad actors to gain access to vulnerable victims" by trapping passengers in vehicles, where drivers have the ability to "commit physical and sexual violence without witnesses."

"Uber made such false representations after failing to screen the drivers in any meaningful way, thereby presenting grave threats to Plaintiffs' safety and well-being," the complaint reads.

The attorneys representing Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2 did not immediately respond to NBC News' requests for comment.

The company said it will review the information that has been provided but currently does not know the specific details of the women's allegations.

"Uber received this complaint today and we are in the process of reviewing it," a spokeswoman for Uber told NBC News in an email. "These allegations are important to us and we take them very seriously."

The suit also claimed Uber was negligent by citing the [Oct. 31 terrorist attack in New York City](#), in which 29-year-old Sayfullo Saipov drove down a crowded bike path in Lower Manhattan, killing eight people and injuring almost a dozen others.

In the wake of the attack, the company said [Saipov was registered as an Uber driver](#) after passing a background check, and previously drove for Uber in Florida and New Jersey.

Saipov has since been banned from the app, and Uber said in a statement that it was assisting law enforcement and was "horrified by this senseless act of violence."

And the women cited the February 2016 hours-long rampage in which Jason Brian Dalton, a 45-year-old Uber driver in Kalamazoo, Michigan, [opened fire on unsuspecting victims](#) while he was in the process of picking up passengers.

At the time, Uber's chief security officer, Joe Sullivan, said Dalton had passed the company's background check to become a driver. Uber also said it offered to help law enforcement and was "horrified and heartbroken" by the shooting spree.

