


# Uber Faces Class Action Over Alleged Widespread Driver Sexual Assault

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By Ben  
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SAN FRANCISCO — Uber Technologies Inc. on Tuesday was hit with a [class action lawsuit](#) brought on behalf of women who have been sexually assaulted or raped by drivers for the ride-hailing giant.

The suit was filed by Wigdor LLP, a New York law firm that has previously represented women who were allegedly victims of sexual violence at the hands of Uber drivers. One such case against the company [settled under confidential terms](#) in November 2016.

The new class action seeks to represent what it says are more than 1,000 riders in the United States—mainly women, although the complaint says it includes men as well—who have been raped, sexually assaulted or subjected to gender-based harassment by Uber drivers over the past four years. The named plaintiffs are two women, in Florida and Los Angeles, respectively, who allege they were raped by Uber drivers.

“On notice of the magnitude of the number of passengers who have experienced sexual harassment and gender-based violence, Uber should have made drastic changes to the way that it screens and monitors drivers,” says the complaint, which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

“Instead, over the last seven years, Uber has done everything possible to continue using low-cost, woefully inadequate background checks on drivers and has failed to monitor drivers for any violent or inappropriate conduct after they are hired,” it adds.

An Uber spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday.

The lawsuit demands that Uber implement a number of changes to how it vets potential drivers, including in-person interviews and fingerprinting, and require the installation of cameras in driver vehicles. It also seeks damages for the alleged harms the victims have endured, plus punitive damages.

The complaint argues that the victims’ claims are not affected by arbitration clauses in Uber’s terms of service with riders, because under California Supreme Court decisions, “Uber cannot cause consumers to waive a statutory right to seek public injunctive relief in any forum.”

The case points in part to reports of assault and harassment that have surfaced on Twitter as part of the #MeToo campaign, which emerged in the wake of [sexual harassment allegations against Harvey Weinstein](#) and his entertainment company.

One of the tweets cited in the complaint reads: “A few years ago, I was in an Uber arriving at my apartment when the driver made inappropriate comments and grabbed at my crotch. #MeToo.”