

## TECH

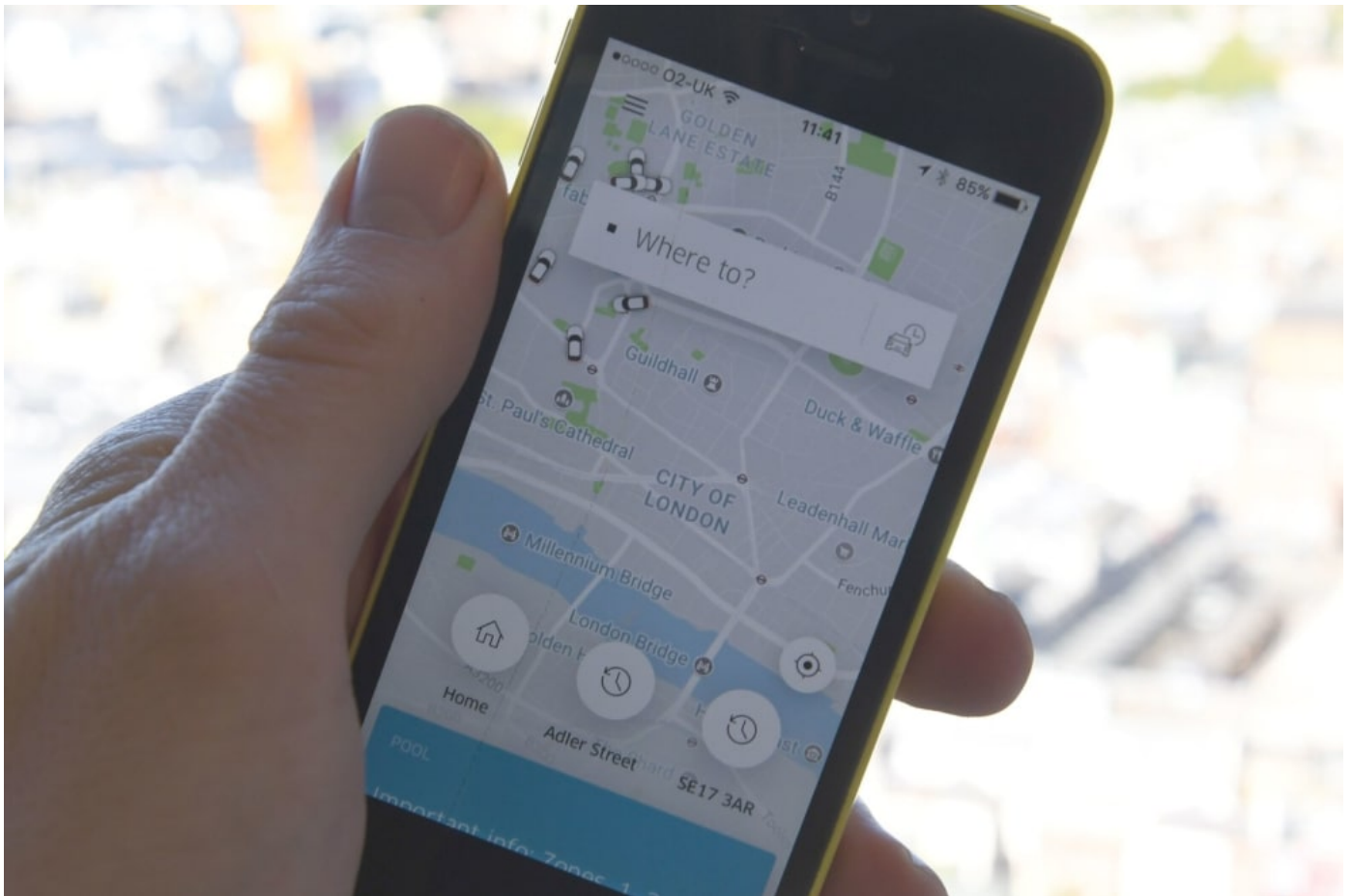
## California Woman Sues Uber For Negligence In Alleged Rape By Driver

An unnamed woman sued the ride-hail giant on Thursday, alleging that the company did not do enough to properly vet the driver, who she says had been previously charged with violent offenses.

Posted on November 17, 2017, 00:05 GMT

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Ben Fathers / AFP / Getty Images



An unnamed woman sued Uber Technologies on Thursday, alleging that the company did not do enough to properly vet the driver who she says sexually assaulted her.

This lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, follows a [class-action case](#) earlier this week that alleges that Uber puts female passengers in danger of sexual assault and harassment. In both suits, the plaintiffs are being represented by Wigdor LLP, a New York-based law firm that has made a name for itself by taking on Fox News for sexual harassment and discrimination.

The plaintiff in Thursday's suit is suing the \$69 billion ride-hailing company for negligence, fraud, assault, battery, and the infliction of emotional distress from a November 2016 incident in Long Beach, California, where she was allegedly raped by an Uber driver. Following the incident, the driver was arrested and charged with rape. The criminal case is ongoing.

According to the complaint, the driver had a documented history of violence, including a charge for domestic battery as well as a temporary restraining order against him "in connection with allegations of sexual abuse of a minor family member." The complaint argues that Uber overlooked this information in contracting with the driver.

“Uber knowingly places its female employees and female passengers in harm’s way,” reads the complaint. “In the name of the bottom line, Uber has proven repeatedly that it turns a blind eye to gender discrimination, internally towards female employees, and externally towards female passengers.”

An Uber spokesperson said that the company is reviewing the lawsuit and that “these accusations are extremely concerning.” In this particular case, the company said that the driver was permanently removed from the app.

In addition to Thursday’s suit, Wigdor lawyer Jeanne Christensen is litigating two other cases against Uber. The first is the class-action lawsuit on behalf of two alleged rape victims that asks a federal court to order that Uber change its approach to passenger safety. The second is over Uber executives allegedly illegally obtaining the records of an anonymous woman who had been raped in an Uber car in India in late 2014.

Unlike the class-action case, which asked a federal court to order the company to improve its safety practices, Thursday’s lawsuit seeks unspecified monetary damages for harm suffered by the woman.

Christensen declined to say if she planned on filing more cases against Uber, but said she had been fielding plenty of calls from lawyers with clients in similar situations. “There are probably lawyers out there who will start filing things after asking, ‘Should I do it or not?’” she said.

But she remains open-minded about Uber’s new CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, who joined the company in Aug. 2017. Last week, Khosrowshahi unveiled new “[cultural norms](#)” at Uber that said the company would “do the right thing. Period.”

“To be fair, there is a new CEO,” she said, “so I hope they are taking it seriously and maybe reflecting before they issue a statement and deny things.”

Ryan Mac is a senior technology reporter for BuzzFeed News and is based in San Francisco. He reports on the intersection of money, technology and power.

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