

More Than 100 U.S. Uber Drivers Accused of Sexual Assault in the Last Four Years: Report

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Compared to street hailing a cab, Uber feels like the safer option: Both your ride and driver are theoretically held accountable by the app, and that layer of security, however thin, can often fool us into believing that it's enough.

But an investigation by CNN found that at least 103 drivers across the U.S. have been accused of sexually assaulting or abusing their passengers in the last four years. Of those, the report found that at least 31 drivers have been convicted, with dozens of other cases still pending in criminal and civil court.

In addition to those drivers, the police departments of four cities contacted by CNN—Austin, Boston, Denver and Los Angeles—shared data on the complaints and reports filed against Uber drivers. In Los Angeles, at least 13 sexual assault complaints were filed since 2016; in Boston, at least 24 were filed. In Austin, at least 16 were filed since 2015, and Denver had at least nine since 2015. The investigation also found that at least 18 Lyft drivers had been accused of similar crimes.

Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi told the network that cracking down on sexual assault is “a new priority for us.” A statement provided to the network from a spokesperson said the company recently updated its safety protocols to include additional measures like rerunning driver background checks annually, as well as creating an in-app “safety center” and emergency button.

“This is just a start and we are committed to doing more,” a spokesperson said. “Sexual assault is a horrible crime that has no place anywhere. While Uber is not immune to this societal issue, we want to be part of the solution to end this violence forever.”

In 2016, Uber settled a suit filed by two “Jane Does,” accusing their respective drivers of sexual assault. The lawsuit’s emphasis was on Uber misleading customers into believing its app was safer than it was, particularly their resistance to fingerprint background checks.