

More Than 120 Uber, Lyft Drivers Accused of Sexual Assault, Report Says

 thedrive.com/news/20556/more-than-120-uber-lyft-drivers-accused-of-sexual-assault-report-says

At least 103 U.S. Uber drivers and 18 Lyft drivers have been accused of sexually assaulting passengers, according to a [new CNN report](#). The news organization reviewed police reports and court documents from 20 major cities, finding that at least 31 drivers have been convicted of crimes ranging from forcible touching and false imprisonment to rape.

Uber and Lyft have faced widespread accusations of crimes committed by drivers, but the *CNN* report attempts to put some numbers to those accusations. Neither company will release data on driver criminal activity, although both have faced public scandals such as [failures of drivers to pass independent background checks](#), and [lawsuits by individual passengers](#).

"These stories are horrific and our hearts go out to the victims," an Uber spokesperson said in a statement to *The Drive*. "We worked with *CNN* to understand their findings and determined that Uber did 2.4 billion trips in the U.S. in that same period. But even one incident on our platform is too many, which is why safety is Uber's top priority for 2018 and beyond. We recently strengthened our safety approach with new features including an emergency button, driver screening improvements, and the addition of the former Secretary of Homeland Security to head up Uber's Safety Advisory Board. This is just a start and we are committed to doing even more."

"The safety of the Lyft community is our top priority," a Lyft spokesperson said. "Since the beginning, we have worked hard to design policies and features that protect our community. These include professionally administered background checks for drivers, in-app photos, real-time ride tracking, a two-way rating system, a 24/7 critical response line, and a dedicated Trust and Safety team that investigates safety-related concerns. When it comes to allegations of inappropriate behavior, we take that very seriously and work closely with law enforcement when appropriate. While Lyft has grown—we now give more than 1 million rides each day—this commitment to safety has not changed," the spokesperson said.

The report noted that 18 of the documented cases against Uber drivers did not move forward because charges were dropped, cases were dismissed, or drivers were found not guilty. However, *CNN* also noted that it did not include many of the complaints from more than 20 police departments it surveyed, because they could not all be verified with incident reports. That, and the fact that *CNN* did not survey every municipality where Uber operates, indicates Uber may be facing an even larger number of incidents.

CNN said many of the women sexually assaulted by the accused Uber drivers had been drinking or were inebriated at the time of the alleged incidents, and took issue with Uber's promotion of its ride-hailing service as a "safe ride home" for women after a night out.

Uber has made attempts recently to improve its safety policies. In April, the company said it would begin rerunning criminal and motor-vehicle background checks annually, and would invest in technology that will provide immediate notification of new criminal offenses by drivers. Uber was previously rerunning background checks every two years, according to *CNN*. Lyft said it reruns background checks on all drivers annually.

A new "911 Assistance" button will connect riders to emergency services with one tap, according to Uber. The company is also giving riders the option to share their trip status with up to five "trusted contacts," who will be notified of each trip, and when the person arrives at their destination.