

New York Sports Clubs Sued for Still Charging Gym Fees for More Than 600,000 Members Despite Coronavirus Closure

 [newsweek.com/coronavirus-new-york-gym-memberships-sports-clubs-1494650](https://www.newsweek.com/coronavirus-new-york-gym-memberships-sports-clubs-1494650)

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A New York-based gym company is being sued following complaints from patrons that it is still charging them membership fees despite being forced to close amid the coronavirus.

The New York Sports Clubs is being accused of "defrauding" more than 600,000 members by not freezing payments and making it "virtually impossible" for them to cancel their memberships.

In a class action lawsuit filed against New York Sports Club's parent company Town Sports International Holdings and Town Sports International (TSI), the gym is also accused of ignoring multiple requests from its members to cancel or freeze their memberships despite all gyms in New York being told to suspend operations on March 16 to help combat the spread of COVID-19

Members have repeatedly taken to social media to complain about their accounts not being frozen or the gym not canceling their memberships.

"You are not 'here to help.' So far you have ignored emails and have not addressed our concerns with membership fees," Twitter user Tom Perlman wrote in response to New York Sports Clubs confirming its closure.

"Credit card already has the order to refuse payment and I will be submitting a complaint to the State for price gouging. You will not steal our money."

"There's nothing on your website about refunds. When I called your parent company TSI at 877-258-2311, I got a voicemail saying refunds couldn't be processed at this time," added Twitter user @tinmaniac. "Other gyms are being responsive. Why can't you be?"

Contract says null and void if you're not able to provide services. AND everyone has been calling and emailing with no help. It's your responsibility to FREEZE memberships with no fee when you're not able to provide services.

— VAN GOTH (@This_Evil_Bunny) March 21, 2020

@NYSC Hi there I have been tryin to call your customer service # and no answer.. how do we freeze our memberships until gyms reopen? And do we still have to puy while the gym is closed?

— Michelle (@Harlemhonie) March 26, 2020

Elsewhere, an online petition demanding TSI be held "accountable and responsible" for reimbursing all those who have attempted to cancel their membership or get a refund in March and beyond has attracted more than 1,500 signatures.

"TSI must do right by New Yorkers who are at the epicenter of this global crisis by freezing all gym memberships effective immediately, honoring all written or verbal membership cancellation requests, and issuing refunds to those members who were fraudulently charged fees for gym memberships that they are now unable to use," David E. Gottlieb, Partner at Wigdor LLP law firm, said in a statement.

"We call on our public institutions - including the New York State Attorney General's Office and the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs - to take formal action against TSI to protect the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers being victimized by this corporate greed."

TSI has been contacted for comment.

A New York Sports Clubs at 41st Street is temporarily closed as the coronavirus continues to spread across the United States on March 16, 2020 in New York City. Cindy Ord/Getty

According to Johns Hopkins University, there are more than 23,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in New York, making it one of the most infected cities in the world right now.

Overall, the U.S now has the highest number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the entire world with more than 85,000. There have been 1,296 fatalities from the virus, with 753 patients managing to recover.