

Facebook bumps up offer to \$650 million to settle facial recognition class action

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Facebook has agreed to pay \$650 million—\$100 million more than before—to settle a long-running class-action lawsuit over its use of facial recognition technology.

"We are focused on settling as it is in the best interest of our community and our shareholders to move past this matter," Facebook said in a statement.

Three Illinois residents sued Facebook under a [state law](#), the Biometric Information Privacy Act, which allows residents who have had their faces scanned for data without written consent to sue.

The lawsuit, which was certified as a class action, involved gathering facial data for a Facebook feature that suggests the name of people in users' photos and could have exposed Facebook to billions in damages.

Facial recognition software is courting more controversy in the wake of nationwide protests over police brutality. Amazon, Microsoft and IBM are suspending or limiting [law enforcement](#)'s access to the technology, which frequently misidentifies African Americans and other people of color.

Facebook's original settlement offer of \$550 million in January, which would have resulted in payouts of between \$150 to \$300 a person, was hailed by the law firms representing Facebook users as the largest cash settlement ever to resolve a privacy-related [lawsuit](#).

It was rejected by U.S. District Judge James Donato of California as too paltry. "It's \$550 million. That's a lot. But the question is, is it really a lot?" Donato asked lawyers for both sides in a court hearing last month, according to a transcript reviewed by NPR.

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