

Uber settles US lawsuit over disabled rider 'wait fees'

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Prosecutors say that riders with disabilities wrongly charged 'wait' fees because they needed extra time to get into cars are in line for cash compensation due to a settlement negotiated to settle a Department of Justice lawsuit.

Uber will offer several million dollars in compensation to tens of

thousands of passengers with disabilities who were charged extra fees, US prosecutors said Monday.

The case brought by the US Department of Justice centered on disabled passengers allegedly being made to pay wait charges because they needed extra time to board vehicles.

Under the settlement, Uber will issue credits to more than 65,000 eligible riders that are worth double the amount of wait time fees they were ever charged, which could potentially amount to millions of dollars.

The ride-share company also agreed to pay over \$1.7 million to riders who complained to Uber about the fees, and \$500,000 to other impacted people.

"People with disabilities should not be made to feel like second-class citizens or punished because of their disability, which is exactly what Uber's wait time fee policy did," said assistant attorney general Kristen Clarke.

Uber said it was "pleased" by the settlement.

"Prior to this matter being filed we made changes so that any rider who shares that they have a disability would have wait time fees waived automatically," the company said.

Uber charges a fee if a driver has to wait more than two minutes to pick up any passenger, but the Department of Justice said applying those fees to riders with disabilities amounts to unlawful discrimination.

Under the terms of a two-year agreement, Uber will continue to waive wait time fees for riders who need more time to board because of

disabilities, and ensure refunds are easily available in event such fees are wrongly charged, prosecutors said.

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