

Uber to pay \$4.4 million to end federal sex harassment probe

19 December 2019



In this June 21, 2017, file photo, people make their way into the building that houses the headquarters of Uber in San Francisco. A federal commission said Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2019, that Uber Technologies, Inc. will establish a \$4.4 million fund for employees who experienced sexual harassment while at the San Francisco ride-hailing company. The settlement ends an investigation by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission launched in 2017 after a former Uber engineer detailed the harassment she experienced in a widely shared blog post. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg, File)

Uber Technologies Inc. will establish a \$4.4 million fund to settle a federal investigation into allegations that the San Francisco company allowed a rampant culture of sexual harassment, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced Wednesday.

The agreement ends an investigation launched in 2017 in which the commission found reasonable cause to believe the ride-hailing tech company "permitted a culture of sexual harassment and retaliation against individuals who complained about such harassment."

A claims administrator will send notices to women who worked at Uber between Jan. 1, 2014, and

June 30, 2019. The commission will determine which claimants may be eligible for money from the \$4.4 million fund.

The company has also agreed to create a system to identify serial offenders and managers who fail to respond to concerns about sexual harassment in a timely manner.

The commission initiated the investigation after a former Uber engineer wrote a widely circulated blog post exposing sexual [harassment](#) at the company, including propositions from her boss. Susan Fowler said her complaints to human resources were ignored.

The company fired 20 people, including some managers, after an investigation by former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder's law firm.

The commission's district director in San Francisco, William Tamayo, applauded Uber's commitment to accountability, and said the "tech industry, among others, has often ignored allegations of [sexual harassment](#) when an accused harasser is seen as more valuable to the [company](#) than the accuser."

Uber's Chief Legal Officer Tony West said he was pleased to work with the commission on the settlement.

As part of its bid to increase transparency, Uber revealed earlier this month that more than 3,000 [sexual assaults](#) were reported during its U.S. rides in 2018. Drivers and riders were both attacked in the reported assaults, and some of the assaults occurred between riders.

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APA citation: Uber to pay \$4.4 million to end federal sex harassment probe (2019, December 19)
retrieved 1 July 2022 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2019-12-uber-million-federal-sex-probe.html>

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