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7 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
8 **FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

9 ANDRE ALMOND and
10 HANS RUUD,
individually and on behalf of all others similarly
11 situated,

Plaintiffs,

12 vs.

13 UBER TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

14 Defendant.

Case No.: _____

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT FOR
VIOLATIONS OF THE UNRUH CIVIL
RIGHTS ACT, SECTION 51 OF THE
CALIFORNIA CIVIL CODE**

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Action Filed: November 3, 2025

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17 Class Plaintiffs Andre Almond and Hans Ruud file this class action complaint individually
18 and on behalf of all others similarly situated against Defendant Uber Technologies, Inc. and allege as
19 follows:
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1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 1. “Public policy in California strongly supports eradication of discrimination based on
3 sex.” *Koire v. Metro Car Wash*, 40 Cal. 3d 24, 36 (1985) (“[P]ublic policy in California mandates the
4 equal treatment of men and women.”). For that reason, California’s “Unruh Act expressly prohibits
5 sex discrimination by business enterprises.” *Id.* To root out discrimination, “the Unruh Act mandates
6 equal provision of advantages, privileges and services in business establishments in this state” to all
7 people “no matter what their sex.” *Id.* at 38 (quoting Cal. Civ. Code §51(b)); *see also* Cal. Civ. Code
8 §51.5. This statutory proscription is a keystone of California’s civil rights policy.

9 2. The motives of the party engaging in sex-based discrimination are immaterial. “[T]he
10 Unruh Act ‘prohibits arbitrary discrimination, both benign and improperly intentioned, against
11 minorities or majorities.’ *Park Redlands Covenant Ctrl. Comm. v. Simon*, 181 Cal. App. 3d 87, 94
12 (1986). “The legality of sex-based [policies] cannot depend on the subjective value judgments about
13 which types of sex-based distinctions are important or harmful.” *Koire*, 40 Cal. 3d at 39 (recognizing
14 that “[m]en and women alike suffer from the stereotypes perpetrated by sex-based differential
15 treatment” (*id.* at 34)).

16 3. Defendant Uber Technologies, Inc. is violating Unruh’s prohibition on gender
17 discrimination. Uber is a rideshare company that connects passengers with independent drivers using
18 the drivers’ own vehicles. Using Uber’s app, passengers request a ride and Uber finds a nearby driver
19 who fulfills that request. Uber charges the passenger for that ride and sends a portion of that payment
20 to the driver as compensation.

21 4. Beginning in August 2025, Uber implemented a sexually discriminatory program in
22 Los Angeles and San Francisco called “Women Preferences” that distorts that matching process.
23 When a woman passenger requests a ride, Uber prioritizes women drivers to fulfill that ride rather
24 than selecting a suitable driver based on neutral principles. Male drivers, in other words, are
25 discriminated against and receive fewer and different rides than they otherwise would absent the
26 policy.

1 5. In most discrimination cases, “direct evidence of intentional discrimination is rare,”
2 and “such claims must usually be proved circumstantially.” *Guz v. Bechtel Nat. Inc.*, 24 Cal. 4th 317,
3 354 (2000). Discrimination typically “must be inferred from facts that create a reasonable likelihood
4 of bias and are not satisfactorily explained.” *Id.* But that is not true in this case. Uber openly advertises
5 and touts its discriminatory policy. That makes Uber’s sex-based discrimination quite unlike the mine
6 run of discrimination cases where the defendant business claims that it did not engage in any
7 discriminatory conduct and factual development is necessary to establish that discrimination.
8 *See, e.g., McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green*, 411 U.S. 792 (1973). Here, there is no question whether
9 Uber discriminates against male drivers, like Plaintiffs, who are disadvantaged by the sex-based
10 policy.

11 6. Uber first launched a “Women Rider Preference” program in Saudi Arabia in 2019.
12 Camiel Irving, *Coming Soon: Women Preferences*, Uber (Jul. 23, 2025), perma.cc/5L9J-JFMD.
13 Uber’s rival, Lyft, launched a similar program domestically in September 2023. But Uber reportedly
14 delayed the launch of its Women Preferences program in the United States “fearing legal risks.”
15 Bonnie Eslinger, *Uber Stalled on Women-Only Rides, Jury hears in Assault Trial*, Law360 (Sept. 17,
16 2025), perma.cc/D27H-M2DF. When confronted with internal documents during a sexual assault
17 trial, Uber Group Product Manager Rebecca Payne, agreed that “significant legal risk associated with
18 a female matching option” was “part of the discussion with Uber’s counsel.” *Id.* The Uber executive
19 further testified that Uber received “input[] from counsel as to the potential legal risk for this
20 [program].” *Id.* Uber decided to implement the program only internationally, according to a
21 September 2022 Uber memo, because other countries “have a government process in place for
22 requesting legal exemptions to antidiscrimination laws.” *Id.*

23 7. Uber’s policy violates the Unruh Civil Rights Act, rendering Uber liable to Plaintiffs
24 and those similarly situated. Accordingly, Plaintiffs bring this action and seek all civil remedies under
25 Unruh, including compensatory, statutory, and punitive damages, injunctive relief, and attorneys’ fees
26 and costs.

1 **PARTIES**

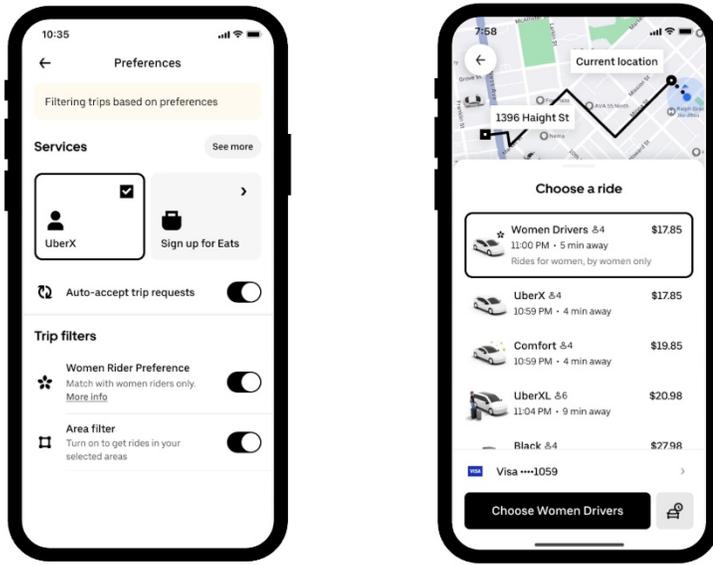
2 8. Plaintiff Andre Almond is a resident of Los Angeles County and a citizen of
3 California, who has been an Uber driver for over 7 years. He is not an Uber employee because Uber
4 drivers operate as independent contractors. As of October 2025, he has completed over 3,300 rides
5 and maintains a 4.98-star driver rating. He currently drives with Uber and has driven in and around
6 Los Angeles, California during the time Uber has operated its Women Preferences program—a
7 program in which he cannot participate because he is male—and Uber thus is discriminating against
8 him based on his sex.

9 9. Plaintiff Hans Ruud is a resident of Santa Clara County and a citizen of California,
10 who has been an Uber driver for over 10 years. He is not an Uber employee because Uber drivers
11 operate as independent contractors. As of October 2025, he has completed over 13,700 rides and
12 maintains a 5-star driver rating. He currently drives with Uber and has driven with Uber in and around
13 San Francisco, California during the time Uber has operated its Women Preferences program—a
14 program in which he could not participate because he is male—and Uber thus is discriminating against
15 him based on his sex.

16 10. Defendant UBER TECHNOLOGIES, INC. is a corporation headquartered at 1725 3rd
17 Street, San Francisco, California. Uber provides a peer-to-peer marketplace for on-demand
18 ridesharing. Uber is a major ridesharing provider with 170 million monthly active platform consumers
19 last year, over 7 million monthly active drivers, and about \$44 billion in annual revenue. *2024 Annual*
20 *Report*, Uber (May 5, 2025), perma.cc/3JW3-VBUY. Uber reports that women make up nearly half
21 of all Uber riders and males comprise about 80% of Uber drivers. Kim Elsesser, *Uber to let Female*
22 *Passengers and Drivers opt for Women-Only Rides*, Forbes (Jul. 30, 2025), perma.cc/V5X7-W3D4.

23 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

24 11. This Court has jurisdiction over Uber and the claims set forth below under the Code
25 of Civil Procedure §410.10 and the California Constitution, Article VI §10, as jurisdiction over this
26 cause of action has not been given by statute to other trial courts.



17. “[W]hen requesting a trip on demand, women riders will see an option called Women Drivers.” *Id.* Female riders can also use Uber’s “Reserve in advance” feature “to pre-book a trip with women drivers” with “more planning and certainty.” Female riders can also set a general “preference for a woman driver in their app settings” to “increase[] your chances of being matched with a woman driver.” *Id.*

18. Uber drivers are about 80% male and 20% female. Kim Elsesser, *Uber to let Female Passengers and Drivers opt for Women-Only Rides*, Forbes (Jul. 30, 2025), perma.cc/V5X7-W3D4. However, women make up nearly 50% of all riders. Felim McGrath, *The Demographics of Uber’s US Users*, Global Web Index (June 23, 2017), perma.cc/EYU6-LEQ3. The lower percentage of female drivers relative to male drivers necessarily leaves male drivers with fewer ride opportunities on the basis of sex under the Women Preferences policy. *Coming Soon: Women Preferences*, Uber (July 23, 2025), perma.cc/5L9J-JFMD (reporting that with Women Preferences’ global reception, Uber is “able to launch more reliable features that offer women riders multiple ways to be matched with a woman driver” in the United States). In other words, women drivers make up about 1/5 of Uber drivers and have access to 100% of the pool of passengers while men make up about 4/5 of drivers and have access to only 50% of the passenger pool (male riders).

1 **II. Uber’s discrimination harmed Plaintiffs and other Class Members.**

2 23. Unruh’s main remedial provision authorizes substantial statutory damages for the
3 application of discriminatory policies. *See* Cal. Civ. Code §52(a).

4 24. In that provision, the “Legislature established that arbitrary ... discrimination by
5 businesses is *per se* injurious”; and it “provide[d] for minimum statutory damages of [\$4,000] for
6 every violation of Section 51, regardless of the plaintiff’s actual damages.” *Koire*, 40 Cal. 3d at 33
7 (emphasis in original); *see also id.* (“[T]he statute provides for damages aside from any actual
8 damages incurred by the plaintiff.”); *see Dep’t of Fair Emp. & Hous. v. M&N Fin. Corp.*, 69 Cal.
9 App. 5th 434, 439-40 (2021). These statutory damages are “a penalty which the law imposes, and
10 which [the statute] directs shall be paid to the complaining party.” *Koire*, 40 Cal. 3d at 33.

11 25. The statute provides for \$4,000 in statutory damages “for each and every offense.”
12 Cal. Civ. Code §52(a). Uber is thus liable to each male driver in California for at least \$4,000 for
13 subjecting them to its discriminatory policy. And although unnecessary because discrimination is “*per*
14 *se* injurious,” Uber’s conduct also undermined Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’ relationships with their
15 riders. Uber’s actions reinforce harmful, sex-based stereotypes that cast a shadow on male drivers’
16 interactions with female riders, particularly when Uber attempts to limit those sorts of assignments
17 by default.

18 **III. Plaintiff Andre Almond’s experience with Uber’s discriminatory program.**

19 26. Plaintiff Andre Almond is an Uber driver in and around Los Angeles, California and
20 has driven with Uber since at least 2018. Uber has screened Mr. Almond out of opportunities for rides
21 in Los Angeles under the Women Preferences program based only on his sex, despite having a 4.98-
22 star rating with over 3,300 rides given.

23 27. Mr. Almond maintains his vehicle and driver’s license in good standing, having
24 satisfied all Uber background check procedures and California law in order to drive with Uber.

25 28. Over his years as an Uber driver, Mr. Almond has given hundreds of rides to female
26 passengers without incident and he has derived income from those rides. Yet, since at least August
27

1 13, 2025, Uber has discriminated against him, limited his economic opportunity, and impugned his
2 reputation as a trusted and safer driver because he is male. Uber's policy limiting Mr. Almond's
3 access to about half of Uber's rider base under its policy has caused him harm.

4 29. Mr. Almond has also experienced a dignitary harm in the deprivation of his right to
5 nondiscriminatory treatment based on sex. As a result, Mr. Almond's relationship with his riders has
6 been harmed, as he receives many ride assignments based on non-preferential status. Mr. Almond's
7 claims mirror those of the Class Members.

8 **IV. Plaintiff Hans Ruud's experience with Uber's discriminatory program.**

9 30. Plaintiff Hans Ruud is an Uber driver in and around San Francisco, California and has
10 driven with Uber since at least 2015. Uber has screened Mr. Ruud out of opportunities for rides in
11 San Francisco under the Women Preferences program based only on his sex, despite having a 5-star
12 rating with over 13,700 rides given.

13 31. Mr. Ruud maintains his vehicle and driver's license in good standing, having satisfied
14 all Uber background check procedures and California law in order to drive with Uber.

15 32. Over his years as an Uber driver, Mr. Ruud has given thousands of rides to female
16 passengers without incident and he has derived income from those rides. Yet, since at least August
17 13, 2025, Uber has discriminated against him, limited his economic opportunity, and impugned his
18 reputation as a trusted and safer driver because he is male. Uber's policy limiting Mr. Ruud's access
19 to about half of Uber's rider base under its policy has caused him harm at each assignment.

20 33. Mr. Ruud has also experienced a dignitary harm in the deprivation of his right to
21 nondiscriminatory treatment based on sex. As a result, Mr. Ruud's relationship with his riders has
22 been harmed, as he receives many ride assignments based on non-preferential status. Plaintiffs' claims
23 mirror those of the Class Members.

24 **V. Plaintiffs' claims mirror those of the Class Members.**

25 34. Like Plaintiffs, each Class Member is a male driver who has driven with Uber in
26 California during Uber's perpetuation of the Women Preferences program. Uber is thus liable to
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1 Plaintiffs and Class Members for discriminating against them on the basis of sex and violating their
2 rights under California law.

3 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

4 35. Plaintiffs incorporate all prior allegations.

5 36. Plaintiffs brings this action individually and on behalf of a class (the “Class”) under
6 California Code of Civil Procedure Section 382.

7 37. Plaintiffs propose the following Class definition and seek Class certification, subject
8 to amendment based on information obtained through discovery:

9 All male individuals within the applicable statute of limitations who drove with Uber
10 in California against whom Uber discriminated by implementing a sex-based
11 preference feature, marketed as the Women Preferences program, that disfavored
12 them on the basis of sex.

13 38. Specifically excluded from this Class are Uber’s officers, directors, employees, and
14 agents; any entity in which Uber has a controlling interest; and affiliates, legal representatives,
15 attorneys, successors, heirs, or assigns of Uber. Also excluded from this Class are any judicial officers
16 to whom this case is assigned, their families, and members of their staff.

17 39. Plaintiffs reserve the right to amend the definition of the Class or add a class or
18 subclass if further information and discovery indicate that the definition of the Class should be
19 narrowed, expanded, or otherwise modified.

20 40. **Numerosity:** The members of the Class are so numerous that joinder of all members
21 of the Class is impracticable. On information and belief, the proposed Class contains hundreds of
22 thousands of individuals against whom Uber discriminated in California. If even 8% of Uber’s over
23 one million drivers are males who drove with Uber in California under the discriminatory policy, the
24 class would be over 80,000 members. *See Uber Economic Impact Report*, at 3, 6, Uber (2024),
25 perma.cc/62FQ-HPHH (over one million drivers, of which approximately 77% are male); *How many*
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1 *People Drive in the U.S.?*, Hedges and Co. (May 24, 2025), perma.cc/HG9Y-4E5W (over 11% of
2 licensed drivers in America reside in California).

3 41. **Predominancy:** There are questions of law and fact common to all Class Members
4 which predominate over any questions affecting only individual Class Members. These common
5 questions include:

6 a. Whether Uber discriminated against Plaintiffs and Class Members on the basis
7 of sex by assigning myriad rides under its Women Preferences program;

8 b. Whether Uber's conduct discriminating against Plaintiffs and Class Members
9 violates the Unruh Act;

10 c. Whether Plaintiffs and Class Members are entitled to injunctive and equitable
11 relief;

12 d. Whether Plaintiffs and Class Members are entitled to actual, compensatory,
13 statutory, or punitive damages, statutory penalties, or declaratory or injunctive relief, or
14 restitution, as allowable by law.

15 42. **Typicality:** Plaintiffs' claims are typical of the claims of the Class Members, arising
16 from the same conduct by Uber and based on the same legal theories.

17 43. **Adequacy of Representation:** Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately represent and
18 protect the interests of the Class Members. Plaintiffs' interests are coincident with, and not
19 antagonistic to, those of the Class Members. Plaintiffs' counsel are competent and experienced in
20 litigating complex and mass actions.

21 44. **Superiority:** A class action is a superior method for the fair and efficient adjudication
22 of this case. This proposed class action presents fewer management difficulties than individual
23 litigation and will permit an orderly and expeditious administration of the Class claims, fostering
24 economies of time, effort, and expense. If the Class Members are forced to bring individual suits, the
25 transactional costs, including those incurred by Uber, will significantly increase, and the courts will
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1 be clogged with a multiplicity of lawsuits involving identical subject matter, fact patterns, and legal
2 issues.

3 45. Moreover, separate actions would risk imposing incompatible standards of conduct on
4 Uber, if for example, different courts reach varying conclusions on whether Uber’s conduct violated
5 California law. A class action is particularly appropriate where, as here, declaratory relief finding
6 Uber’s actions were unlawful or injunctive relief preventing Uber from engaging in such unlawful
7 discrimination is appropriate with respect to the class as a whole.

8 **CAUSE OF ACTION**

9 **Violation of California’s
10 Unruh Civil Rights Act**

11 **Cal. Civ. Code §51**

12 **(On Behalf of Plaintiffs and the Class against Uber)**

13 46. Plaintiffs incorporate all prior allegations.

14 47. California passed the Unruh Civil Rights Act “to create and preserve ‘a
15 nondiscriminatory environment in California business establishments.’” *White v. Square, Inc.*, 7 Cal
16 5th 1019, 1024 (2019). “The Act stands as a bulwark protecting each person’s inherent right to ‘full
17 and equal’ access to ‘all business establishments.’” *Id.*

18 48. “Public policy in this state strongly supports the abolition of discrimination on the
19 basis of sex.” *Rotary Club of Duarte v. Bd. of Directors*, 178 Cal. App. 3d 1035, 1066 (1986). “This
20 policy is effectuated, in part, by the Unruh Act which expressly proscribes sex discrimination by
21 business establishments.” *Id.* (holding that “exclusion from or termination of membership arbitrarily
22 on the basis of sex is prohibited” (*id.* at 1059)).

23 49. The Supreme Court of California has explained that, in enforcing the Act, tribunals
24 “must consider [the Act’s] broad remedial purpose and overarching goal of deterring discriminatory
25 practices.” *Id.* As a result, that court has explained “that ‘[t]he act must be construed liberally in order
26 to carry out its purpose.’” *Id.* “In light of its broad preventive and remedial purposes, courts have
27 recognized that ‘standing under the Unruh Civil Rights Act is broad.’” *Id.*; *see also Isbister v. Boys’*

1 *Club of Santa Cruz, Inc.*, 40 Cal. 3d 72, 75-76 (1985) (“The Legislature’s desire to banish
2 [discriminatory] practices from California’s community life has led this court to interpret the Act’s
3 coverage ‘in the broadest sense reasonably possible.’”).

4 50. Unruh’s text mirrors its broad purpose. It provides in relevant part that “[a]ll persons
5 ... are free and equal, and no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, [or] national origin
6 ... are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in
7 all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.” Cal. Civ. Code §51(b); *see also* Cal. Civ. Code
8 §51.5(a).

9 51. California courts have long read this text to “prohibit[] arbitrary discrimination, both
10 benign and improperly intentioned, against minorities or majorities.” *Park Redlands Covenant Ctrl.*
11 *Comm.*, 181 Cal. App. 3d at 94. More specifically, Unruh bars differential treatment in the offering
12 of services based on a protected characteristic. *See, e.g., Koire*, 40 Cal. 3d 24, 30 (1985) (holding that
13 “sex-based price discounts” violated Unruh); *Angelucci*, 41 Cal. 4th at 175-76 (charging a different
14 price for admission to a club based on sex violates Unruh even if male patrons discriminated against
15 under the policy did not “express their wish to be charged the same price as women on Ladies’ Day”
16 (cleaned up)).

17 52. “The Legislature’s choice of terms evidences concern not only with access to business
18 establishments, but with equal treatment ... in all aspects of the business.” *Koire*, 40 Cal. 3d at 29.
19 That is why California “[c]ourts have repeatedly held that the Unruh Act is applicable where unequal
20 treatment is the result of a business practice.” *Id.*

21 53. The Supreme Court of California has explained that “the Unruh Civil Rights Act
22 prohibits all forms of stereotypical discrimination.” *San Jose Country Club Apartments v. County of*
23 *Santa Clara* 137 Cal. App. 3d 948, 952 (1982). To that end, “discrimination on the basis of immutable
24 characteristics such as sex” is particularly “likely to perpetuate stereotypes;” even more so than other
25 forms of differential treatment, such as on the basis of age. *Javorsky v. W. Athletic Clubs, Inc.*, 242
26 Cal. App. 4th 1386, 1398 (2015).

- 1 B. Appointing the law firm of Consovoy McCarthy PLLC as class counsel;
2 C. Finding that Defendant's conduct was unlawful, as alleged herein;
3 D. Awarding declaratory relief against Defendant;
4 E. Awarding injunctive and any other equitable relief the Court deems appropriate;
5 F. Awarding Plaintiffs and Class Members statutory, actual, compensatory, consequential,
6 punitive, and nominal damages, as well as restitution and disgorgement of profits unlawfully
7 obtained;
8 G. Awarding Plaintiffs and Class Members pre- and post-judgment interest;
9 H. Awarding Plaintiffs and Class Members reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses; and
10 I. Granting such other relief as the Court deems appropriate.

11 **JURY TRIAL DEMAND**

12 Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Class, demands a trial by jury of all issues so
13 triable of right.

14 DATED: November 3, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

15 /s/ Bryan Weir

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