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8 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
9 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

10
11 COURTNEY MITCHENER,
individually and on behalf of all
12 others similarly situated;
13 Plaintiff,
14 v.
15 TALKSPACE NETWORK LLC, a
New York limited liability company;
16 DOES 1 through 25, inclusive
17 Defendant.

Case No.
**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
FOR:
VIOLATIONS OF
CALIFORNIA TRAP AND
TRACE LAW (CAL. PENAL
CODE § 638.51)**

JURISDICTION

1
2 1. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to
3 the Class Action Fairness Act of 2005, 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2), because the total
4 matter in controversy exceeds \$5,000,000 and there are over 100 members of the
5 proposed class. Further, at least one member of the proposed class is a citizen of a
6 State within the United States and at least one defendant is the citizen or subject of
7 a foreign state.

8 2. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because, on
9 information and belief, Defendant has purposefully directed its activities to the
10 Central District of California by regularly tracking individuals in California through
11 its website. Defendant’s illegal conduct is directed at and harms California residents,
12 including Plaintiff, and if not for Defendant’s contact with the forum, Plaintiff would
13 not have suffered harm.

14 3. Venue is proper in the Central District of California pursuant to 28
15 U.S.C. § 1391 because Defendant (1) is authorized to conduct business in this
16 District and has intentionally availed itself of the laws and markets within this
17 District; (2) does substantial business within this District; (3) is subject to personal
18 jurisdiction in this District because it has availed itself of the laws and markets within
19 this District; and the injury to Plaintiff occurred within this District.

PARTIES

20
21 4. Plaintiff Courtney Mitchener (“Plaintiff”) is a citizen of California
22 residing within the Central District of California.

23 5. Defendant Talkspace Network LLC is a New York limited liability
24 company (“Defendant”) is a New York limited liability company that owns,
25 operates, and/or controls www.talkspace.com.

26 6. The above-named Defendant, along with its affiliates and agents, are
27 collectively referred to as “Defendants.” The true names and capacities of the
28 Defendants sued herein as DOE DEFENDANTS 1 through 25, inclusive, are

1 currently unknown to Plaintiff, who therefore sues such Defendants by fictitious
2 names. Each of the Defendants designated herein as a DOE is legally responsible for
3 the unlawful acts alleged herein. Plaintiff will seek leave of Court to amend the
4 Complaint to reflect the true names and capacities of the DOE Defendants when
5 such identities become known.

6 7. Plaintiff is informed and believes that at all relevant times, every
7 Defendant was acting as an agent and/or employee of each of the other Defendants
8 and was acting within the course and scope of said agency and/or employment with
9 the full knowledge and consent of each of the other Defendants, and that each of the
10 acts and/or omissions complained of herein was ratified by each of the other
11 Defendants.

12 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

13 8. Defendant is a health care provider offering therapy services.
14 Defendant operates <https://www.talkspace.com> (the “Website”). Defendant has
15 installed on its Website software created by TikTok in order to identify website
16 visitors (the “TikTok Software”).

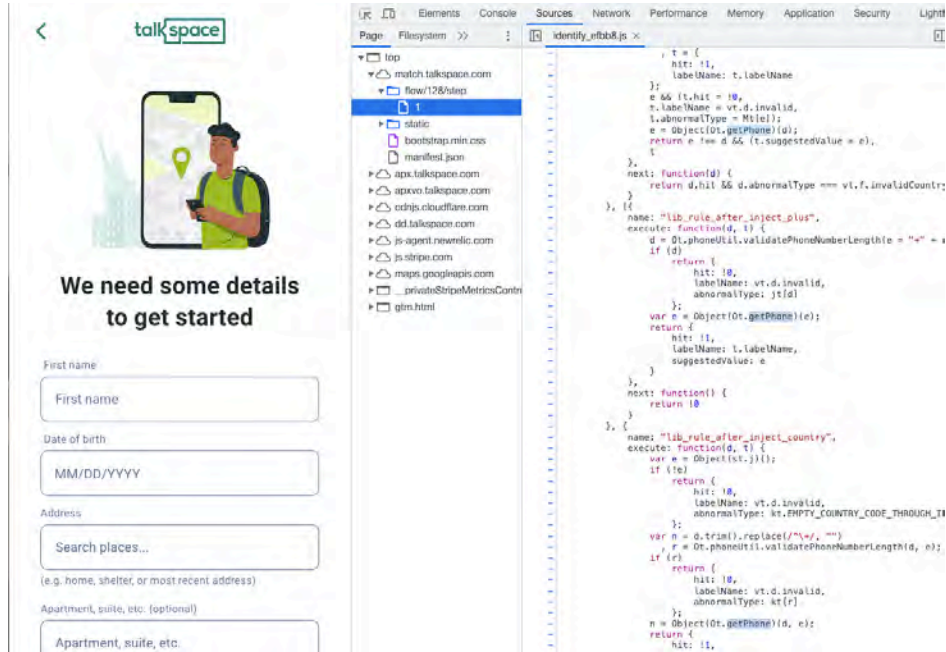
17 9. The TikTok Software acts via a process known as “fingerprinting.” Put
18 simply, the TikTok Software collects as much data as it can about an otherwise
19 anonymous visitor to the Website and matches it with existing data TikTok has
20 acquired and accumulated about hundreds of millions of Americans.

21 10. The TikTok Software gathers device and browser information,
22 geographic information, referral tracking, and url tracking by running code or
23 “scripts” on the Website to send user details to TikTok.

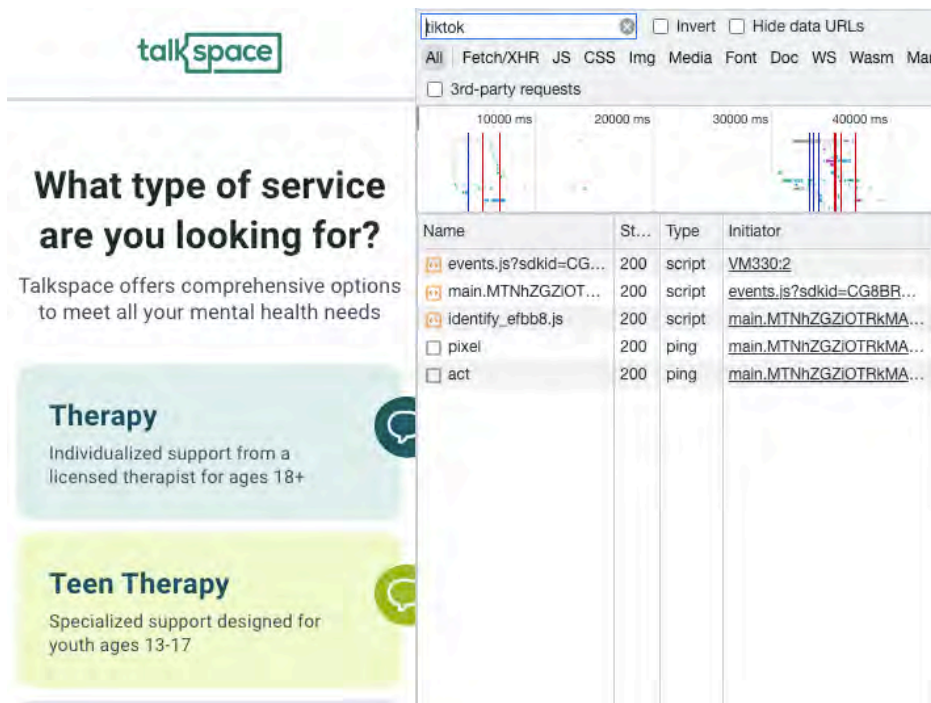
24 11. The TikTok Software begins to collect information the moment a user
25 lands on the Website. Thus, even though the Website has a “cookie banner” the
26 information has already been sent to TikTok regarding the user’s visit.

1 12. Additionally, when the website asks for information, such as name, date
2 of birth, and address, the information is sent simultaneously to TikTok, so that
3 TikTok can isolate with certainty the individual to be targeted.

4 13. An image of the code can be seen here:



16 14. The Talkspace website instantly sends communications to TikTok
17 when a user lands, and every time a user clicks on a page. In the example below,
18 the right side of the image shows the various TikTok scripts being run by Defendant,
19 and the electronic impulses being sent to TikTok to add to their collection of user
20 behavior.



15. As can be seen above, the information given to TikTok by Talkspace includes medical information related to minors, which is particularly troubling given recent concerns that TikTok’s data collection practices are a threat the United States.¹

16. California Penal Code § 638.50(c). California law defines a “trap and trace device” as “a device or process that captures the incoming electronic or other impulses that identify the originating number or other dialing, routing, addressing, or signaling information reasonably likely to identify the source of a wire or electronic communication, but not the contents of a communication.” California Penal Code § 638.50(c).

17. The TikTok Software is a process to identify the source of electronic communication by capturing incoming electronic impulses and identifying dialing, routing, addressing, and signaling information generated by users, who are never

¹ <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3354874/leaders-say-tiktok-is-potential-cybersecurity-risk-to-us/>

1 informed that the website is collaborating with the Chinese government to obtain
2 their phone number and other identifying information.

3 18. The TikTok Software is “reasonably likely” to identify the source of
4 incoming electronic impulses. In fact, it is designed solely to meet this objective.

5 19. Defendant did not obtain Class Members’ express or implied consent
6 to be subjected to data sharing with TikTok for the purposes of fingerprinting and
7 de-anonymization.

8 20. CIPA imposes civil liability and statutory penalties for the installation
9 of trap and trace software without a court order. California Penal Code § 637.2; see
10 also, *Greenley v. Kochava*, 2023 WL 4833466, at *15-*16 (S.D. Cal. July 27, 2023).

11 21. Defendant did not obtain Class Members’ express or implied consent
12 to be subjected to data sharing with TikTok for the purposes of fingerprinting and
13 de-anonymization.

14 **CLASS ALLEGATIONS**

15 22. Plaintiff brings this action individually and on behalf of all others
16 similarly situated in a (the “Class”) defined as follows:

17 **(a) All persons within California who within the statute of**
18 **limitations period whose chats were transcribed by third**
19 **parties; and/or**

20 **(b) All persons within California who within the statute of**
21 **limitations period whose identifying information was sent to**
22 **TikTok.**

23 23. NUMEROSITY: Plaintiff does not know the number of Class Members
24 but believes the number to be well into the thousands. The exact identities of Class
25 Members may be ascertained by the records maintained by Defendant.

26 24. COMMONALITY: Common questions of fact and law exist as to all
27 Class Members, and predominate over any questions affecting only individual
28 members of the Class. Such common legal and factual questions, which do not vary

1 between Class members, and which may be determined without reference to the
2 individual circumstances of any Class Member, include but are not limited to the
3 following:

- 4 a. Whether Defendant caused electronic communications from Class
5 Members with the website to be recorded, intercepted, and/or
6 monitored;
- 7 b. Whether Defendant aided and abetted a third-party in eavesdropping on
8 such communications;
- 9 c. Whether Defendant installed the TikTok Software on the Website;
- 10 d. Whether the TikTok Software is a trap and trace process as defined by
11 law;
- 12 e. Whether Plaintiff and Class Members are entitled to statutory penalties;
13 and
- 14 f. Whether Class Members are entitled to injunctive relief.
- 15 g. Whether Class Members are entitled to disgorgement of data obtained
16 unlawfully.

17 25. TYPICALITY: As a person who visited Defendant's Website and
18 whose electronic communication was subjected to a trap and trace process on
19 Defendant's Website, they are typical of the Class.

20 26. ADEQUACY: Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests
21 of the members of The Class. Plaintiff has retained attorneys experienced in the class
22 action litigation. All individuals with interests that are actually or potentially adverse
23 to or in conflict with the class or whose inclusion would otherwise be improper are
24 excluded.

25 27. SUPERIORITY: A class action is superior to other available methods
26 of adjudication because individual litigation of the claims of all Class Members is
27 impracticable and inefficient. Even if every Class Member could afford individual
28

1 litigation, the court system could not. It would be unduly burdensome to the courts
2 in which individual litigation of numerous cases would proceed.

3 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

4 **Violations of California Trap and Trace Law**

5 **Cal. Penal Code § 638.51**

6 28. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges the allegations contained in every
7 preceding paragraph as if fully set forth herein.

8 29. California Penal Code §638.51 (the “California Trap and Trace Law”)
9 provides that “a person may not install or use...a trap and trace device without first
10 obtaining a court order...” § 638.51(a).

11 30. A “trap and trace device” as “a device or process that captures the
12 incoming electronic or other impulses that identify the originating number or other
13 dialing, routing, addressing, or signaling information reasonably likely to identify
14 the source of a wire or electronic communication, but not the contents of a
15 communication.” California Penal Code § 638.50(c).

16 31. Defendant uses a trap and trace process on its Website by deploying the
17 TikTok Software on its Website, because the software is designed to capture the
18 phone number, email, routing, addressing and other signaling information of website
19 visitors. As such, the TikTok Software is designed precisely to identify the source
20 of the incoming electronic and wire communications to the Website. Defendant did
21 not obtain consent from Plaintiff or any of the class members before using trap and
22 trace technology to identify users of its Website, and has violated Section 638.51.

23 32. CIPA imposes civil liability and statutory penalties for violations of
24 §638.51. California Penal Code § 637.2; see also, *Greenley v. Kochava*, 2023 WL
25 4833466, at *15-*16 (S.D. Cal. July 27, 2023).

26 **PRAYER**

27 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for the following relief against Defendant:
28

- 1 1. An order certifying the Class, naming Plaintiff as the representative of
- 2 the Class and Plaintiff's attorneys as Class counsel;
- 3 2. An order enjoining Defendant's conduct as alleged herein and
- 4 ordering disgorgement of data acquired by the TikTok Software;
- 5 3. Statutory damages pursuant to CIPA;
- 6 4. Punitive damages;
- 7 5. Reasonable attorneys' fees and costs; and
- 8 6. All other relief that would be just and proper, as determined by the
- 9 Court.

10
11 DATED: August 20, 2024

TAULER SMITH LLP

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14 By: /s/ Robert Tauler
15 Robert Tauler, Esq.
16 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
17 *Courtney Mitchener*
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DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff Courtney Mitchener hereby demands a trial by jury.

DATED: August 20, 2024

TAULER SMITH LLP

By: /s/ Robert Tauler
Robert Tauler, Esq.
*Attorneys for Plaintiff
Courtney Mitchener*

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [Talkspace Lawsuit Claims Therapy Website Secretly Shares User Data with TikTok](#)
