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7	Counsel for Plaintiff	
8	UNITED STATES DI	
9	CENTRAL DISTRICT	OF CALIFORNIA
10		
11	, Individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,	No.
12	others similarly situated,	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
13	Plaintiff,	FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE
14	V.	FEDERAL SECURITIES LAWS
15		<u>CLASS ACTION</u>
16	DAVE INC., JASON WILK, and KYLE BEILMAN	JURY TRIAL DEMANDED
17		
18	Defendants.	
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Plaintiff ("Plaintiff"), individually and on behalf of all other persons similarly situated, by Plaintiff's undersigned attorneys, for Plaintiff's complaint against Defendants (defined below), alleges the following based upon personal knowledge as to Plaintiff and Plaintiff's own acts, and information and belief as to all other matters, based upon, among other things, the investigation conducted by and through Plaintiff's attorneys, which included, among other things, a review of the Defendants' public documents, public filings, wire and press releases published by and regarding Dave Inc. ("Dave" or the "Company"), and information readily obtainable on the Internet. Plaintiff believes that substantial evidentiary support will exist for the allegations set forth herein after a reasonable opportunity for discovery.

#### NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is a class action on behalf of persons or entities who purchased or otherwise acquired publicly traded Dave Inc. securities, between March 13, 2022, and December 30, 2024, inclusive (the "Class Period"). Plaintiff seeks to recover compensable damages caused by Defendants' violations of the federal securities laws under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act").

## **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

- 2. The claims asserted herein arise under and pursuant to Sections 10(b) and 20(a) of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. §§ 78j(b) and 78t(a)) and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder by the SEC (17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5).
- 3. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, and Section 27 of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. §78aa).
- 4. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and Section 27 of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. § 78aa(c)) as the alleged

directly participated in the management of the Company;

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(a)

- (b) was directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the Company at the highest levels;
- (c) was privy to confidential proprietary information concerning the Company and its business and operations;
- (d) was directly or indirectly involved in drafting, producing, reviewing and/or disseminating the false and misleading statements and information alleged herein;
- (e) was directly or indirectly involved in the oversight or implementation of the Company's internal controls;
- (f) was aware of or recklessly disregarded the fact that the false and misleading statements were being issued concerning the Company; and/or
- (g) approved or ratified these statements in violation of the federal securities laws.
- 14. The Company is liable for the acts of the Individual Defendants and its employees under the doctrine of *respondeat superior* and common law principles of agency because all of the wrongful acts complained of herein were carried out within the scope of their employment.
- 15. The scienter of the Individual Defendants and other employees and agents of the Company is similarly imputed to Dave under *respondeat superior* and agency principles.
- 16. Defendant Dave and the Individual Defendants are collectively referred to herein as "Defendants."

## **SUBSTANTIVE ALLEGATIONS**

# Materially False and Misleading Statements Issued During the Class Period

17. As a public company, Dave is required to file periodic financial statements and other materials with the Securities and Exchange Commission of the United States ("SEC").

18. On March 25, 2022, the Company filed with the SEC its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2021 (the "2021 10-K)."

#### 19. The 2021 10-K states:

If we are unable to acquire new Members and retain our current members or sell additional functionality and services to them, our revenue growth will be adversely affected.

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Our member subscriptions are open-ended arrangements that can be terminated by the Member without penalty at any time. For us to maintain or improve our operating results, it is important that our Members continue to maintain their subscriptions on the same or more favorable terms. We cannot accurately predict renewal or expansion rates given the diversity of our member base in terms of size, industry, and geography. Our renewal and expansion rates may decline or fluctuate as a result of several factors, including member spending levels, member satisfaction with our platform, decreases in the number of Members, pricing changes, competitive conditions, the acquisition of our Members by other companies, and general economic conditions. If our Members do not renew their subscriptions, or if they reduce their usage of our platform, our revenue and other operating results will decline and our business will be adversely affected. If our renewal or expansion rates fall significantly below the expectations of the public market, securities analysts, or investors, the trading price of our common stock would likely decline.

- 20. This statement was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) members were unable to cancel the subscriptions at their convenience; 2) members were signed up for subscriptions without their knowledge; and 3) subscription renewal and expansion rates were artificially inflated by these factors, rather than the factors listed.
  - 21. The 2021 10-K further stated the following:

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If we fail to offer high-quality customer support, or if our support is more expensive than anticipated, our business and reputation could suffer.

Our Members rely on our customer support services to resolve issues and realize the full benefits provided by our platform. High-quality support is also important for the renewal and expansion of our subscriptions with existing Members. We primarily provide customer support over chat and email. If we do not help our Members quickly resolve issues and provide effective ongoing support, or if our support personnel or methods of providing support are insufficient to meet the needs of our Members, our ability to retain Members, increase adoption by our existing Members and acquire new Members could suffer, and our reputation with existing or potential Members could be harmed. If we are not able to meet the customer support needs of our Members by chat and email during the hours that we currently provide support, we may need to increase our support coverage and provide additional phone-based support, which may reduce our profitability.

- 22. This statement was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that Dave was knowingly and purposefully providing poor and inadequate customer support services in an effort to retain deceptively obtained subscription revenue, tip revenue, and fee revenue.
- 23. The 2021 10-K contains a section titled *Regulatory Environment*, which lists the various federal consumer protection statutes and regulations that apply to it, including the Federal Trade Commission Act ("FTC Act").
- 24. The Regulatory Environment section of the 2021 20-K was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) Dave was knowingly violating Section 5(a) of the FTC Act; 2) Dave was knowingly violating the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act ("ROSCA").
- 25. On March 13, 2023, the Company filed with the SEC its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2022 (the "2022 10-K)."
  - 26. The 2022 10-K stated the following:

Tips for the year ended December 31, 2022 were \$62.0 million, an increase of \$16.8 million, or 37%, from \$45.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2021. The increase was primarily attributable to increases in total advance volume from approximately \$1,413 million to approximately \$2,709 million year over year along with average advance amounts that increased from \$104 to \$144 as of the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2022, respectively. Tips tend to increase as advance volume increases, but may not always trend ratably as tips often vary depending on the total amount of the advance. The percentage of Members that chose to leave a tip decreased slightly for the year ended December 31, 2022 as compared to the year ended December 31, 2021. The average amount of tip Members chose to leave increased for the year ended December 31, 2022 as compared to the year ended December 31, 2021.

- 27. This statement was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) Dave induces app users to pay a "tip" on Dave's cash advances by using a deceptive interface that does not offer a clear way to avoid tipping; 2) Dave's app falsely represents to consumers that the company will purchase or pay for a certain number of meals for needy children based on the size of a customer's tip, while in reality Dave keeps the vast majority of tips for itself; and 3) the increase in tip revenue was a product of these factors.
  - 28. The 2022 10-K also stated the following:

Subscriptions for the year ended December 31, 2022 were \$19.1 million, an increase of \$1.9 million, or 11%, from \$17.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2021. The increase was primarily attributable to higher subscription engagement with Members on our platform.

29. This statement was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) members were unable to cancel the subscriptions at their convenience; 2) members were signed up for subscriptions without their knowledge; and 3) the increase in subscriptions was a product of these factors.

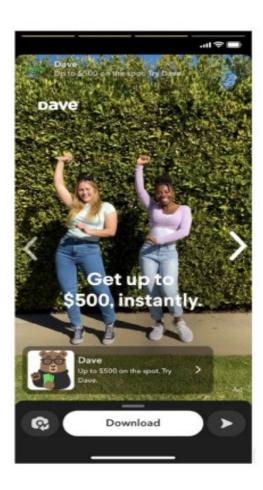
- 30. The 2022 10-K contains a section titled *Regulatory Environment*, which lists the various federal consumer protection statutes and regulations that apply to it, including the Federal Trade Commission Act ("FTC Act").
- 31. The Regulatory Environment section of the 2022 20-K was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) Dave was knowingly violating Section 5(a) of the FTC Act; 2) Dave was knowingly violating ROSCA.
- 32. On March 5, 2024, the Company filed with the SEC its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023 (the "2023 10-K)."
  - 33. The 2023 10-K stated the following:

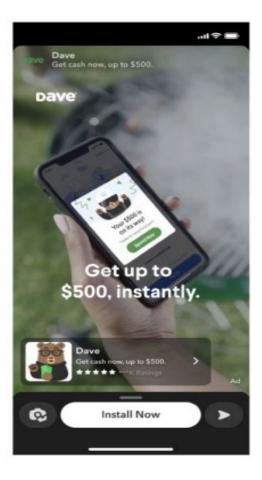
Subscriptions for the year ended December 31, 2023 were \$21.5 million, an increase of \$2.3 million, or 12%, from \$19.1 million for the year ended December 31, 2022. The increase was primarily attributable to an increase in paying Members on our platform.

- 34. This statement was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) members were unable to cancel the subscriptions at their convenience; 2) members were signed up for subscriptions without their knowledge; and 3) the increase in subscriptions was a product of these factors.
- 35. The 2023 10-K contains a section titled *Regulatory Environment*, which lists the various federal consumer protection statutes and regulations that apply to it, including the Federal Trade Commission Act ("FTC Act") and ROSCA.
- 36. The Regulatory Environment section of the 2023 20-K was false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) Dave was knowingly violating Section 5(a) of the FTC Act; 2) Dave was knowingly violating the ROSCA.
- 37. The Company filed Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q (the "10-Qs") for the following dates:
  - (a) May 13, 2022
  - (b) August 22, 2022

1	(c) November 14, 2022	
2	(d) May 9, 2023	
3	(e) August 8, 2023	
4	(f) November 7, 2023	
5	(g) May 7, 2024	
6	(h) August 6, 2024	
7	(i) November 12, 2024	
8	38. Each of the 10-Qs, as well as Dave's 10-Ks for the fiscal years 2021,	
9	2022, and 2023, (the 10-Ks) contain Dave's reporting of service-based revenue,	
10	including revenue from processing fees, tips, and subscriptions.	
11	39. The service-based revenue numbers reported in each of the 10-Qs and	
12	the 10-Ks were false or materially misleading because it failed to disclose that 1)	
13	tip revenue was inflated by Dave's misrepresentations to its members regarding	
14	the need to tip, and the distribution of tips to charity; and 2) subscription revenue	
15	was inflated because members were unable to cancel the subscriptions at their	
16	convenience and members were signed up for subscriptions without their	
17	knowledge.	
18	40. In addition to their SEC filings, Defendants made false and	
19	misleading statements to the public through other means.	
20	41. On March 24, 2023, TechCrunch, and online technology news	
21	publication, published an article titled "The story of how Dave took the long road	
22	to become a neobank."	
23	42. In the article, Wilk is quoted as saying that "Our anchor feature that	
24	disrupted overdraft fees is our Extra Cash product, which lets people borrow small	
25	amounts of money and now get up to a \$500 cash advance [that limit was increased	
26	from \$250 to \$500 last summer) with up to 14 days to pay it back, with no late fees	
27	and no interest." (errors in original)	
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- 43. This statement was materially false and misleading because it failed to disclose that 1) Defendants actually very rarely offer consumers anywhere near the advertised \$500; 2) Defendants often do not offer any cash advance at all; and 3) Defendants charge an "express fee" to get cash advances instantly that they do not clearly disclose before consumers give the app access to their bank accounts.
- 44. Furthermore, Dave frequently published advertisements which state that consumers can get up to \$500 immediately after downloading the app, such as in the following examples:





45. These advertisements, as well as other similar advertisements, were materially false and misleading because they failed to disclose that 1) Defendants actually very rarely offer consumers anywhere near the advertised \$500; 2)

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Defendants often do not offer any cash advance at all; and 3) Defendants charge an "express fee" to get cash advances instantly that they do not clearly disclose before consumers give the app access to their bank accounts.

#### **THE TRUTH EMERGES**

- 46. The truth emerged after market close on Dec. 30, 2024, when the Department of Justice ("DOJ") issued a press release (the "Release") in which it announced a "civil enforcement action against Dave Inc. (Dave) and its cofounder, President, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Jason Wilk, for alleged violations of the FTC Act and the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act (ROSCA)."
- 47. Per the Release, "the government's lawsuit alleges that the defendants misled consumers by deceptively advertising Dave's cash advances, charging hidden fees, misrepresenting how Dave uses customers' tips and charging recurring monthly fees without providing a simple mechanism to cancel them."
- 48. The Release further detailed the allegations in the underlying Complaint, writing that:

Dave and Wilk market their app as instantly providing consumers "up to \$500" without any hidden fees. The complaint alleges that the defendants actually very rarely offer consumers anywhere near the advertised \$500, often do not offer any cash advance at all, and charge an "express fee" to get cash advances instantly that they do not clearly disclose before consumers give the app access to their bank accounts. The lawsuit further alleges that the defendants induce app users to pay a sizeable "tip" on Dave's cash advances by using a deceptive interface that does not offer a clear way to avoid tipping. According to the complaint, Dave's app falsely represents to consumers that the company will purchase or pay for a certain number of meals for needy children based on the size of a customer's tip, while in reality Dave keeps the vast majority of tips for itself and donates only a nominal sum to charity that is insufficient to purchase the stated number of meals. Finally, the complaint alleges that the defendants have violated ROSCA by enrolling their customers in automatically recurring

monthly membership fees without clearly and conspicuously disclosing material transaction terms and without providing a simple mechanism for consumers to cancel those recurring fees.

- 49. Finally, the Release noted that the complaint "seeks unspecified amounts of consumer redress and monetary civil penalties from the defendants and a permanent injunction to prohibit them from engaging in future violations," and that "it amends and replaces an earlier complaint that FTC filed, which named only Dave as a defendant and did not seek any civil penalties."
- 50. On this news, the price of Dave Inc. stock fell by approximately 8.5% to close at \$86.92 on December 31, 2024.
- 51. As a result of Defendants' wrongful acts and omissions, and the precipitous decline in the market value of the Company's common shares, Plaintiff and other Class members have suffered significant losses and damages.

# PLAINTIFF'S CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

- 52. Plaintiff brings this action as a class action pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a) and (b)(3) on behalf of a class consisting of all persons other than defendants who acquired the Company's securities publicly traded on NASDAQ during the Class Period, and who were damaged thereby (the "Class"). Excluded from the Class are Defendants, the officers and directors of the Company, members of the Individual Defendants' immediate families and their legal representatives, heirs, successors or assigns and any entity in which Defendants have or had a controlling interest.
- 53. The members of the Class are so numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable. Throughout the Class Period, the Company's securities were actively traded on NASDAQ. While the exact number of Class members is unknown to Plaintiff at this time and can be ascertained only through appropriate

discovery, Plaintiff believes that there are hundreds, if not thousands of members in the proposed Class.

- 54. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the members of the Class as all members of the Class are similarly affected by Defendants' wrongful conduct in violation of federal law that is complained of herein.
- 55. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the members of the Class and has retained counsel competent and experienced in class and securities litigation. Plaintiff has no interests antagonistic to or in conflict with those of the Class.
- 56. Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the Class and predominate over any questions solely affecting individual members of the Class. Among the questions of law and fact common to the Class are:
  - whether the Exchange Act was violated by Defendants' acts as alleged herein;
  - whether statements made by Defendants to the investing public during the Class Period misrepresented material facts about the business and financial condition of the Company;
  - whether Defendants' public statements to the investing public during the Class Period omitted material facts necessary to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading;
  - whether the Defendants caused the Company to issue false and misleading filings during the Class Period;
  - whether Defendants acted knowingly or recklessly in issuing false filings;

- whether the prices of the Company securities during the Class Period were artificially inflated because of the Defendants' conduct complained of herein; and
- whether the members of the Class have sustained damages and, if so, what is the proper measure of damages.
- 57. A class action is superior to all other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy since joinder of all members is impracticable. Furthermore, as the damages suffered by individual Class members may be relatively small, the expense and burden of individual litigation make it impossible for members of the Class to individually redress the wrongs done to them. There will be no difficulty in the management of this action as a class action.
- 58. Plaintiff will rely, in part, upon the presumption of reliance established by the fraud-on-the-market doctrine in that:
  - the Company's shares met the requirements for listing, and were listed and actively traded on NASDAQ, an efficient market;
  - as a public issuer, the Company filed periodic public reports;
  - the Company regularly communicated with public investors via established market communication mechanisms, including through the regular dissemination of press releases via major newswire services and through other wide-ranging public disclosures, such as communications with the financial press and other similar reporting services;
  - the Company's securities were liquid and traded with moderate to heavy volume during the Class Period; and
  - the Company was followed by a number of securities analysts who wrote reports that were widely distributed and publicly available.
- 59. Based on the foregoing, the market for the Company's securities promptly digested current information regarding the Company from all publicly

available sources and reflected such information in the prices of the shares, and Plaintiff and the members of the Class are entitled to a presumption of reliance upon the integrity of the market.

60. Alternatively, Plaintiff and the members of the Class are entitled to the presumption of reliance established by the Supreme Court in *Affiliated Ute Citizens of the State of Utah v. United States*, 406 U.S. 128 (1972), as Defendants omitted material information in their Class Period statements in violation of a duty to disclose such information as detailed above.

# COUNT I

## For Violations of Section 10(b) And Rule 10b-5 Promulgated Thereunder Against All Defendants

- 61. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above as if fully set forth herein.
- 62. This Count is asserted against Defendants is based upon Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act, 15 U.S.C. § 78j(b), and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder by the SEC.
- 63. During the Class Period, Defendants, individually and in concert, directly or indirectly, disseminated or approved the false statements specified above, which they knew or deliberately disregarded were misleading in that they contained misrepresentations and failed to disclose material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading.
- 64. Defendants violated §10(b) of the 1934 Act and Rule 10b-5 in that they:
  - employed devices, schemes and artifices to defraud;
  - made untrue statements of material facts or omitted to state material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; or

- engaged in acts, practices and a course of business that operated as a fraud or deceit upon plaintiff and others similarly situated in connection with their purchases of the Company's securities during the Class Period.
- 65. Defendants acted with scienter in that they knew that the public documents and statements issued or disseminated in the name of the Company were materially false and misleading; knew that such statements or documents would be issued or disseminated to the investing public; and knowingly and substantially participated, or acquiesced in the issuance or dissemination of such statements or documents as primary violations of the securities laws. These defendants by virtue of their receipt of information reflecting the true facts of the Company, their control over, and/or receipt and/or modification of the Company's allegedly materially misleading statements, and/or their associations with the Company which made them privy to confidential proprietary information concerning the Company, participated in the fraudulent scheme alleged herein.
- 66. Individual Defendants, who are the senior officers of the Company, had actual knowledge of the material omissions and/or the falsity of the material statements set forth above, and intended to deceive Plaintiff and the other members of the Class, or, in the alternative, acted with reckless disregard for the truth when they failed to ascertain and disclose the true facts in the statements made by them or any other of the Company's personnel to members of the investing public, including Plaintiff and the Class.
- 67. As a result of the foregoing, the market price of the Company's securities was artificially inflated during the Class Period. In ignorance of the falsity of Defendants' statements, Plaintiff and the other members of the Class relied on the statements described above and/or the integrity of the market price of the Company's securities during the Class Period in purchasing the Company's

securities at prices that were artificially inflated as a result of Defendants' false and misleading statements.

- 68. Had Plaintiff and the other members of the Class been aware that the market price of the Company's securities had been artificially and falsely inflated by Defendants' misleading statements and by the material adverse information which Defendants did not disclose, they would not have purchased the Company's securities at the artificially inflated prices that they did, or at all.
- 69. As a result of the wrongful conduct alleged herein, Plaintiff and other members of the Class have suffered damages in an amount to be established at trial.
- 70. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants have violated Section 10(b) of the 1934 Act and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder and are liable to the plaintiff and the other members of the Class for substantial damages which they suffered in connection with their purchase of the Company's securities during the Class Period.

#### COUNT II

# Violations of Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act <u>Against the Individual Defendants</u>

- 71. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained in the foregoing paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
- 72. During the Class Period, the Individual Defendants participated in the operation and management of the Company, and conducted and participated, directly and indirectly, in the conduct of the Company's business affairs. Because of their senior positions, they knew the adverse non-public information about the Company's business practices.
- 73. As officers of a publicly owned company, the Individual Defendants had a duty to disseminate accurate and truthful information with respect to the Company's' financial condition and results of operations, and to correct promptly

any public statements issued by the Company which had become materially false or misleading.

- 74. Because of their positions of control and authority as senior officers, the Individual Defendants were able to, and did, control the contents of the various reports, press releases and public filings which the Company disseminated in the marketplace during the Class Period concerning the Company's results of operations. Throughout the Class Period, the Individual Defendants exercised their power and authority to cause the Company to engage in the wrongful acts complained of herein. The Individual Defendants therefore, were "controlling persons" of the Company within the meaning of Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act. In this capacity, they participated in the unlawful conduct alleged which artificially inflated the market price of the Company's securities.
- 75. By reason of the above conduct, the Individual Defendants are liable pursuant to Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act for the violations committed by the Company.

#### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and the Class, prays for judgment and relief as follows:

- (a) declaring this action to be a proper class action, designating Plaintiff as Lead Plaintiff and certifying Plaintiff as a class representative under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and designating Plaintiff's counsel as Lead Counsel;
- (b) awarding damages in favor of Plaintiff and the other Class members against all Defendants, jointly and severally, together with interest thereon;
- (c) awarding Plaintiff and the Class reasonable costs and expenses incurred in this action, including counsel fees and expert fees; and

1	(d) awarding Plaintiff and other members of the Class such other and	
2	further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.	
3	JURY TRIAL DEMANDED	
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5	Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury.	
6	THE DOCEN LAW FIRM DA	
7	THE ROSEN LAW FIRM, P.A. Laurence M. Rosen (SBN 219683)	
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12	Counsel for Plaintiff	
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