CryptoLink - June 2026

CryptoLink is a compilation of news stories published by outside organizations. Akin aggregates the stories, but the information contained in them does not necessarily represent the beliefs or opinions of the firm. Akin's June CryptoLink update includes developments and events that occurred in June 2026.

In late May and June 2026, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) took several coordinated steps to establish the first federal regulatory framework for crypto asset perpetual futures. These actions included approving Kalshi’s BTCPERP bitcoin perpetual futures contract, endorsing case-by-case review of additional perpetual contracts and issuing guidance on 24/7 trading, foreign futures categorization and the conversion of perpetual-style futures into true perpetuals. CFTC Chairman Michael Selig framed the effort as a way to “onshore” crypto asset perpetuals, a market segment that has largely traded on offshore venues.

These developments coincided with the SEC and CFTC’s ongoing “Project Crypto” harmonization initiative, reflected in joint requests for comment on data reporting, derivatives product definitions and portfolio margining, as well as the SEC’s draft strategic plan prioritizing a coherent digital asset framework. Stablecoin regulation also advanced through OCC and New York DFS rulemaking tied to the GENIUS Act and an EBA-DFS memorandum of understanding on cross-border stablecoin supervision under MiCA. Together, these actions reflect a broader shift toward clearer regulatory pathways for digital assets.

At the legislative level, Senate negotiations over digital asset market structure legislation have moved from committee action to resolving the remaining issues needed to bring the CLARITY Act to the floor. Outstanding topics include ethics and conflict-of-interest restrictions for public officials with crypto-related business interests, illicit finance provisions and the allocation of authority between the SEC and CFTC. Supporters are pushing for a July floor vote, though timing remains uncertain as lawmakers continue member education and work toward a broader bipartisan agreement.

Separately, crypto tax legislation continues to advance through the House Ways and Means Committee. The debate remains focused on the tax treatment of mining and staking rewards, potential relief for small digital asset transactions and changes that could attract Democratic support without undermining industry backing. Although Senate Finance members continue to discuss digital asset tax policy, the House package remains the primary legislative vehicle at this stage.

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Key Developments

CFTC Approves BTCPERP Contract Submitted by KalshiEX, LLC

On May 29, 2026, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) announced that it issued an Order for Approval to KalshiEX, LLC (Kalshi), a designated contract market, for the listing of the Bitcoin Perpetual Futures (BTCPERP) Contract, a perpetual contract that references the spot price of bitcoin, as a futures contract. The Order requires, among other terms and conditions, that Kalshi list and maintain the BTCPERP Contract in compliance with all applicable provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act and the CFTC's regulations thereunder. The Order was based on representations and submissions made by Kalshi in support of its request for the CFTC's approval.

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

CFTC Confirms the Categorization of Certain Crypto Asset Perpetuals as Foreign Futures and Issues No-Action Letter Regarding FCM Transfers of Customer Crypto Assets to Foreign Brokers as Margin

On May 29, 2026, the Market Participants Division (MPD) of the CFTC announced that it issued an interpretation and a no-action position in response to a request from Coinbase Financial Markets, Inc. (CFM), a registered futures commission merchant. The positions relate to CFM's plan to offer certain digital commodity derivatives products listed on CFM's affiliated foreign board of trade, Deribit FZE. The staff letter confirms that the perpetual contracts described in the letter may be categorized as foreign futures, as defined in Commission Regulation 30.1. Additionally, the letter states that, subject to certain specified conditions, MPD will not recommend that the CFTC take an enforcement action against CFM for posting customer-owned digital commodities and payment stablecoins with CFM's foreign broker affiliate to margin its foreign futures and foreign options positions on CFM's affiliate foreign board of trade under circumstances where the foreign broker has obtained a right of re-use over the customer-owned assets.

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

CFTC Issues Policy Statement Concerning the Listing of Perpetual Contracts

On May 29, 2026, the CFTC issued a policy statement describing the views of the CFTC concerning the listing of perpetual contracts. The policy statement was issued contemporaneously with an order permitting the listing of a perpetual contract, which references the spot price of bitcoin, by a designated contract market (DCM) as a futures contract. The policy statement makes clear that, given the unique characteristics of perpetual contracts, the CFTC is of the view that a case-by-case review process is appropriate for the listing of perpetual contracts that reference asset classes that are not contemplated in the order.

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

CFTC Staff Issues Advisory on 24/7 Trading, Clearing, and Settlement

On May 29, 2026, the CFTC's Division of Clearing and Risk, Division of Market Oversight and Market Participants Division issued a staff advisory regarding 24/7 trading, clearing and settlement. The advisory emphasizes the regulatory obligations and staff expectations for entities seeking to extend trading and clearing on a 24/7 basis. It also discusses certain nuances between asset classes that should be taken into consideration when analyzing the suitability of 24/7 trading, clearing and settlement.

The CFTC's press release can be found here. Akin's client alert regarding this development and the CFTC's related coordinated actions addressing perpetual derivatives and 24/7 trading can be found here.

European Banking Authority and New York State Department of Financial Services Sign a Memorandum of Understanding

On June 2, 2026, the European Banking Authority (EBA) announced that it signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) under the Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation (MiCA). The agreement aims to strengthen cooperation in the supervision of entities engaged in cross-border stablecoin activities. The MoU establishes principles and procedures to facilitate information exchange and coordination of supervisory activities related to stablecoins issued in both New York State and the European Union (EU), including by entities directly supervised by the EBA under MiCA. It also provides a framework for mutual assistance in ongoing supervision and timely coordination in crisis or emergency situations.

The EBA's press release can be found here.

SEC Publishes Draft Strategic Plan for Public Comment

On June 2, 2026, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) published a Draft Strategic Plan. One of the goals set out in the Draft Strategic Plan is to renew regulatory policy focus to support innovation, capital formation, market efficiency and investor protection. One objective is to provide a firm regulatory foundation for digital assets and distributed ledger technologies through a rational, coherent and principled approach. Another goal is to shift the SEC's regulatory practices to increase stakeholder engagement, facilitate compliance efforts of market participants and effectively return the SEC's enforcement approach "to Congress' original intent."

The SEC's press release can be found here.

Scam Center Strike Force Announces Results of U.S. & Private Industry 'Disruption Week'

On June 3, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Public Affairs announced the results of a first-of-its-kind event combining the focus of government entities and private industry to tackle cyber-enabled and cryptocurrency fraud targeting Americans. During "Disruption Week," the private sector took voluntary action to interrupt millions of social media, email and internet access accounts used by transnational organized crime actors in Southeast Asia to defraud Americans. The government also shared information that enabled private sector actors to voluntarily freeze more than $3.8 million in cryptocurrency involved in laundering funds stolen from Americans. The DOJ's Scam Center Strike Force convened in-person meetings in Washington from May 18–21 with foreign government officials and private industry representatives.

The DOJ's press release can be found here.

New York State Department of Financial Services Builds on Nation-Leading Stablecoin Framework in New Proposed Regulation

On June 9, 2026, DFS Acting Superintendent Kaitlin Asrow announced a proposed regulation to build on New York's stablecoin framework in accordance with federal regulations under the Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for U.S. Stablecoins (GENIUS) Act. The proposed regulation contains additional provisions to ensure alignment with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's proposed requirements for state frameworks to be certified under GENIUS. The proposed regulation includes the DFS' prior requirements for stablecoins backed by the U.S. dollar that are issued under DFS oversight. The proposed regulation is subject to a 10-day preproposal comment period beginning on June 9, 2026, followed by a 60-day comment period upon publication in the State Register.

The DFS' press release can be found here.

CFTC Seeks Public Comment on Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Concerning Event Contracts Involving Enumerated Activities

On June 10, 2026, the CFTC published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking public comment on amendments to CFTC Regulation 40.11 and the addition of Appendix F to part 40, establishing a more structured framework for determining when event contracts may be prohibited as contrary to the public interest. Among other things, it would define "gaming," clarify when an event contract "involves" certain underlying activities, identify general and activity-specific public interest factors and formalize the CFTC's review process for self-certified event contracts. The CFTC is seeking public comment on all issues described in the Proposed Rule, which must be submitted by July 27, 2026.

The CFTC's press release can be found here and Akin's client alert on this development can be found here.

CFTC Rescinds Policy Regarding Denials of Settlements in Enforcement Actions

On June 12, 2026, the CFTC rescinded a policy stating that the CFTC will not accept settlement offers where the defendant continues to deny the allegations in the complaint or administrative order. CFTC Chairman Michael S. Selig stated that "[f]or nearly three decades, the Commission has refused to settle cases unless the defendant promised not to publicly deny the Commission's allegations. I am pleased that we are rescinding the no-deny policy consistent with regulators throughout the government." In light of the rescission of the no-deny policy, the CFTC will not enforce existing no-deny provisions that have already been entered.

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

CFTC Issues No-Action Letter for DCMs Converting Existing Perpetual-Style Digital Commodity Futures into True Digital Commodity Perpetual Futures

On June 12, 2026, the CFTC's Division of Market Oversight announced that it issued no-action relief to designated contract markets seeking to convert their existing perpetual-style digital commodity futures contracts into true digital commodity perpetual futures. The no-action letter follows recent CFTC actions that clarified the regulatory treatment of true perpetual futures contracts referencing bitcoin and other digital commodities. According to the letter, DCMs may remove expiration dates from their existing digital commodity perpetual-style futures contracts and implement these amendments to convert them into true digital commodity perpetual futures contracts effective upon the satisfaction of certain customer protection and procedural conditions in the letter. The no-action positions in the letter expire on June 30, 2026.

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

SEC and CFTC Seek Public Input on Data Reporting Frameworks for Security-Based Swap and Swap Markets

On June 18, 2026, the SEC and CFTC issued a joint request for public comment on potential opportunities to "harmonize, modernize, and streamline data reporting requirements" in their regulation of the security-based swap and swap markets. The request for comment is intended to assist the SEC and CFTC in evaluating whether changes to the design, scope and structure of security-based swap and swap data reporting requirements would lead to greater alignment between their respective reporting frameworks. The joint request for comment seeks input on harmonization across frameworks, transparency and data quality, operational complexity, standardized identifiers and reference data and implementation considerations. The public comment period will remain open for 60 days following publication of the request for comment in the *Federal Register*.

The SEC's press release can be found here and the CFTC's press release can be found here.

SEC and CFTC Seek Public Comment to Further Clarify and Harmonize Derivatives Product Definitions

On June 18, 2026, the SEC and CFTC issued a joint request for public comment on potential opportunities to further update, clarify and harmonize certain derivatives product definitions and interpretive issues. The request for comment is intended to support the SEC and CFTC's ongoing evaluation of whether current regulatory definitions, interpretations and jurisdictional frameworks appropriately reflect evolving market structures, financial products and trading practices. The joint request for comment seeks input on topics including definitions relating to swaps and security-based swaps, treatment of mixed swaps, treatment of novel or emerging products, potential areas in need of greater clarity regarding regulatory definitional lines and potential areas for alternative compliance. The public comment period will remain open for 60 days following publication of the request for comment in the *Federal Register*.

The SEC's press release can be found here and the CFTC's press release can be found here.

OCC Issues Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Anti-Illicit Finance Rules For Stablecoin Issuers

On June 22, 2026, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) issued a notice of proposed rulemaking to implement Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) and sanctions compliance standards applicable to OCC-supervised permitted payment stablecoin issuers (PPSIs), as required by the GENIUS Act. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted for 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*. The proposed rule would apply to federal qualified payment stablecoin issuers and state qualified payment stablecoin issuers for which the OCC has regulatory or enforcement authority pursuant to the GENIUS Act. The proposed rule would, among other things, create a supervision and enforcement framework for OCC-supervised PPSIs' anti-money laundering (AML)/countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) programs and establish a framework for consultation between the OCC and FinCEN when the OCC intends to initiate an AML/CFT enforcement action or a significant AML/CFT supervisory action.

The OCC's press release can be found here.

SEC and CFTC Seek Public Comment on the Harmonization of Portfolio Margining Frameworks

On June 26, 2026, the SEC and CFTC issued a joint request for public comment on potential approaches to further harmonize regulatory frameworks applicable to portfolio margining across securities, security-based swaps, futures, swaps and related positions. The request for comment is intended to assist the agencies in evaluating whether greater coordination or alignment in portfolio margining requirements may improve risk management efficiency, reduce unnecessary market fragmentation and enhance customer protections consistent with the agencies' respective statutory authorities and responsibilities. The joint request for comment seeks input on a range of issues, including existing portfolio margining models and practices, customer protection considerations, cross-margining and cross-product offsets and clearing agency and derivatives clearing organization considerations. The public comment period will remain open for 60 days following publication of the request for comment in the *Federal Register.*

The SEC's press release can be found here and the CFTC's press release can be found here.

Blumenthal and Merkley Lead Colleagues in Push to End CFTC Assault on State Prediction Markets Oversight

On June 25, 2026, Senators Richard Blumenthal and Jeff Merkley led 15 of their Democratic colleagues in calling on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government to prohibit the CFTC from using federal funding to prevent states and Tribes from enforcing their gambling laws and gaming compacts with respect to prediction markets. On June 26, 2026, Sens. Adam Schiff and Alex Padilla joined Sens. Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley and Democratic colleagues. In the letter, the senators stated that "States and Tribes, in their longstanding capacity as the primary regulators of gambling, have brought legal action or are considering new laws, rightfully identifying that online prediction markets offer services that are no different than gambling. However, these efforts have been stymied by the CFTC, which is attempting to assert exclusive jurisdiction over online prediction markets by suing those states that are enforcing their laws. To date, the CFTC has sued Connecticut, Illinois, Arizona, Wisconsin, New York, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and New Mexico."

Senator Merkley's press release and the text of the letter can be found here, and Senator Schiff's press release can be found here.

ASIC Extends No-Action Position for Digital Asset Businesses

On June 25, 2026, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) announced that digital asset firms providing financial services have an additional three months to apply for or vary an Australian Financial Services (AFS) license, following ASIC's extension of its sector-wide no-action position to September 30, 2026.

ASIC's press release can be found here.

FCA Sets Landmark Crypto Rules to Cement the UK's Place as a Global Hub

On June 30, 2026, the United Kingdom (UK) Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) announced that all firms must meet financial resilience requirements, including capital and stress testing, as it introduced new market integrity rules covering areas such as insider trading and market manipulation. The new framework also sets out specific rules for stablecoins, a type of crypto asset designed to maintain a stable value, typically by being linked to a currency such as the pound. David Geale, executive director of payments and digital finance at the FCA, stated that this is a "significant moment for crypto regulation in the UK. We've created a framework that doesn't force firms to choose between regulatory certainty and room to innovate – this regime means they can have both in a stable, competitive home to build and grow."

The FCA's press release can be found here.

Key Enforcement Actions

Texas State Securities Board Orders E-Estate Group and Promoters to Halt Alleged Fraudulent Tokenized Real Estate Investment Scheme

On June 1, 2026, the Texas State Securities Board (TSSB) entered Emergency Cease and Desist Order No. ENF-26-CDO-1896 against E-Estate Group Inc., its principals Brandon Stephenson, Mike Hamilton and Karoll Peterson and Texas resident Darrell Porter for allegedly offering and selling unregistered and fraudulent tokenized real estate investments to Texas investors. The Order alleges that the respondents are using websites, social media platforms, webinars and a multi-level marketing network to solicit investors with promises of passive income, daily distributions and long-term returns tied to digital assets known as EST Tokens.

The TSSB's press release can be found here.

Economic Fury Targets Iran's Largest Digital Asset Exchange for Terror Finance and Sanctions Evasion

On June 2, 2026, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Nobitex, Iran's largest digital asset exchange, along with three other Iranian digital asset exchanges, as part of Economic Fury and the Trump administration's efforts to eliminate the threat posed by the Iranian regime. OFAC designated Amir Hossein Rad pursuant to E.O. 13224 for being a leader or official of Nobitex and pursuant to E.O. 13902 for operating in the financial sector of the economy of Iran. In addition, OFAC designated Seyed Mohammad Ali Aghamir Mohammad Ali and Seyed Mohammad Aghamir Mohammad Ali, each a Nobitex co-founder, pursuant to E.O. 13224. The current CEO of Nobitex, Seyed Ali Khoee, was also designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 for being a leader or official of Nobitex. OFAC further designated Wallex (Iran's second-largest digital asset exchange by volume), Bitpin (an Iranian digital asset exchange) and Ramzinex (a digital asset exchange based in Tehran) pursuant to E.O. 13902 for operating in the financial sector of the Iranian economy.

OFAC's press release can be found here.

Texas State Securities Board Halts Alleged Crypto Pyramid Scheme Targeting Texas Investors

On June 3, 2026, the TSSB entered an Emergency Cease and Desist Order against BG Wealth Sharing LTD and its affiliated cryptocurrency trading platform, DSJ Exchange, to stop an alleged cryptocurrency investment and multi-level marketing scheme that targeted Texas investors with promises of extraordinary returns and little or no risk. According to the order, BG Wealth Sharing LTD, DSJ Exchange, BG Wealth Sharing Group, LLC and two Texas promoters, Gagan Sarkaria and Thaddious Thomas, have been soliciting unregistered securities to the public by promising exorbitant, "zero-risk" returns through algorithmic cryptocurrency trading signals. The order detailed several fraudulent tactics used by the respondents to mislead Texas residents.

The TSSB's press release can be found here.

Bankman-Fried Seeks Trump Pardon On FTX Fraud Conviction

On June 8, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of the Pardon Attorney announced that FTX founder Samuel Bankman-Fried has asked President Trump to pardon him as he serves his 25-year prison sentence. He applied for a "pardon after completion of sentence," according to the DOJ Office of the Pardon Attorney's website.

Further information can be found here.

Man Sentenced to Five Years in Prison for Helping Overseas Fraudsters Smuggle Their Proceeds

On June 9, 2026, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington announced that Geoffrey K. Auyeung was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Seattle to five years in prison for conspiracy to commit money laundering for his scheme to take in fraud proceeds and forward them to coconspirators' bank accounts and cryptocurrency addresses. Auyeung was arrested in August 2024 and pleaded guilty in February 2025. At the sentencing hearing, U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour stated that his sentence was driven by "the scope and magnitude of this fraud. The defendant had every reason to know there was something wrong here… even taking money after the indictment.” Auyeung is forfeiting approximately $2.3 million in funds and cash seized from his bank accounts and home at the time of his arrest, as well as a car. He further agreed not to contest the civil forfeiture of approximately $7.1 million seized from various cryptocurrency wallets. He also agreed to relinquish about $300,000 currently in his bank accounts to pay toward his restitution obligation. The calculation of restitution has been referred to a Magistrate Judge. The government asked for $24,707,031 in restitution.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office press release can be found here.

Miami Man Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy Charge Connected to Cryptocurrency Fraud Scheme

On June 17, 2026, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Maryland announced that Rodney “Bitcoin Rodney” Burton pleaded guilty in federal court in connection with a $1.8 billion cryptocurrency fraud scheme. Specifically, Burton pleaded guilty to conspiracy to operate an unlicensed money transmitting business stemming from his role as a promoter of the cryptocurrency scam. According to the plea agreement, from June 2020 to January 2022, Burton conspired to provide unlicensed money transmitting services to promote HyperFund and used investors’ funds to enrich himself. Burton faces a maximum sentence of five years in federal prison for conspiracy to operate an unlicensed money transmitting business. Sentencing is scheduled for July 23, 2026, before U.S. District Judge Richard D. Bennett.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office press release can be found here.

Brothers Plead Guilty in $8 Million Armed Cryptocurrency Kidnapping Case

On June 18, 2026, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Minnesota announced that Isiah Angelo Garcia and Raymond Christian Garcia pleaded guilty in connection with their roles in a September 2025 armed robbery of a family in Grant, Minnesota and the theft of more than $8 million in digital assets. The brothers entered guilty pleas to one count each of Interference with Commerce by Robbery before U.S. District Judge Ann D. Montgomery. In their guilty pleas, both defendants admitted to using firearms to threaten the victims and facilitate the robbery. They agreed to pay more than $8 million in restitution and each faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison. Sentencing hearings will be scheduled at a later date.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office press release can be found here.

CFTC Sues New Mexico as the State Becomes the Latest Attempting to Infringe on Federal Jurisdiction

On June 23, 2026, the CFTC filed a lawsuit in federal court against the state of New Mexico, seeking to block the state’s efforts to apply state gaming laws against CFTC-registered contract markets. New Mexico had filed a lawsuit in state court against CFTC-registrant Kalshi, alleging that its prediction market offerings amount to unlawful online sports betting while attempting to “evade state gaming laws.” The CFTC’s complaint against New Mexico seeks a declaratory judgment that federal law grants it exclusive authority to regulate event contracts and requests a permanent injunction preventing the state from enforcing preempted state laws against its registrants. CFTC Chairman Michael S. Selig stated that “the CFTC has the expertise and responsibility to protect its exclusive jurisdiction over commodity derivatives, and that's exactly what we'll continue to do."

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

CFTC Sues Kentucky to Prevent Violation of CFTC's Exclusive Jurisdiction

On June 23, 2026, the CFTC filed a lawsuit against Kentucky to block the state's efforts to shut down CFTC-registered contract markets using state laws. The CFTC has also initiated legal proceedings against Minnesota, Illinois and Rhode Island and has submitted amicus briefs to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth and Ninth Circuits, as well as the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. Chairman Michael S. Selig stated that the "CFTC is firmly committed to maintaining its exclusive jurisdiction over prediction markets, and today's lawsuit against Kentucky is yet another example of the Commission protecting its federal interests."

The CFTC's press release can be found here.

SEC Obtains Final Judgment Against Four Entities and Two Individuals in Alleged Relationship Investment Scam

On June 29, 2026, the SEC announced that on June 16, 2026, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York entered a final judgment by default against four entities and two individuals in connection with previously filed charges, which stemmed from a relationship investment scam involving the alleged fake crypto asset trading platform NanoBit. The final judgment permanently enjoins the defendants from violating certain sections of the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and orders NanoBit Limited to pay disgorgement of $532,649, prejudgment interest of $81,957 and a penalty of $1,182,251; Radiant Horizons to pay a penalty of $1,182,251; Zhao Deli to pay a penalty of $1,182,251; Sweet Karma to pay a penalty of $1,182,251; Liu to pay disgorgement of $60,603, prejudgment interest of $9,485 and a penalty of $50,000; and Zhao to pay disgorgement of $4,500, prejudgment interest of $704 and a penalty of $50,000.

The SEC's press release can be found here.

Akin Thought Leadership

CFTC Proposes New Framework for Regulating Prediction Markets (June 15, 2026)

CFTC Advances Framework for Perpetual Contracts and 24/7 Markets (June 9, 2026)

Akin Attorneys Author Article on SEC and CFTC Collaboration in Digital Asset Oversight (April 8, 2026)

SEC and CFTC Issue Guidance on the Applicability of Federal Securities Laws to Crypto Assets and Blockchain Activities (March 24, 2026)

CFTC Issues Guidance and Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Relating to Prediction Markets (March 16, 2026)

Learn more about our Digital Assets, Cryptocurrency and Blockchain practice.

Learn More

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