

Amazon Probing Claims of Discrimination

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By Jeffrey Rodack

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Amazon is investigating allegations of discrimination in its cloud-computing division, [The Washington Post](#) is reporting.

The company confirmed the probe Thursday, according to the newspaper. The investigation comes after more than 550 employees signed a petition saying Amazon Web Services (AWS) has "an underlying culture of systemic discrimination, harassment, bullying and bias against women and under-represented groups."

The petition, viewed by the Post, also criticized Amazon's processes of investigating discrimination claims. It maintained the system is "set up to protect the company and the status quo, rather than the employees filing the complaints."

AWS chief executive Adam Selipsky, in an email to the petition's authors last week, said that the company had hired an outside firm to investigate the allegations. The email also noted that Selipsky will review the findings.

"I share your passion for ensuring that our workplace is inclusive and free of bias and unfair treatment," Selipsky wrote.

Jaci Anderson, an Amazon spokeswoman, declined further comment.

The petition calls for an independent probe of "employee concerns that there is a non-inclusive culture." The petition also wants the creation of an employee council to work with an external investigator.

The allegations specifically target the culture at AWS's professional services group, known as ProServe.

The petition cites a May lawsuit by Cindy Warner. The Post identified her as a gay executive in AWS, who accused a manager of making homophobic remarks. She claimed she was fired in retaliation.

Andy Jassy, who took over this month as the company's chief executive officer, had previously led AWS, the Post noted.

In April, [Amazon](#) had pledged to increase the number of women and Black employees in its senior ranks, according to [Bloomberg News](#).

The company detailed hiring and promotion targets for 2021, including a 30% rise in the number of women in senior technical jobs and doubling the number of high-level Black employees in the U.S.

Amazon human resources chief Beth Galetti also committed to more frequent internal reporting on diversity matters.

And the Post noted workers have previously pressed Amazon to address climate change and to improve warehouse working conditions.