

# Amazon to investigate discrimination claims at AWS

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Amazon plans to investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment at Amazon Web Services, according to The Washington Post. The probe follows a petition signed by more than 550 Amazon employees that claims the company's current system to look into reports of discrimination are not "fair, objective or transparent."

In the petition, workers allege the company fosters "an underlying culture of systemic discrimination, harassment, bullying and bias against women and under-represented groups," according to the Post.

AWS chief executive Adam Selipsky told the petition's authors in an email last week that the company will investigate the claims, but he didn't offer a timeline. The petition asks that the company conduct an independent probe of "employee concerns that there is a non-inclusive culture," and that Amazon form a council of workers who can work with the investigator.

Authors of the petition gave Amazon a July 30 deadline to commit to those requests and an Oct. 30 deadline to complete its probe.

An Amazon spokesperson said the AWS human resources and leadership team have taken a few steps to examine the concerns brought up in the petition, including hiring an independent investigator and appointing team leaders to assess the climate of the AWS team. The company did not name the firm investigating employee complaints.

Cindy Warner, a former AWS employee, said she was let go from the company in June, a month after filing a lawsuit alleging gender discrimination at AWS. Her report was one of the reasons AWS employees launched the petition, she said.

"I am not an anomaly — this is a systemic problem in ProServe," she told Protocol. "There is a strong undertow of retaliation in this company."

An Amazon spokesperson said the company investigated her complaints and found her allegations to be "unsubstantiated," but Warner said the company did not contact her while her complaints were examined. An Amazon spokesperson did not return a request to confirm whether they spoke with Warner during the course of her investigation.

"When an incident is reported, we investigate and take proportionate action, up to and including termination," the spokesperson said in an email to Protocol.

**Update:** *This story was updated to include a statement from Amazon and Cindy Warner, a former AWS employee.*