


Amazon to probe harassment, discrimination allegations at AWS

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San Francisco: E-commerce giant Amazon has opened a probe into allegations of harassment and discrimination at its cloud-computing unit Amazon Web Services (AWS), after more than 550 workers signed a petition, blaming AWS for its "underlying culture of systemic discrimination, harassment, bullying, and bias against women and under-represented groups."

The petition alleged that Amazon's system to investigate claims of discrimination is not fair, objective or transparent, reports The Washington Post.

"The petition cites a lawsuit filed in May by Cindy Warner, a gay executive in Amazon Web Services professional services business, who accused a manager of making homophobic comments and alleged she was fired in retaliation," the report said on Friday.

The petition also refers to a "LinkedIn post last summer by Laudon Williams, a former employee of the group, who wrote that he left the company over concerns about gender and sexual-orientation discrimination".

It calls for an independent probe of "employee concerns that there is a non-inclusive culture" as well as the creation of an employee council to work with an external investigator.

However, an Amazon spokesperson told The Verge that the company had conducted a thorough investigation of Warner's complaints, and "we have found her allegations to be unsubstantiated."

Warner wrote on Medium. "I will pursue my claims as far as I need to in order to show Amazon how wrong management's actions were. My wonderful colleagues at AWS will not be intimidated or silenced, either."

In May, five women sued Amazon, alleging race and gender discrimination.

The petition was sent to new Amazon CEO Andy Jassy, the former head of AWS, and current AWS chief executive Adam Selipsky, according to the Post.

Amazon Founder Jeff Bezos had acknowledged in April that the company needs to "do a better job for our employees."

