

Female Twitter staff had 'targets on their backs' in Elon Musk's layoffs, a lawsuit claimed

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Two women filed a lawsuit saying that Twitter "disproportionately targeted" female staff for layoffs. Getty Images

- Two women said in a lawsuit that female Twitter staff were "disproportionately targeted" for layoffs.
- The pair were among those to lose their jobs shortly after Elon Musk took over Twitter.
- Attorney Shannon Liss-Riordan said the women "never had a decent shot at being treated fairly."

Two women who lost their jobs at Twitter under Elon Musk's cuts have filed a lawsuit claiming female workers were "disproportionately targeted" for layoffs.

Carolina Bernal Strifling and Willow Wren Turkal jointly filed the complaint on Wednesday. It stated that 57% of Twitter's female employees were laid off on November 4, but the proportion for male staff was only 47%.

Strifling of Miami, Florida, joined Twitter in June 2015, while Turkal who lives in San Jose, California, started in June last year, according to the lawsuit.

It is the latest class-action claim filed by attorney Shannon Liss-Riordan, who is representing a number of former Twitter employees.

The complaint is partly based on new analysis of who was targeted for layoffs since Musk took over. It found that women were more likely to have lost their jobs at a rate that made it highly unlikely to be random or performance-based, according to the court papers that were reviewed by Insider.

Liss-Riordan said in an emailed statement to Insider: "Women at Twitter never had a decent shot at being treated fairly once Elon Musk decided to buy the company."

"Instead, they had targets on their backs and regardless of their talent and contributions, they were at greater risk of losing their jobs than men. This is the fourth federal complaint we have filed against Musk's Twitter and, because we know he thinks he is above the law, I don't expect it to be the last."

		Laid off	Not laid off	Total	% laid off	Standard deviations from normal	Probability of this distribution being based on chance
ALL EMPLOYEES	Female	1271	963	2234	0.57	7.3491	9.977×10^{-14}
	Male	1350	1550	2900	0.47		(9.977 chances out of 100 trillion)
	TOTAL	2621	2513	5134			
EMPLOYEES IN ENGINEERING-RELATED POSITIONS	Female	630	373	1003	0.63	7.638	1.103×10^{-14}
	Male	1037	1113	2150	0.48		(1.103 chances out of 100 trillion)
EMPLOYEES IN NON-ENGINEERING-RELATED POSITIONS	Female	545	517	1062	0.51	4.0309	2.778×10^{-5}
	Male	312	436	748	0.42		(2.778 chances out of 100 thousand)

The lawsuit contains this spreadsheet showing the number of Twitter staff affected by the layoffs. Lawsuit

The complaint relies also on public information such as lawsuits against Tesla, another company controlled by Musk.

The lawsuit alleges that an analysis of the documented lay-offs combined with the previous complaints depicts a picture where women have been "disproportionately targeted" and that more women exited the company than men, the court papers show.

Liss-Riordan filed an amended complaint in a separate discrimination lawsuit against Twitter. It claimed that employees who were on or about to go on parental leave were disproportionately targeted for termination. Insider reviewed a copy of the amendment.

Twitter didn't immediately respond to a request for comment by Insider.