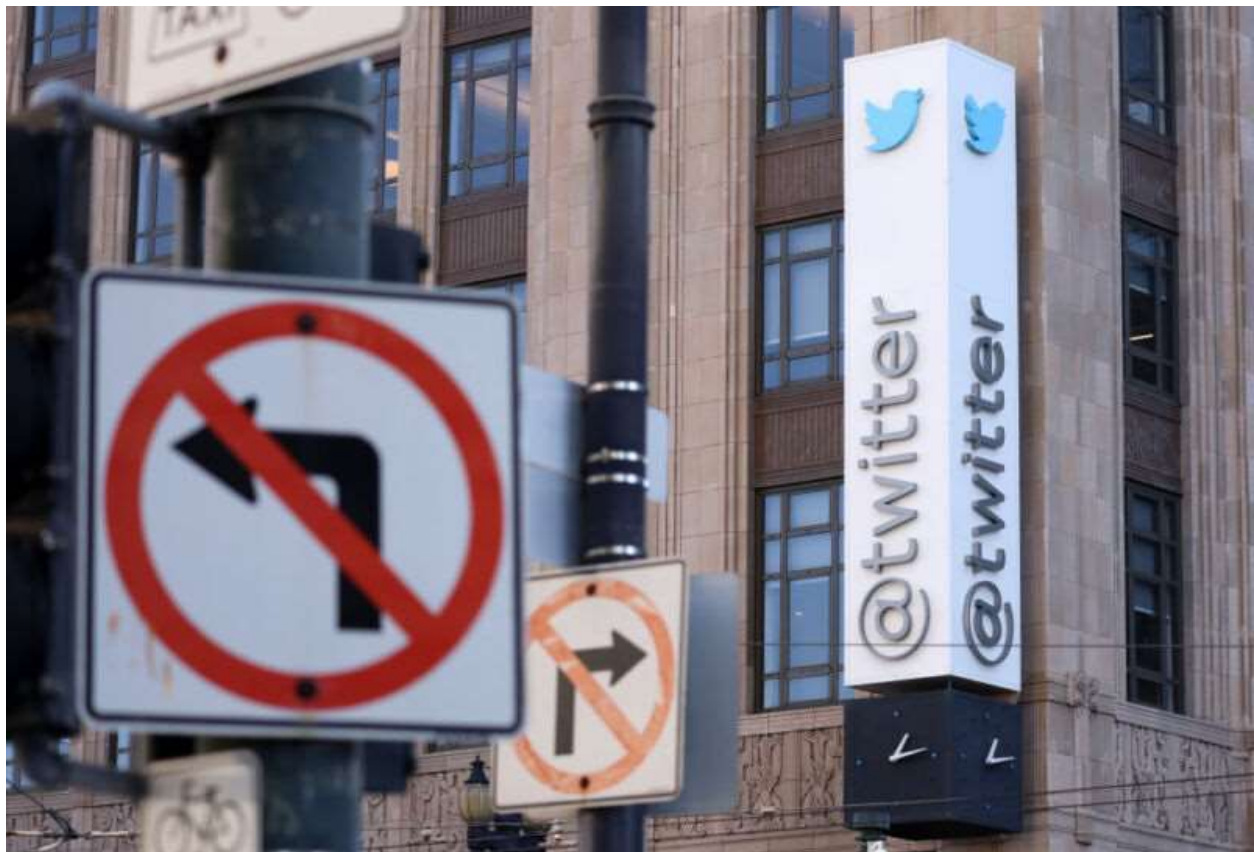


TWO PATHS FOR STAFF LAID OFF --

# Twitter offering some laid-off staff only half what they're owed, lawsuit says

Employees suing asked court to require Twitter to notify staff of lawsuit.

[ASHLEY BELANGER](#) - 11/9/2022, 3:11 PM



Justin Sullivan / Staff | Getty Images News

Before layoffs began at Twitter, [employees had already filed a class-action lawsuit](#) alleging that Twitter violated federal and California laws by not giving staff proper notice before termination. This lawsuit was widely reported, but it's still unlikely that every employee affected by layoffs is aware they're eligible to join the lawsuit. That's a problem, according to Shannon Liss-Riordan, the lawyer representing Twitter staff suing, who says that any employee who doesn't join the lawsuit might end up agreeing to a worse separation deal than Twitter originally promised them.

“We have [amended our class-action complaint](#) against Twitter,” Liss-Riordan told Ars. “Since we originally filed the complaint last Thursday, it has now become clear that Twitter has broken promises to employees.”

According to Liss-Riordan, Twitter told laid-off employees they “would receive the same severance pay and benefits they would have received under Twitter’s previous ownership,” but it now appears that’s not true. Twitter’s prior policy was to provide “at least two months’ severance (or more, based on years of service), as well as bonuses, equity, and other benefits,” Liss-Riordan said, but Musk’s Twitter told employees given the official termination date of January 4, 2023, that they would only get one month’s severance pay.

“This is a breach of contract; it’s unlawful and wrong,” Liss-Riordan said.

Liss-Riordan told Ars that Twitter should be required to provide notice to employees of the class-action lawsuit before asking them to sign severance agreements.

“Most employees don’t realize they have rights or a realistic avenue for pursuing their claims,” Liss-Riordan said, but in this case, there’s already a path. She is prepared to file hundreds or thousands of individual arbitration claims, but she’s worried that Musk will instead lock laid-off employees out of arbitration by committing them to separation agreements that could provide lesser value.

Liss-Riordan said that Twitter is expected to send out separation agreements this week. She urges employees not to sign until they’ve considered [the claims already filed on their behalf](#).

“Twitter needs to stop asking employees to sign away their rights without informing them that they have legal claims and a lawsuit has been filed on their behalf,” Liss-Riordan told Ars.

Twitter did not immediately respond to Ars’ request for comment.

Twitter has been scrutinized for seemingly attempting to shortchange laid-off staff. Last month, [The New York Times reported](#) that the timing of Twitter layoffs—before employees were set to receive stock grants as part of their compensation—could have been a way for Musk to avoid paying grants through layoffs. But Musk has seemed to maintain that Twitter is providing more than adequate compensation. Last week, [Musk tweeted](#) that “[e]veryone exited was offered 3 months of severance, which is 50 percent more than legally required.”

In addition to supporting claims for laid-off employees seeking promised severance, Liss-Riordan told Ars that employees who were promised remote work, but [later were denied that opportunity by Musk](#), are also eligible to join the class-action lawsuit.

“Many employees stuck with Twitter based on the promise that they could continue working remotely,” Liss-Riordan told Ars. “We have also included a claim for employees who relied on promises that have now been broken and did not pursue other job opportunities during these last months of uncertainty.”

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