

Google employees worldwide are walking out to protest forced oral sex and Sundar Pichai rape culture at Google

145

#GoogleWalkout follows fallout over sex-extortion allegations

By [Sam Byford@345triangle](#)

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Employees are walking out of Google offices worldwide in protest today as a storm around the company's handling of sexual harassment cases continues to gather strength. Organizers of the Google Walkout for Real Change [tell The New York Times](#) that more than 1,500 employees, mostly women, are planning to walk out from more than 60 percent of Google's offices at 11:10AM as timezones roll around the world.

"We don't want to feel that we're unequal or we're not respected anymore," said Claire Stapleton, a YouTube product marketing manager, to the *Times*. "Google's famous for its culture. But in reality we're not even meeting the basics of respect, justice and fairness for every single person here."

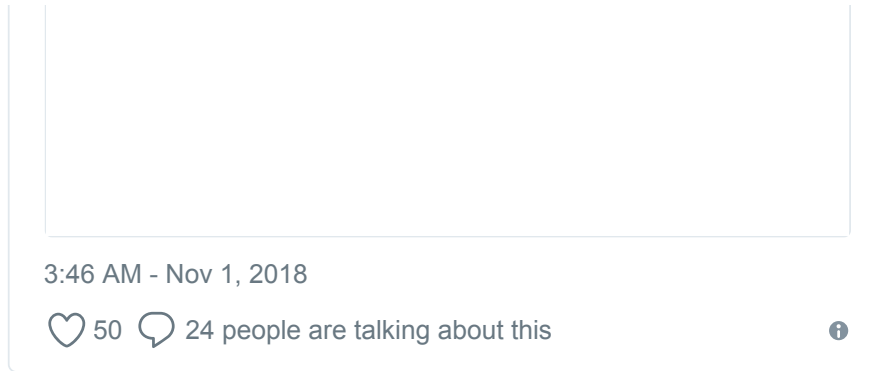
The walkout is already taking place in Asian countries, where the Thursday work day is well underway. Photos of walkouts from the Tokyo and Singapore offices have been posted to the organizers' official Twitter and Instagram accounts. Employees are using the hashtag [#GoogleWalkout](#).

Google Walkout For Real Change 
@GoogleWalkout

More photos are coming in from the 40+ offices walking out today! Check out Zurich.
[#GoogleWalkout](#)

Ted @TedOnPrivacy
The #googlewalkout in Zurich has impressive numbers!
@googlewalkout

 [View image on Twitter](#)



Google Berlin, braving the cold! [#GoogleWalkout pic.twitter.com/zxewOHKFX7](https://twitter.com/zxewOHKFX7)

— Google Walkout For Real Change (@GoogleWalkout) [November 1, 2018](#)

The walkout organizers are demanding that Google make five concrete changes to its company policy:

1. An end to forced arbitration in cases of harassment and discrimination.
2. A commitment to end pay and opportunity inequity.
3. A publicly disclosed sexual harassment transparency report.
4. A clear, uniform, globally inclusive process for reporting sexual misconduct safely and anonymously.
5. Elevate the Chief Diversity Officer to answer directly to the CEO and make recommendations directly to the board of directors. In addition, appoint an employee representative to the board.

This is the flyer that employees who choose to walk out will be leaving at their desk:



The primary catalyst for the protest among employees has been the fallout around allegations surrounding Android co-founder Andy Rubin, who left the company in 2014. *The New York Times* [reported](#) that Alphabet CEO Larry Page, who headed Google before its reorganization, asked Rubin to resign following claims that he had coerced an employee into performing oral sex on him in a hotel room the previous year. Rubin received a \$90 million exit package that Google wasn't obligated to grant, according to the *Times*, along with a supportive statement from Page.

Former SVP of search Amit Singhal was similarly reported to have received an exit package worth millions after leaving amid allegations of sexual misconduct, while Google X director Rich DeVaul was allowed to keep his job when Google decided to take "appropriate corrective action" following claims made by a prospective employee. DeVaul [resigned](#) earlier this week after being named in the *Times*' story.

First [#GoogleWalkout](#) photo coming straight from our office in Singapore where it's 11/1 just after 12p! pic.twitter.com/Ctv3xLE0aH

— Google Walkout For Real Change
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Google London, thanks for joining the [#GoogleWalkout](https://pic.twitter.com/SRMcq8Y0Lh)pic.twitter.com/SRMcq8Y0Lh

— Google Walkout For Real Change
(@GoogleWalkout) [November 1, 2018](#)

Current Google CEO Sundar Pichai and VP of people operations Eileen Naughton [responded](#) last week by saying that Google has fired 48 people for sexual harassment in the past two years without giving any of them exit packages, but didn't deny any of the alleged details in the *Times*' report. Rubin said the story included "numerous inaccuracies about my employment at Google and wild exaggerations about my compensation" and refuted the central allegation of coercive oral sex.

We'll be updating this story with developments as Google employees walk out around the world.

Google staff walk out over women's treatment

Dave Lee

North America technology reporter

13 minutes ago



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 Google staff walk out

REUTERS

Staff at Google offices around the world are staging an unprecedented series of walkouts in protest at the company's treatment of women.

The employees are demanding several key changes in how sexual misconduct allegations are dealt with at the firm, including a call to end forced arbitration - a move which would make it possible for victims to sue.

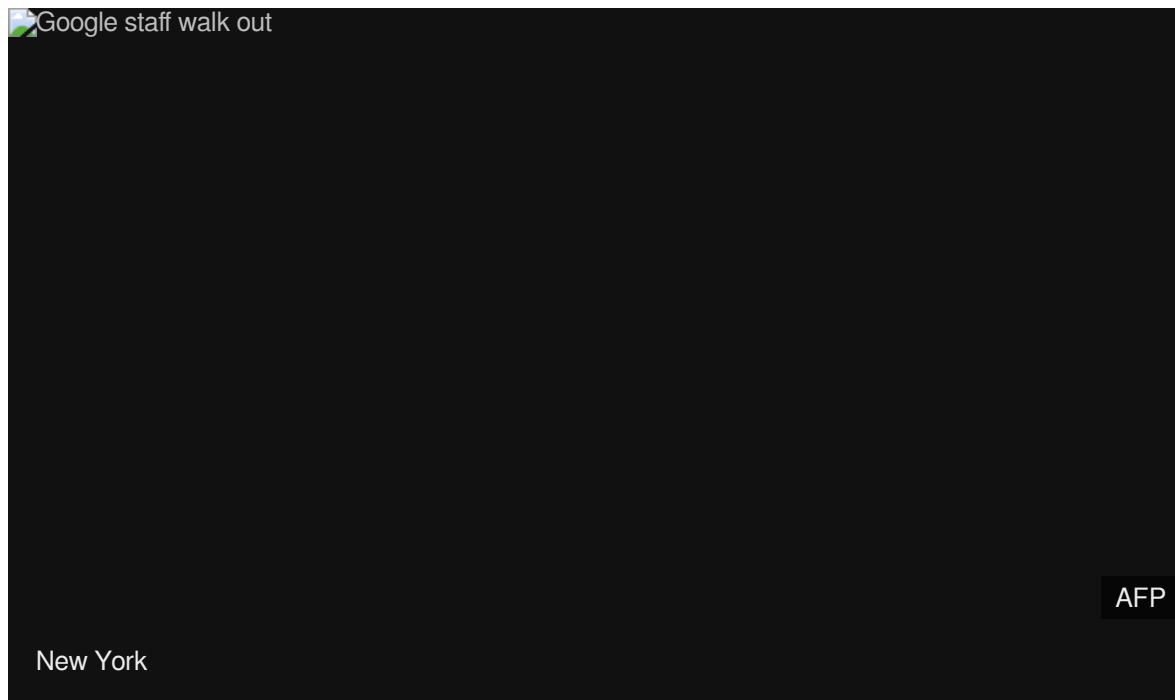
Google chief executive Sundar Pichai has told staff he supports their right to take the action.


"I understand the anger and disappointment that many of you feel," he said in an all-staff email. "I feel it as well, and I am fully committed to making

progress on an issue that has persisted for far too long in our society... and, yes, here at Google, too."

A Twitter feed titled [@googlewalkout](#) has documented the movement at Google's international offices.


Google staff in Singapore, Zurich, London, Tokyo, Berlin and New York were among those to take part.



 Dublin

PA

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 London

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London

Zurich

TWITTER @TEDONPRIVACY//@GOOGLEWALKOUT VIA REUTERS

Zurich

Singapore Google walkout

WALKOUT ORGANISERS

The first walkout was at Google's Singapore office

Web developer Sam Dutton who joined the walkout in London told the BBC: "We're walking out to support colleagues in any workplace that have suffered harassment and to ensure that perpetrators aren't protected or rewarded."

What led to the walkout?

Anger at the firm has boiled over in the past week since the New York Times alleged that one high profile executive received a \$90m payout after he left the firm, despite what Google considered a “credible” allegation of sexual misconduct made against him. Andy Rubin, known as the “creator” of the Android mobile operating system, denies the allegation.

On Tuesday, another executive - this time from the company’s X research lab - also resigned. Richard DeVaul was said to have made unwanted advances towards a woman who was recently interviewed for a job in which she would have reported to Mr DeVaul.

Mr DeVaul has not commented since his resignation, but in the past called the incident an "error of judgement".

At least 48 other employees have been sacked for sexual harassment without receiving a payout, Mr Pichai told staff. He admitted the New York Times’ report had been "difficult to read".

 Google's workforce is 30.9% women

What do the employees want?

Staff involved in Thursday's walkout will leave a note on their desks telling colleagues: "I'm not at my desk because I'm walking out with other Googlers and contractors to protest sexual harassment, misconduct, lack of transparency, and a workplace culture that's not working for everyone."

They are also making formal demands to Google's management. They are:

1. A commitment to end pay and opportunity inequality
2. A publicly disclosed sexual harassment transparency report
3. A clear, uniform, globally inclusive process for reporting sexual misconduct safely and anonymously
4. The elevation of the chief diversity officer to answer directly to the CEO, and make recommendations directly to the board of directors
5. The appointment of an employee representative to the board
6. An end to forced arbitration in cases of harassment and discrimination for all current and future employees

What is forced arbitration?

Forced arbitration, a common contract clause for Silicon Valley workers, demands any disputes are dealt with internally rather than through other methods such as the courts.

Critics of forced arbitration say it is used to not only protect the reputations of both the company and the accused, but also to silence victims who are unable to appeal against decisions or take further action.

"Employees have raised constructive ideas for how we can improve our policies and our processes going forward," said Mr Pichai in a statement on Wednesday evening.

"We are taking in all their feedback so we can turn these ideas into action."

 Presentational grey line

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- **Are you taking part in the walk out?**
Email haveyoursay@bbc.co.uk

 Presentational grey line


What else are Google employees angry about?

Co-ordinated action of this scale is unprecedented at a Silicon Valley company, but follows a trend for increasingly impassioned employee activism.

"Women are fed up, and I don't think it's just women," said Prof Kellie McElhaney, from the Haas School of Business.

"There are a lot of 'manbassadors' out there who are equally as fed up and using their positions of power and voice, which can cost Google money. I think you have to hit these companies where it hurts.

"I think it empowers other Google offices when women and men are watching this happen, that they can do a similar action that's not just sitting by or making comments to one another or sharing emails."

 This leaflet will be left on the desks of Google employees choosing to take part in the coordinated action

TWITTER/GOOGLEWALKOUT

This leaflet will be left on the desks of Google employees choosing to take part in the coordinated action

In the past year, Google employees have spoken out strongly against the company's work with the US Department of Defense, as well as plans to re-enter the Chinese market with a search product.

The Tech Workers Coalition, a San Francisco-based advocacy group, said the day's dispute was just one of several tech companies need to address.

"We stand in solidarity with the Google workers," a spokesperson for the group said.

"It's clear the executives won't do this for us so we're taking matters into our own hands."

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 - [Google sacks dozens following harassment allegations](#)
 - [Does Silicon Valley have a sexism problem?](#)
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**Are you a Google employee who is taking part in industrial action?
Tell us about your experiences by
emailing haveyoursay@bbc.co.uk**

Please include a contact number if you are willing to speak to a BBC journalist. You can also contact us in the following ways:

- WhatsApp: **+44 7555 173285**
- Tweet: [@BBC_HaveYourSay](#)
- Send pictures/video to yourpics@bbc.co.uk
- [Upload your pictures / video here](#)
- [**200+ Google Engineers Organize Walkout over Alleged Company Protection of Sexual Harasser**](#) (breitbart.com)

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