

Twitch reckons with sexual assault as it begins permanently suspending streamers | The Verge

By Jacob Kastrenakes

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When streamer Samantha Wong told Twitch that she had been sexually harassed by another person connected to the Twitch community, the report went all the way to the top. A Twitch VP who has since left the company, Justin Wong, says he escalated her allegations to Twitch's CEO, the head of Twitch HR, and a VP who managed Twitch's relationship with the accused person. "All assured me it would be handled," he wrote on Twitter.

But a year later, the accused person was still being featured by Twitch. According to Samantha Wong, who streams under the name [Sampai](#), the person she'd reported for harassment was not only still allowed to attend Twitch events, but he was even given the opportunity to appear on segments on Twitch's official channel. "You, as a company, minimized and dismissed my sexual harassment," she wrote on Twitter.

Wong is one of dozens of people who have come forward with stories of harassment, abuse, and assault in the gaming industry over the past few days. The stories span the industry, but one group is heavily represented: Twitch streamers. These streamers, mostly women, say others in the Twitch streaming community, mostly men, engage in abusive behavior. A Medium post cataloging the recent accounts lists more than 60 people accused of misconduct, in many cases with accusations from multiple people.

There need to be harsher consequences for people who do these kinds of predatory things on the platform.

Their accounts have led to a growing demand for Twitch to do a better job moderating, protecting, and setting the tone for its community. The company has said it will investigate and potentially punish the accused users, and as of Wednesday night, it had begun issuing permanent bans. But streamers are doubtful that Twitch is ready to take them seriously.

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