

Mass Layoffs: Getting Prepared and Dealing with the Aftermath

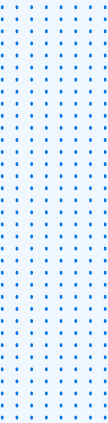
Corporate security teams play a crucial role in both preparing for and dealing with the aftermath of mass layoffs. But, so do teams like human resources (HR), cybersecurity, and legal. While protecting your business during these difficult times may seem like an uphill struggle, having a proactive security protocol in place, as well as a plan for any risks that may come afterward, can offset a lot of unforeseen damages resulting from a mass layoff.

Leverage the following checklist to ensure you have a comprehensive mass layoff process in place.



Pre-Conversation Evaluation

As early as possible, assess how the employees being impacted, as well as those who are not, are likely to react based on the circumstances, and solicit input from their managers, HR, legal, and corporate security.	
Use the behavioral threat assessment process when an employee's behavior is concerning or threatening.	
Evaluate an appropriate severance package for those affected by the layoff and/or have a list of resources such as an Employee Assistance Program, resume service, job skills, or training readily available to provide to the employee.	
Evaluate the best environment for the conversation to take place. If there are concerns due to past aggressive action or violence, consideration should be given to terminating the group of employees off-site.	
Consider the best day and time to conduct the terminations. The most common approach is Friday at the end of the workday, as this minimizes attention and does not interrupt the employees' typical schedule.	
Work closely with your legal and compliance teams to ensure the layoff is in compliance with the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act which requires employers conducting a large-scale layoff to provide 60 days' notice to affected employees.	
Engage with your HR team on messaging to ensure nothing communicated during the layoff conversation results in increased hostility from employees.	



Supporting Personnel and Employee Hardware

Evaluate who from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is best suited to share the news with the group. Be sure that on-site security and the executive protection team are in the loop to ensure they are monitoring for any increase in threats against all the executives once the news is shared.	
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Identify who else should be present at the time of the termination besides the ELT member who is sharing the news.	
Evaluate whether security needs to be present and where they will be during the conversation. An overbearing security presence may make the employee feel offended, and possibly result in the situation becoming hostile . If conducting the layoff offsite, ensure you have heightened security at your offices if you believe there are indicators that an impacted employee may come to the office and pose a threat. e.g. in the room, nearby hallway, or parking lot	
Deactivate all of the employees' electronic access to work accounts and request they return their company equipment.	



TIP: IT access should be shut off simultaneously to the layoff notification. Doing this too far in advance will likely “tip off” the employees and can create false rumors and disrupt the work environment.

Termination Conversation and Action

Determine who will accompany the employees to their workstations to get their personal belongings and company property they need to return. You may want to consider returning their personal belongings and/or having them return their property by mail to keep the employees away from the premises. e.g. manager, security, or law enforcement	
Provide employees with HR contact information should they have any questions or requests post-termination.	
Ensure that you have a system in place for your HR team to report any threats they receive to the security team. Keep in mind that threats are not always direct and may come in the form of veiled comments. For this reason, it is important to notify your threat assessment team of any concerning interactions.	

Ongoing Assessment

Regroup to discuss the events and what can be improved from a security standpoint if future terminations are necessary.	
Consider what resources are in place for the continuous monitoring of former employees that pose a legitimate threat, and how that information will be communicated to relevant security teams.	
Establish a technology-supported process to help identify and assess indicators of potential risk posed by employees to the organization.	
Utilize a technology solution to collect, store, and manage threat data.	

Proactively evaluate behavior signals and investigate incidents to prevent violence in the workplace

Ontic's [Incidents, Investigations and Case Management](#) solution is purpose-built within an end-to-end threat management solution for early capture of concerning behavior signals, pre-incident indicators, and alerts from many sources to help security teams mitigate the risks posed by mass layoffs.

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