

Microsoft offers to buy out a quarter of its workforce



On Monday, Microsoft said it is offering voluntary buyouts to eligible employees in select parts of the company. CNBC reports that the buyouts will be offered to roughly 60,000 employees, or about a quarter of its global workforce. The company describes the offer as an opportunity for employees who may have already been considering career moves outside Microsoft. While Microsoft did not give a direct reason for the buyout package, it comes as the company has spent the last several years managing costs amid investment in AI infrastructure and data-center buildout.

Microsoft will extend the voluntary exit offer (VE0) to qualifying employees in the United States, India, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Microsoft employees at level 70 or below will be eligible for the buyout program. The company's employee rankings are internal, but according to the salary and career database Levels.fyi, levels 65–67 correspond to principal positions, and 68–70 are at the

partner/distinguished level. According to Chief People Officer Amy Coleman, eligible organizations were selected “based on each business’s priorities, customer commitments and workforce needs.”

The effort is the second time Microsoft has run a voluntary workforce reduction in 2026. In April, the company offered its first voluntary retirement package to 8,750 US employees. In July, the Xbox division laid off 3,200 employees, or about 20 percent of its entire gaming division. As reported by CNBC, about 30 percent of eligible employees accepted the retirement offer, lessening the impact of the planned layoffs, according to Coleman. While the offer in April went out to long-tenured employees who might be nearing the end of their career, the VEO expands the effort to a much larger potential pool.

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