

Activision delays two games amid workplace turmoil

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Employees of the video game company Activision Blizzard hold a walkout and protest rally to denounce the workplace conditions, in Irvine, California, on July 28, 2021.

Video game giant Activision Blizzard on Tuesday said it is delaying

eagerly-awaited sequels to its hit Diablo and Overwatch franchises as it deals with upheaval due to workplace conditions.

"In recent months, we have taken actions that resulted in the departure of a number of individuals across the [company](#)," chief operating officer Daniel Alegre said on an earnings call.

"As we have worked with new leadership at Blizzard, and within the franchises themselves, particularly in certain key creative roles, it has become apparent that some of the Blizzard content planned for year will benefit from more development time to reach its full potential."

More than Activision 20 employees have "exited" the gaming giant, the company said last month in a staff email, following accusations of sexual harassment and discrimination against women.

The California-based maker of "Call of Duty" has been hit by employee protests, departures, and a state lawsuit alleging the company enabled toxic workplace conditions and sexual harassment against women.

Last week the company announced measures intended to strengthen anti-harassment protections at the [video game](#) giant, including a cut to his salary.

Company CEO Bobby Kotick apologized and said he has asked the board to slash his pay to the California legal minimum of \$62,500 until the panel "has determined that we have achieved the transformational gender-related goals".

During an earnings call, Kotick outlined steps Activision Blizzard is taking to improve workplace culture.

"The leadership team and I have been hard at work listening to

employees and implementing meaningful changes," Kotick said on the call.

No new date was given for the releases of Diablo 4 and Overwatch 2, which the company described as being among the most hotly anticipated in the [video game industry](#).

First-person, team-based shooter game Overwatch was first released five years ago and has grown into a popular esports complete with its own league for competition.

Action role playing game Diablo dates back to 1997, winning loyal fans and taking on renewed life with more current releases.

Delay of the games will come with a delay in the boost they were expected to give Activision Blizzard, executives said on an earnings call with analysts.

The company's overall earnings results for the recently ended quarter topped expectations.

Shares in the US-based video [game](#) company slid 10 percent in after-market trades that followed release of the earnings figures and word of the delay.

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