

Lawyer: Diversity dismissals begin at intel agency

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REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Officials involved in diversity, equality, inclusion and accessibility programs at the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence have been ordered to resign or be fired, the lawyer for two of the officials said on Friday.

Attorney Kevin Carroll said he did not know how many other ODNI officials had received the directive beyond his clients.

Unlike the CIA, which issued a simi-

lar order last month to 51 officers temporarily assigned to diversity programs, ODNI was giving those who received one a chance to appeal to Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, he said.

“Like their colleagues at CIA, they are being told that they cannot apply for other jobs; unlike CIA, they are being given a right to appeal to the DNI,” said Carroll, a former undercover CIA officer.

An ODNI spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Nearly two weeks ago, a federal judge refused to halt the firings of the

CIA officers who were terminated under President Donald Trump’s January 20 executive order eliminating diversity, equality, inclusion and accessibility programs across the federal government. One of Carroll’s clients said in an email reviewed by Reuters that they were told to report at 11:45 a.m. Eastern on Monday to the ODNI visitors center, where they were expected to resign, accept deferred resignation by September 30 or be fired after 90 days of paid administrative leave.

They also could submit a written appeal of the order, the email said.

The client, whose identity was not disclosed, said they were told they were ineligible for reassignment to another post. The CIA this week terminated an unspecified number of recent hires in cuts that current and former U.S. intelligence officials warned would risk damaging U.S. national security, according to three people familiar with the matter.

Those firings under Trump’s new CIA director, John Ratcliffe, come as the Republican president presides over massive federal workforce reductions overseen by billionaire Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency.