



January 22, 2010

**Starbucks Statement re: Response to Coverage of California Lawsuit**

This is a sad and unfortunate situation that involves a personal, consensual relationship between two former Starbucks partners (employees). We view our partners as the heart of the company and we are committed to providing a positive, welcoming and safe work environment.

This case was brought in 2007 by a former barista who is seeking monetary damages for harm she claims she suffered as a result of this relationship with her co-worker, who was not her manager. These two partners concealed their relationship from Starbucks, which violated company policy. None of the alleged activities occurred in any Starbucks store. We are confident that the case will ultimately be resolved with a finding that Starbucks was not at fault.

We have never blamed the barista and, in fact, we condemn the conduct of her co-worker. For everyone, including teenagers, our workplace policies provide for equal employment opportunities and strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. All partners, at all levels, are required to read, acknowledge and adhere to Starbucks Policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment.

Unfortunately, this kind of case and the information that comes out during the process is very personal and layered with complexities that cannot be represented accurately without the full context – many aspects of the case are still under seal by the court.

We cannot comment further because this case is still in litigation. To read more about Starbucks Standards of Business Conduct, visit [http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/SoBC\\_FY09\\_eng.pdf](http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/SoBC_FY09_eng.pdf).

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