

August 1, 2022

Dear Starbucks Management,

We, the unionized partners of Willow Lawn Starbucks, are disappointed and frustrated. For five months, we were unknowingly and unwillingly forced to work alongside an accused rapist. Starbucks Management chose to protect the character and anonymity of the accused, rather than the safety of our partners. Twice we have sent a formal request for a store-wide meeting and an explanation for management's decision. We have made one request – a store wide meeting explaining why the safety of our partners was compromised. Instead, we have been met with silence, inaction, gaslighting, and inconsistent and untrustworthy communication. Letters have not been enough; partners' concerns for their safety have not been enough. So now we stand before you, united, to tell you that we have had enough.

Despite silence on the part of Starbucks corporate and management, the consequences suffered by our team have not, and will not, dissipate without continued action. Our team has suffered an agonizing trauma. Knowing that management jeopardized our team's safety by allowing this partner to transfer into our store broke our trust; knowing that management is fully aware of our continued suffering and still remains silent and inactive has ignited outrage. We still feel unsafe. We are still traumatized. To make matters worse, this is not an isolated incident. Following the publishing of the Vice article highlighting our experience, multiple partners across the country have reached out to our team in solidarity sharing similar horrifying stories of Starbucks management's unwillingness to protect partners from sexual assault in the workplace.

Regardless of the time elapsed, our demands have not changed. We still believe we are owed an official explanation, as well as an acknowledgement of wrongdoing, from members of corporate whose job it is to maintain our safety. We believe a store-wide meeting with members of both District and Regional management would be the best avenue to accomplish this. We are fully aware that following our first communication, the District Manager who made the decision to transfer the aforementioned supervisor into our store has since transferred districts; as she was the responsible party, we feel her presence in this store-wide meeting is not only appropriate, but necessary. We understand that following the sexual assault in question, the victim was terminated; we believe it is imperative that the victim in question be reinstated. We are prepared to address this issue, among others concerning partner safety, at the contract bargaining table in a few weeks' time.

As fellow partners, we believe our voices should be heard. Since his reinstatement as CEO in April of this year, Howard Schultz has emphasized the importance of partner involvement in order to "reinvent Starbucks for the future." If the spirit behind these Collaboration Sessions is sincere, rather than another union busting publicity stunt, it is imperative that we become active participants in discussions regarding future policy change in regard to sexual assault and partner safety. For example, had the accused party been put on paid administrative leave pending investigation rather than surreptitiously transferred into our store, the safety and rights of all parties, including the partners of Willow Lawn, would have been protected. We cannot change the past, but we can channel the trauma our team has collectively suffered to enact positive change for the future.

Rumor has it that instead of granting us this store wide meeting, Starbucks Management has decided to once again pull the partners of Willow Lawn into intimidating and ineffectual individual meetings with Partner Resources. Not only is this a waste of company time and money, but it also causes undue stress and anxiety for our partners on the floor. Individual meetings will not solve this problem, and we will continue to refuse any further requests for such meetings. The partners of Willow Lawn are, for the third time, requesting a store-wide meeting with members of district and regional management who were responsible for this decision. Additionally, we are also requesting that members of Starbucks management immediately meet the Willow Lawn Starbucks Union at the bargaining table to negotiate these partner safety concerns. We must ensure that other Starbucks partners will not be endangered by further irresponsible management decisions the way the partners of Willow Lawn have.

We will continue to advocate for positive change until our voices are heard and our experience acknowledged. We look forward to meeting Starbucks Management at the bargaining table.

