

Starbucks Loses Unfair Labor Practices Case After Firing Unionizing Employees



The US National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has found Starbucks guilty of violating federal labor laws by firing two employees organizing a union in a Philadelphia store in 2020. The NLRB had upheld the ruling of an administrative law judge, which stated that Starbucks took illegal actions in 2019 and 2020 when it threatened, interrogated, and surveilled the two employees who were advocating for equitable changes to their workplace. The NLRB ruled that the coffee giant must provide backpay and offer reinstatement to the two former employees, Echo Nowakowska and Tristan Bussiere.

The employees had worked at a Philadelphia Starbucks for over a year when they began to demand that the store manager take accountability for the mistreatment of BIPOC and LGBTQ workers. The manager resigned soon after, and Nowakowska and Bussiere started organizing a union among other Philadelphia Starbucks workers. However, their efforts were quickly shut down, and the two workers were fired.

The NLRB panel ruled that Starbucks violated Section 8(a)(1) of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) by improperly monitoring and dismissing two workers who were advocating for unionization and better working conditions. In a statement to Bloomberg, a Starbucks spokesperson expressed the company's disappointment in the ruling and said they are considering all options to obtain a full legal review of the matter.

The NLRB's decision sends a clear message to employers that they cannot take illegal actions to prevent workers from organizing and advocating for better working conditions. It also highlights the importance of the NLRA, which protects workers' rights to form unions and engage in collective bargaining.

Starbucks can appeal the decision to the US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. However, this ruling could set a precedent for other cases involving workers' rights and unionization, as it reinforces the NLRB's commitment to upholding the NLRA and protecting workers' rights.

The NLRB's ruling against Starbucks is a significant victory for workers' rights and the labor movement. It sends a clear message to employers that they cannot take illegal actions to prevent workers from organizing and advocating for better working conditions. This decision could set a precedent for future cases involving workers' rights and unionization and underscores the importance of the NLRA in protecting workers' rights to form unions and engage in collective bargaining.

REFERENCES:

Starbucks loses unfair labor practices case after firing two workers engaged in organizing union