

## Starbucks vows to change unpredictable barista work schedule

### Original article

Starbucks is changing its scheduling policies to give baristas more "stability and consistency," following a New York Times report about the havoc created in a young mother's life by having to work unpredictable shifts determined by the company's scheduling software.

In an email to employees Thursday morning, senior executive Cliff Burrows said that Starbucks has "a responsibility to support" employees in balancing their home and work lives.

The company will upgrade its scheduling software in order to make work shifts more consistent, said Burrows. Employees will never be required to work back-to-back closing and opening shifts, and schedules will be posted a week in advance.

Moreover, the company will work to transfer employees who have to commute for more than an hour to stores closer to their home "as quickly as possible."

Starbucks prides itself on providing benefits that are rare in the services industry, such as stock options, health care and retirement plans for those working more than 20 hours a week.

The company recently announced a deal with Arizona State University to subsidize an online college degree for its legions of U.S. baristas.

Nevertheless, the ruckus about scheduling underscores the tensions between running a business "through the lens of humanity," as the company calls its workplace practices, and the need to keep its profit growth momentum through expansion and efficiency.

The news also comes in the midst of a growing debate about the quality of the bottom-tier of U.S. jobs and the strain they create among workers. Last month, a South Carolina fast-food worker was arrested for leaving her daughter to play alone in a park while she went to work.

### Revised article

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**Advocates praised Starbucks' new approach as one with potentially far-reaching impact. "Starbucks' latest move isn't just good for Starbucks employees — it's good for communities, said Annie Lyles, a program manager at Oakland's Prevention Institute. "Communities are safer when residents have good, sustainable jobs — by making sure that Starbucks employees can work and take care of their families, the company is making an investment in their community that benefits families, the community, and their bottom line."**

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**"The economic benefits of the new policy will accrue beyond the workers as Starbucks contributes to better working and living conditions in all the communities across the country," Lyles said. "Thriving communities where families are safe require solid, sustainable employment."**