

Can a Boss Ask His Secretary to Make Him a Cup of Coffee

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Question: Can a boss ask his secretary to make him a cup of coffee?

Answer: There is a halacha that forbids a woman to pour a drink for an unrelated man. While most Poskim say that this refers to all drinks, the *Rashbah* is lenient and says that this only applies to wine and not other drinks. Furthermore, the Rema says that this prohibition only applies in a private setting and not in a public place. For example, if a boy is proposing to a girl and pours her a cup of champagne, if they are in a private setting this might be problematic. However, if a secretary brings her boss a cup of coffee in a public office, there would be no problem.

Additionally, the Rema writes that pouring a drink is only forbidden if it is done in a personal way that could be considered *derech chiba*. If she is just serving him in a professional and non-personal way, as a secretary would typically do for her boss, it would not be a problem.