

**Buffalo & Erie County Public Library**  
**PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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**SUBJECT: Break Periods**

**CHAPTER: V**

**SECTION: 3**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/81**

**REVISION DATE: 7/06, Modified for the B&ECPL effective 1/1/15**

**I. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

All employees who work a minimum of four (4) hours per day shall be entitled to one fifteen (15) minute break period. Employees who work eight (8) hours per day shall be entitled to a fifteen (15) minute break during the first half of the work day and a second fifteen (15) minute break during the second half of the work day. The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library will act in accordance with the provisions of the respective collective bargaining agreements pertaining to break periods.

**II. GUIDELINES**

**A. Scheduling Break Periods**

1. In many work units, break periods are scheduled for specific times during the employee's work shift. Such departments usually "stagger" scheduled break periods to assure continuous staffing of the unit.

Where such schedules exist, it is expected that employees will normally take their break periods as scheduled, and return to their work stations promptly.

2. Supervisors must approve in advance any deviations from established schedules.
3. In emergencies and in situations where break periods cannot be scheduled at specific times due to the nature of the work, break periods may be taken as time and circumstances permit. It is the department's responsibility to develop its own guidelines to cover such situations and to communicate these guidelines to its employees.

B. Use of Break Periods

Break periods should be provided for in each work unit. So long as they are provided for, it is up to the individual employee to use them or not use them, as he/she sees fit. However, no employee will receive additional compensation in any form for any break period(s) that have been provided but which he/she has chosen not to take.

C. Abuse of Break Periods

1. It is the direct responsibility of each supervisor and administrator to assure employees under their supervision do not abuse rest period privileges. Extending break periods will be considered tardiness.
2. No supervisor may authorize compensatory time or overtime for break periods worked.

3. An employee may not "skip" break periods in order to make up for tardiness or to justify leaving his/her work station before the end of the regularly scheduled shift.