

Breaks (Rest Periods) and Lunch Breaks (Meal Periods)

Summary/Purpose: An employee's work performance and individual health may benefit from taking a break. Lunch breaks (meal periods) are provided to employees. Breaks and lunch breaks are periods of time, specified by the manager, during which employees are not actively working on the job. Regulations for breaks (rest periods) and lunch break (meal periods) are given.

Breaks (Rest Periods):

Employees are encouraged to take breaks from work assignments. Breaks generally last from 5 – 20 minutes per four hours worked, to eat, visit the restroom, read, talk with friends, walk, and handle personal business. The break may last up to 20 minutes and is arranged within the workday by the supervisor/manager. The supervisor may also request that the break be taken away from the employee's immediate work area/desk. These breaks are a privilege and not a right and must not be abused. Employees are not required to use personal time or "time without pay" for these short, approved breaks. Sufficient personnel should be on duty at all times to carry on the normal functions of the department.

Lunch Breaks (Meal Periods):

The lunch break is to typically remain one hour in length; however different lunch increments may be established at the discretion of the department head. At least a ½ hour lunch break should be provided to and taken by an employee. On occasion, an employee may have a need to "work through" lunch in order to meet a family need or personal obligation. This is allowable; however it may not be practiced on a regular basis or as a set schedule. Lunch breaks are not considered work time and are not compensable.