

## **Meals and Breaks**

The University Libraries, out of consideration for the well-being and productivity of its employees, subscribes to the practices described below regarding meals and breaks, even though the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act does not require an employer to provide such breaks or meal periods.

### **Meal Periods**

Employees working four or more consecutive hours are entitled to an *unpaid* meal period of at least thirty minutes, to be scheduled by the library department in which the employee is employed. An employee scheduled to work seven or more consecutive hours is required to take an unpaid meal period of at least thirty minutes. During unpaid meal periods, employees are relieved from work duties and, therefore, should not take their meals at their desks. As a rule, supervisors may not allow staff members to skip or unduly postpone meal periods, nor may staff members compensate for late arrival or early departure by working through their meal period.

### **Coffee or Rest Breaks**

Staff members usually are offered a fifteen-minute *paid* rest break for every four consecutive hours worked. Breaks should be scheduled according to the library department's needs and at the discretion of the supervisor; they are to be taken approximately in the middle of each four-hour work segment. Coffee or rest breaks cannot be used to extend a meal period, compensate for late arrival or early departure, or accumulate if not taken during the appropriate work period.

It is not appropriate to combine two fifteen-minute breaks (paid) with a thirty-minute meal period (unpaid) for a one-hour meal period.

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