


Memo



To: Department Heads
From: Laura Jaramillo 
RE: BREAK TIME CLARIFICATION (PLACE IN POLICY NOTEBOOK)
Date: 8-1-19

I have had some concerns expressed that some staff are taking advantage of the allowed break time. Providing break periods is not required by New Mexico laws and breaks are subject to service delivery needs. Our policy allows employees a personal rest period of up to 15 minutes in each half of the work shift. This means a break in the morning and a break in the afternoon. Breaks cannot be accumulated from day to day and were really intended to be taken on-site at the work location. Typical protocol for work breaks is to remain on-site while you smoke, make phone calls, or attend to personal needs.

Years ago, the City set up where the break time could be saved and taken at the end of the day, thus allowing staff to leave 30 minutes early and be credited for the unused break time not taken during the day. If a staff is leaving 30 minutes early, they should not also be taking breaks during the day and keep personal business to a bare minimum.

It appears that some staff are taking their break during the day and leaving the worksite. They are not clocking out and running personal errands possibly accounting this as their break time. The problem with leaving the building and running personal errands while clocked in can present a problem if you are in an accident. If you are in an accident, is it workman's comp since you are officially clocked in?

Personal business should be kept to a bare minimum while clocked in, unless you are taking your allotted 15 min breaks on-site. If staff leave the premises to run a personal errand, they should always clock out, even if it is for a short 10-minute period.