

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

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**SUBJECT: Professional Development**

**CHAPTER: X**

**SECTION: 2**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/1/14 (previously incorporated in Work Related Travel, Continuing Education, and Library Business Requests Policy)**

**REVISION DATE: 9/5/2024**

**I. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library encourages all staff to participate in professional development opportunities. This policy is intended to ensure requests by an employee to attend a professional development opportunity are approved in a manner that ensures fairness for all employees while meeting the coverage and productivity needs of the Library.

**A. Professional Development**

Professional development is opportunities for all employee to improve themselves through learning and training. The Library may offer attendance at training sessions to further develop employees, or an employee may work on their own professional development independently. Professional development may also include staying up-to-date on new trends within an employee's field and applying new practices. Professional development improves an employee's skill set and knowledge and can also benefit the Library through growth of the employee.

**B. Library Business**

When the Library requests or requires an employee to attend a professional development event and there are costs associated with attendance, it shall be deemed "Library Business" and the [Library Business](#) policy shall apply.

**II. EMPLOYEE REQUESTS**

**A. Supervisor Approval**

1. Employees who are interested in attending a professional development opportunity hosted or sponsored by the B&ECPL during their

regularly scheduled work hours must receive permission from their supervisor to attend.

2. Employees who are interested in attending a professional development opportunity hosted or sponsored by an external organization that is one day or less and has no cost (ex. a free webinar or local workshop) must receive permission from their supervisor to attend.
3. Individual libraries and departments are expected to establish their own procedures for approving these requests and to apply them consistently. Supervisors are encouraged to consider the following:
  - a. Is the employee required to attend;
  - b. How will the employee's absence impact operations;
  - c. Does the program relate to the employee's position;
  - d. Has the employee attended other events recently;
  - e. How would the employee benefit from the opportunity; and
  - f. How would the library/department benefit from the employee's attendance?
4. If the event is within the employee's regularly scheduled hours and the event is free and/or employee will not seek financial reimbursement, no further approval is required. If not, additional approval is required as set forth below.

#### B. Coverage of Expenses

Employees who wish to request coverage of expenses associated with a professional development opportunity must follow the process and guidelines set forth in the [Library Business](#) and [Library Business Expenses](#) policies.

#### C. Compensable and Non-Compensable Time

1. Approved professional development done onsite during the course of an employee's normal working hours will be counted as regular hours worked.
2. An employee's schedule may be adjusted at the discretion of their supervisor to allow staff to attend professional development on work time. Supervisors should consult with Human Resources to ensure compliance with the respective collective bargaining agreement.

3. Time spent traveling for approved professional development during an employee's scheduled workday will be counted as hours worked.
4. Employees will be compensated for travel time when performed on a continuous workday basis from one business site to another. Employees will also be compensated for travel time in excess of their normal commute time when traveling to an event at the beginning of their workday or from an event at the end of their workday.
5. Travel time will not be compensated for travel time from a non-business site (including employee's home) to an event or from an event to a non-business site (including employee's home) if such travel is commensurate with the employee's normal commute.
6. Employees will not be paid for voluntarily attending professional development events that have not been approved.
7. Employees attending approved external professional development events during their regularly scheduled work hours should document their time as regular hours on their timesheet. A note regarding the activity, time attended, and location should be included in the Notes field.

### III. RELATED POLICIES

[Library Business](#)

[Library Business Expenses](#)

[Release Time](#)