

Circular Letter No. 03/2023

READ AND CIRCULATE

01-09-2023

Dear Members,

OUR AVERMENTS ON DECISION OF STAGGERING THE LUNCH TIMINGS AT BRANCHES

* * * * *

Members must have gone through the HO Circular letter HO:BBD:CIRCULAR LETTER: GF(48):67:2023-24 dated 25-08-2023 wherein directions has been given to the branches to plan staggered way of lunch timings in the branches to render uninterpreted services to the customers.

After reading this circular many members have called us and informed us about the practical difficulties they have to face to follow the new directions in view of inadequate manpower, infrastructures and arrangements in the branches. Further, our branches are spread across different geographical areas in the country and many of our branches are located in Gram Panchayat (GP), Rural, Semi-urban places. The existing uniform business hours and lunch hours working fine and are well accepted by the customers also. By implementing a new direction of staggered lunch timings uniformly in all the branches in the name of customer services without reviewing the need, necessity and requirement of the customers will lead to more customer complaints, may create security risks at branches and also affects smooth functioning of the branches. As such, after going through the provisions of the Bipartite Settlement in respect of working hours and lunch hours and practical difficulties to be faced by the staff members of the branches, we have served a Joint Letter to the **Managing Director** of the Bank bearing No.361/2023 dated 31-08-2023 in the matter. We are furnishing herewith the excerpts of the same for the information and guidance of the members:

Dear Sir,

Reg: Uninterrupted Customer Service – Bank's Circular - our averments.

Ref: 1. HO:BBD:CIRCULAR LETTER:GF(48):67:2023-24 dated 25-08-2023
2. HO/Circular Letter/Try & Acc/GF-34/028 /2020-21 dated 04-08-2020
3. HO/CPD/CIRCULAR/GF (5)/2/2018-19 dated 10-05-2018

We invite your kind attention to the Circular No. RPCD No. DC.111/07.38-92-93 dated 12th May, 1993, wherein it has been informed that no customer is left unattended and that uninterrupted customer service should be extended.

In this connection, we would like to highlight the following for your kind consideration.

1. The circular under ref. No.1 above mentions that the customers have been denied basic amenities like proper lighting, drinking water, A/C, Fan etc., which may be the result of Expenditure Curtailment measures adopted by the branches as per the circular under reference No.2 above. However, it could be addressed through instructions to branches.
2. In the name of customer service, there has been a pressure on the staff members to take lunch and to attend the customers at counters immediately even though the lunch hour is half an hour as per the provisions of the Bipartite Settlement.

3. We wish to inform you that as per clause no. 14.4 of the First Bipartite Settlement dated 19th October, 1966, which is reproduced as under:

“There shall be a recess for lunch which shall not be less than half an hour and not more than one hour on week days (excluding Saturdays) subject, however, to the requirements of any statutory provisions like the Shops & Commercial Establishments Act. Primarily it will be for the workmen to decide the actual length of recess within the limit fixed as aforesaid and the majority decision of the workmen in any branch or establishment shall be adopted in case of difference of opinion with the management...”

Therefore, you will please appreciate the fact that the decision of lunch recess is to be decided by the workmen at a particular branch and it shall not be less than half an hour. However, in many of the branches, unwanted and avoidable pressure is being exerted on the staff members to complete their lunch in a hurry, in the name of customer service.

4. Further, we would like to bring to your notice that in almost all branches, the cash department is functioning with only one cashier and it is not possible to entrust the cash to another person without tallying the same. Hence, in such branches, where there is only one cashier, during the lunch recess of the cashier, there shall be no cash transactions.
5. **For the past several years, we have been practicing uniform lunch recess and there have been no customer complaints in any of the branches. The uniform timings including lunch hours has been implemented in our bank as per Circular under Ref. No.3. Therefore, we suggest that uniform lunch hours need not be changed at all as it has stood the test of time.**
6. The circular quoted the words of Mahatma Gandhi on customer service, which we fully endorse and it is requested that excessive pressure need not be put on staff members to curb their lunch hours, which is defined and determined by the industry-level Bipartite Settlement. We are hopeful and confident that the Management would not breach the Industry-level Provisions, which have been in vogue for more than 50 years.

We therefore request you to consider this representation and do the needful in this regard.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-
(Paneendra K G)
General Secretary, AIKBEA

Sd/-
(Suresha Hegde S)
General Secretary, KBOO


CC to:

- 1, The General Secretary, All India Bank Employees' Association, Chennai, for Information
2. The General Secretary, All India Bank Officers' Association, Chennai, for Information

The developments in the matter will be informed.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,


(Paneendra K G)
General Secretary, AIKBEA


(Suresha Hegde S)
General Secretary, KBOO

AII INDIA KARNATAKA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION	...	...	...	ZINDABAD
KARNATAKA BANK OFFICERS' ORGANISATION	...	...	...	ZINDABAD
OFFICERS - WORKMEN UNITY	...	...	...	ZINDABAD