Swipe Time Buffer Zones

Swipe Time Buffer Zones are an excellent way to manage interpretation of scans that occur near the shift start or stop time. Basic Time Calculation Rules allow you to define rounding and grace period for both start and stop times, but these do not allow you to define a different calculation for BOTH sides of the shift start or stop (i.e. before and after the start or stop). Nor can you have a different interpretation of the scan when it is relatively close to the intended start or stop.

As an example, suppose you have 15 minute rounding, and a grace period of 8 minutes for the stop (or out) time. This will essentially "split the difference" for all out scans. A 3:38 PM scan will be interpreted as 3:45 PM; a 3:37 PM scan would be considered to be 3:30 PM. This might be fine for scans that happen well past or before the defined shift stop, but what about when the scan is "reasonably" close to the shift stop? Often there will be a small number of minutes extra at the end of a person's shift, possibly due to lineups at the clock or scan station, or perhaps some chatting with the incoming shift workers. Usually you won't want to allocate this to overtime. This is where the Buffer Zones come in.

For every Time Calculation Rule you can define a buffer zone around both the In and Out times. If the actual scan falls within the defined zone, the calculation routine will interpret this as being exactly the same as the shift start or stop time. For instance, if the stop time for a given shift is supposed to be 3:15 PM, then any scan less than 5 minutes before this and less than 15 minutes after will simply be interpreted as 3:15 PM. (See image below).

These buffer zones are an extension of the Time Calculation Rule. Any time record with this rule will have the same buffer zone rule applied to it, regardless of what shift has been applied to it. Also, if the buffer zone rule is applied, this overrides any basic rounding that would otherwise be handled by the Time Calculation rule. Scans that fall outside the buffer zone will still be interpreted by the basic Time Calculation Rule settings. Also, it is entirely possible that one scan could be handled by the buffer zone settings and the other by the basic Time Calculation rounding.

To access the Swipe Time Buffer Zones screen, click on the "Utilities" menu on the main ETP screen, and choose Time Calculation Buffer Zones.

The Swipe Time Buffer Zone is an excellent way to handle scan times that closely correspond to desired In and Out times, and still allow other scan times to follow "basic" rounding and grace rules. This can drastically cut down on editing time records, thereby saving you time in approving payroll.