



HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC

District School Board

Disconnecting from Work

Adopted:	May 24, 2022	Policy #:	P 3.4.20.
Revised:		Policy Category:	3.4. Human Resources

BELIEF STATEMENT:

In light of Catholic Social Teaching, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board believes that the dignity of the worker and their work must be protected; that every person has the right and the responsibility to support and strengthen their relationship with family and community; and that active participation in society serves to promote the common good and wellbeing of all.

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board that every employee should be provided with the opportunity to disconnect from work (i.e. not engage in work-related communications) outside of their normal work hours, subject to certain exceptions, such as when there is an emergency or an agreement to do so. To that end, and in accordance with the Employer's obligations under the relevant provisions of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, as amended from time to time (the "ESA"), the Employer has developed this Disconnecting from Work Policy (the "Policy").

PROCEDURES:

In the event of any discrepancy between this Policy and an employee's employment contract, collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment and/or any relevant Employer policies, the employment contract, collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment and the Employer policies shall take precedence.

This Policy applies to all employees of the Employer, regardless of their role.

a) Disconnecting from Work

Under the *ESA*, "disconnecting from work" means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work.

The Employer recognizes that every employee should be disconnecting from work outside of their normal hours of work, subject to certain exceptions. However, the *ESA* and this Policy do not create a stand-alone right to disconnect from work for employees, and it does not impose obligations on the Employer to allow employees to disconnect from work and to be free from the

obligation to engage in work-related communications during their normal hours of work.

The Employer and the employee also recognize that situations can arise where it would be challenging to deal with matters during the employee's normal hours of work. Specifically, the Employer, an employer's representative or an external stakeholder, may contact employees outside of their normal working hours in the following circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Confirming an employee's availability for staffing purposes;
- Where unforeseeable circumstances may arise;
- Where an emergency may arise;
- Where business and operational reasons require contact outside of normal working hours.

Where such situations occur, the Employer undertakes to comply with the relevant provisions of the *ESA*, the employee's employment contract, collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment and/or any relevant Employer policies.

b) Hours of Work

An employee's normal hours of work may vary in accordance with their role, their employment contract, collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment, and any relevant Employer policies. If an employee has any questions with respect to their normal hours of work, they should contact their immediate supervisor.

c) Communications

It is important that an employee's personal time is respected. Therefore, where possible, email communications should be responded to and/or sent only during the employee's normal working hours. As hours of work may vary between employees, an employee may send communications at a time which is inconvenient to another employee. i.e., where one employee works early in the morning, and another does not. Where this is the case, the sender should consider the timing of their communication and understand that the recipient may not be expected to respond until their return to work.

Where a supervisor sends communications outside normal working hours, unless business or operational needs dictate that an immediate response is required, employees should not feel the need to respond to email communications received outside their normal hours of work.

d) Personal Devices

In the course of their duties, some employees may use employer-provided personal electronic devices such as: mobile phone, laptop, tablet, etc. These devices are provided to employees to allow flexibility in how employees complete their work, and do not necessarily imply that the employee must make themselves available for work at all times.

e) Raising Concerns

Should an employee have any issues with disconnecting from work under this Policy, they should raise this with their supervisor immediately in order to resolve the matter on an informal basis. Where the matter is unresolved or an agreement cannot be reached, the matter can be formally raised with the Manager of Human Resources.

The Employer reserves the right to amend or revise this Policy in accordance with operational requirements and any legislative changes.

DEFINITIONS:

- N/A

REFERENCES:

- *Employment Standards Act, 2000*
- *Bill 27, Working for Workers Act, 2021*

RESOURCES, APPENDICES AND FORMS:

- N/A