



RIGHT TO DISCONNECT FROM WORK

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Reviewed/Revised: N/A
Memo To: All Staff
From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide guidance and support to employees about disconnecting from work outside of normal working hours.

REFERENCES:

- Employment Standards Act, 2000
- Collective Agreements
- Terms of Employment

FORMS:

- N/A

REPORTS:

- N/A.

APPENDICES:

- N/A.

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board (the "Board") supports and encourages employee health and wellness by fostering a work environment that maintains a healthy work-life balance, including the freedom to disconnect from work as set out in the Employment Standards Act, 2000.

Definitions:

"Disconnecting from work" - not engaging in work-related activities or 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.

"Employee" - any person employed by the Board in the province of Ontario, whether employed on a permanent or contract, full-time or part-time basis



“Regular Hours of Work” - the normal hours of work for the Employee as determined by their immediate supervisor and the respective collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or employment contract. It is understood that Employees may have different Regular Hours of Work depending on their position and the Board facility in which they work.

Requirements:

Subject to the terms outlined in this Memorandum, Employees may disconnect from work outside of their Regular Hours of Work.

Employees are encouraged to send emails and voicemails, and otherwise perform their work, during their Regular Hours of Work.

The Board wishes to provide Employees reasonable flexibility for when work is completed and so does not prohibit sending emails or voicemails outside of their Regular Hours of Work; however, asks that all Employees:

- (i) be aware that the recipient(s) may feel compelled to answer “right away” outside of their Regular Hours of Work and thus encourages that realistic response time expectations be conveyed to the recipient(s);
- (ii) be aware that pursuant to this Memorandum, Employees may have disconnected, and therefore may not review a message left outside of that Employee’s Regular Hours of Work; and
- (iii) be aware that the monitoring of emails after Regular Hours of Work is at the discretion of Employees and there is no expectation that Employees respond to emails after Regular Hours of Work; and
- (iv) consider using the Send Later feature in Outlook and/or the Schedule Send feature or Gmail such that the email is received by the recipient(s) during their Regular Hours of Work.

Employees should be mindful of scheduling meetings with colleagues that are outside of their Regular Hours of Work; however, in exceptional circumstances, meetings outside of an Employer’s Regular Hours of Work may be necessary.

There will be circumstances when Employees are required to respond to communications outside of their Regular Hours of Work due to critical or time-sensitive operational issues. In the event that during their workday an Employee is aware, or is made aware, of a critical or time-sensitive operational issue that may require attention after the end of their workday, the Board requires that the Employee remain available and monitor their work communications after the end of the workday, and respond as appropriate to ensure operational needs are met.

In the event that an Employee will be unable to monitor their work communications for one (1) or more business days, they are expected to enable an out-of-office notification in their Board email and voicemail systems.

Employees in administrator and management positions or in positions that specifically require additional hours during specified times generally are expected to monitor their email outside of their Regular Hours of Work or be available by phone in order to ensure that all matters are managed within an appropriate time frame, considering the nature and urgency of each issue.

This Memorandum will be provided to all new Employees within thirty (30) days of their hire date.

The Board reserves the right to revise this Memorandum at any time.

A written copy of this Memorandum will be retained by the Board for at least three (3) years after it is no longer in effect.

This Memorandum does not restrict the Board’s right to schedule and modify the hours of work of Employees, nor does it prohibit Employees from working outside of their Regular Hours of Work.

This Memorandum does not supersede language contained within each Employee's collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or employment contract. In the case of conflict, the language within the respective collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or employment contract shall prevail.