

Policy: Right to Disconnect

Main Contact: Clerk

Last Revision: June 2022

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Policy Statement

The Town of Renfrew recognizes the fundamental need for employees to achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance and supports the wellness of its workforce. The Town of Renfrew abides by the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* and has established this policy to champion and uphold its provisions with respect to disconnecting from work.

Background

This policy governs disconnecting from work requirements under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* and is applicable to all employees. This policy covers the following content:

- Disconnecting from work under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*
- Best practices for disconnecting from work
- Roles and responsibilities
- Enforcement
- Amendments

Consult the appropriate Collective Agreement for any deviations to this policy.

Definitions

Disconnecting from work: 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 outside normal hours of work.

Normal hours of work: working hours set out in the employee's terms and conditions of employment and their regular work schedule, inclusive of overtime as approved and worked from time to time.

Town: refers to the Town of Renfrew

POLICY

1. Disconnecting From Work Under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*

This policy has been established to meet obligations with respect to disconnecting from work under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*. To maintain compliance with provincial legislation, the Town of Renfrew will:

- Ensure it has a written policy in place for all employees with respect to disconnecting from work that includes the date the policy was prepared and the date any changes were made to the policy.
- Provide a copy of the written policy with respect to disconnecting from work to each of the Town's employees within 30 days of preparing the policy or, if an existing written policy is changed, within 30 days of the changes being made; and
- Provide a copy of the written policy with respect to disconnecting from work that applies to a new employee within 30 days of the day the employee becomes an employee of the Town.

The Town wishes to advise that the requirement to have a disconnecting from work policy under the Employment Standards Act (ESA) does not require the employer to create new rights for employees with respect to disconnecting from work.

2. Best Practices for Disconnecting from Work

The Town of Renfrew recognizes that a healthy work-life balance is central to the happiness and health of its workforce, and endeavors to share the following best practices for disconnecting from work:

- Discuss remote working options with your supervisor or manager
- Focus on productivity instead of hours
- Utilize automatic out of office replies when away from work
- Be cognizant of your capacity for new assignments or projects
- Take vacation, time off or breaks when able
- Be an ambassador for a healthy work-life balance
- Commit to realistic timelines and set reasonable expectations for yourself and others

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Town of Renfrew recognizes that we all play a role in upholding this policy and the disconnecting from work provisions under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*. The following outlines the various roles and responsibilities placed on those in the workplace.

The Employer is responsible for the following:

- Uphold the disconnecting from work provisions under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*
- Champion a healthy work-life balance and promote this disconnecting from work policy
- Amend and review this policy on an ongoing basis

Supervisors are responsible for the following:

- Adhere to this policy and disconnect from work when appropriate
- Respect the wishes of others with respect to disconnecting from work
- Promote and enable disconnecting from work within their team or department
- Enforce this policy amongst their team or department
- Consult your supervisor or manager if you are struggling to disconnect from work
- Work cooperatively with your supervisor or manager to understand expectations with respect to disconnecting from work
- Consult with the Department Head and Human Resources on matters related to their teams and disconnecting from work

Employees are responsible for the following:

- Adhere to this policy and disconnect from work when appropriate
- Respect the wishes of others with respect to disconnecting from work
- Consult your supervisor or manager if you are struggling to disconnect from work
- Work cooperatively with the supervisor or manager to understand expectations with respect to disconnecting from work

5. Enforcement

We all must hold each other accountable with respect to disconnecting from work, as this policy requires all of us to create an environment that promotes a healthy work-life balance. The Town will also hold staff accountable if they do not respect other's wishes with respect to disconnecting from work, and in some cases, disciplinary action may be taken.

6. Amendments

The Town will review this policy and update it as required in order to capture any new or updated *Employment Standards Act, 2000* provisions related to disconnecting from work that may come into effect.

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Change History

Policy Name	Effective Date	Significant Changes	By-law No.
Right to Disconnect Policy	June 14, 2022		Resolution # 2022 - 6 - 18