



**POLICY SECTION:** HUMAN RESOURCES  
**SUB-SECTION:** MISCELLANEOUS  
**POLICY NAME:** DISCONNECTING FROM WORK  
**POLICY NO:** H.M.06

<b>Date Approved:</b> May 19, 2022	<b>Date of Next Review:</b> June 2023	<b>Dates of Amendments:</b> May 19, 2022
<b>Cross References:</b>  H.M. 02 Non-Union Employee Handbook PART VII.0.1 of the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> , 2000 (ESA)		

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline what it means to disconnect from work and to promote employees' ability to disconnect from work in accordance with this policy.

### **Scope and Responsibility**

This Policy applies to TCDSB staff, whether employed by the Board on a permanent or contract, full-time or part-time basis, subject to individual terms and conditions of employment. For clarity, this policy applies to occasional staff as well. This Policy does not apply to parents, students, or volunteers. The Director is responsible for this Policy with support from the Human Resources department.

### **Alignment with MYSP**

Growing in Knowledge with Justice and Hope

### **Policy**

This is a policy on disconnecting from work, which means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls, chats or sending or reviewing other messages, to be free from the performance of work.



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## **Regulations**

1. Employees are encouraged to consider sending emails, chats and voicemails during regular work hours and/or to use the “Delay Delivery” or “Send Later” features in the TCDSB corporate email system. If an email or voicemail is sent outside of regular work hours, employees are encouraged to provide guidance to the recipient regarding the expected response time (either a general discussion or a specific note in a specific email or voicemail which could include denoting the email as urgent).
2. Employees may, based on their own schedules, find it more flexible to send emails outside of regular work hours. The TCDSB recognizes that each individual’s schedule may be different and is supportive of reasonable flexibility, as approved by their supervisor.
3. While the TCDSB wishes to provide employees reasonable flexibility and so does not discourage sending emails, chats or voicemails outside of work hours, the TCDSB asks employees to:
  - i. consider that recipients may feel compelled to answer outside of regular work hours so encourages senders to communicate realistic response time expectations; and
  - ii. be aware that pursuant to this Policy, employees may have disconnected, and therefore may not respond immediately to a message left outside of that employee’s working hours.
4. Employees should attempt to avoid scheduling meetings with colleagues that are outside of the participating employees’ regular working hours; however, meetings outside of working hours may occur as needed.



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5. Except where an employee is aware that their attention may be required outside of their working hours, employees are not expected to respond to communications outside of their working hours. As such, in ordinary circumstances an individual sending a communication to an employee outside of that an employee's working hours should not expect a response until the following workday.
6. This Policy does not restrict the TCDSB'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, subject to any contractual or collective agreement requirements.

## **Definitions**

### **Disconnecting from work**

Not engaging in work-related activities or communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls, chats or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work.

### **Employees**

All teachers and TCDSB staff, whether employed by the Board on a permanent or contract (including occasional staff), full-time or part-time basis, but does not include parents, students or volunteers.

### **Regular Work Hours**

The hours of work employees are contractually required to work.



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### **Evaluation and Metrics**

1. The effectiveness of this Policy will be evaluated by senior Human Resources staff.
2. A copy of this Policy will be provided to all Employees in electronic format within 30 calendar days of the policy being prepared and/or the Policy being changed. This Policy will also be provided to all new Employees within 30 days of their hire.
3. The TCDSB reserves the right to revise this Policy at any time. This Policy will be revisited and revised (if necessary), on an annual basis.
4. A written copy of this Policy will be retained by the TCDSB for at least three (3) years after it is no longer in effect.

