



# Disconnect from Work Policy

Policy #

Date Last Reviewed:

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### 1.0 Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The Municipality recognizes the right of employees to disconnect from work outside of normal working hours to ~~support the health, safety and mental wellbeing of employees by encouraging a good work-life balance~~ ensure legislative compliance with the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*.  
~~This policy will inform procedures and guidance to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and the Municipality's commitment to support the health, safety and mental wellbeing of staff.~~

### 2.0 Interpretation

#### 2.1 In this policy:

- 2.1.1 "Disconnect from Work" means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls, or sending or reviewing other messages, ~~in order so as~~ to be free from the performance of work. As the list of work-related communications is inclusive, and not exhaustive, other types of work-related communications could also fall under this definition.
- 2.1.2 "Employee" means all employees employed with the Municipality of Lakeshore.
- 2.1.3 "Normal Working Hours" means the regular schedule of the employee as listed in any of the following: the Hours of Work Policy, respective collective agreement, and the job description.

#### 2.2 Conflicts

- 2.2.1 Where a conflict exists between this policy and a collective agreement, the collective agreement will prevail.
- 2.2.2 Where a conflict exists between this policy and another policy, the more specific policy shall prevail.

#### 2.3 Application



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**2.3.1** The Municipality of Lakeshore is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodations under the requirements of the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19 and *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c. 11 (AODA) will be provided upon request in all employment practices.

**2.3.2** This policy applies to all employees.

### 3.0 Policy

**3.1** Employees shall have the right to Disconnect from Work ~~subject to this policy~~outside of Normal Working Hours.

#### ~~3.2~~

~~While technology allows the flexibility to work anywhere and at any time, the Municipality recognizes that a constantly connected work culture has the potential to impact employee mental health including increased stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, and other mental health-related risks and conditions.~~

**3.3.2** Recognizing the importance of the Right to Disconnect, there are circumstances that may occur where the Employer may contact an Employee outside of Normal Working Hours, including but not limited to:

~~3.3.13.2.1~~ 3.3.13.2.1 “on-call” schedules;

~~3.3.23.2.2~~ 3.3.23.2.2 Overtime opportunities;

~~3.3.33.2.3~~ 3.3.33.2.3 At short notice, replacing an unscheduled absence of a team member;

~~3.3.43.2.4~~ 3.3.43.2.4 Attending to urgent unforeseeable circumstances which may arise;

~~3.3.53.2.5~~ 3.3.53.2.5 Attending to an emergency which may arise;

~~3.3.63.2.6~~ 3.3.63.2.6 Attending to urgent operational matters requiring contact outside of normal working hours; and

~~3.3.73.2.7~~ 3.3.73.2.7 Wellness check-ins and other return to work/accommodation planning.

**3.43.3** For positions where there is a requirement to respond to emergency situations, this Policy shall not restrict the Municipality from ~~requiring~~requesting performance of work-related duties during emergency situations when immediate action is required.

~~3.0~~ — The Municipality shall have procedures to implement this policy which shall address, but are not limited to:

~~3.0.1~~ — Overtime and performance of duties outside of normal working hours;



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- ~~3.0.2 Process on communicating with employees outside of normal working hours;~~
- ~~3.0.3 Automatic replies and other ways to communicate staff availability/normal working hours;~~
- ~~3.0.4 Meetings outside of normal working hours;~~
- ~~3.0.5 Use of technology as it relates to working outside of normal working hours; and,~~
- ~~3.0.6 Employee well-being as it relates to working outside of normal working hours.~~

## ~~1.1~~ **4.0 Responsibilities**

### **4.1 The Chief Administrative Officer:**

4.1.1 Shall ensure the framework and procedures are developed and implemented accordingly.

### **4.2 The Workforce Development Division shall:**

- 4.2.1 Develop procedures and provide training as required.
- 4.2.2 Ensure employees receive a copy of this policy or that the policy is accessible to all staff.
- 4.2.3 Communicate updates to staff as necessary.

### ~~4.3 Members of management shall:~~

- ~~4.3.1 Ensure employees are aware of their required working hours and terms and conditions of their employment, including normal working hours and schedules.~~
- ~~4.3.2 Support and encourage employees in taking their rest periods and vacation time/time off.~~
- ~~4.3.3 Ensure the employees within their team are able to disconnect from work outside of normal working hours.~~
- ~~4.3.4 Should an employee have concerns surrounding their working time, or be unable to disconnect from work, it is important that this is brought to the attention of their immediate supervisor in order to try to resolve any concerns.~~

### ~~4.4 Employees shall:~~

- ~~4.4.1 Manage their working time while at work to be productive and efficient in performing their duties.~~

- ~~4.4.2—Take reasonable care to protect their safety, health and welfare, and the health and safety of co-workers and residents.~~
- ~~4.4.3—Be mindful of a co-worker's, and all others, right to disconnect when communicating.~~
- ~~4.4.4—Be conscious of their work pattern and aware of their work-related well-being, and remedy if necessary.~~
- ~~4.4.5—If unable to disconnect, discuss with the respective member of management to determine role clarity.~~

## 5.0 Consequences

- 5.1 Failure to comply with this policy may result in a violation of the respective legislation.
- 5.2 Failure to comply with this policy may result in a negative impact to the health and wellness of employees.

## 6.0 Reference Documents

- 6.1 *Employment Standards Act, 2000,*
- 6.2 *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19*
- 6.3 *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11*
- 6.4 Hours of Work Policy
- 6.5 Overtime Policy
- 6.6 CUPE Local 702.4 collective agreement
- 6.7 IBEW Local 636 (full time) collective agreement
- 6.8 IBEW Local 636 (part time) collective agreement.

## 7.0 Communication and Training

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- 7.1 The Policy will be communicated to all employees in accordance with the respective legislation.
- 7.2 The Policy will be included in the onboarding or orientation of each new employee.
- 7.3 Training will be provided as required.
- 7.4 This Policy will be made accessible to all staff.

## 8.0 Review/Revisions

- 8.1 The Policy will be reviewed every 5 years or as legislative or organizational changes require, whichever is earlier.

### 8.2 Revision Log:

#	Date Revised	Author	Section	Details of Change
1	May 31, 2022	Workforce Development		New policy based on changes to the <i>Employment Standards Act, 2000</i> , S.O. 2000, c. 41.
2				
3				
4				

Refer policy questions to: Division Leader – Workforce Development