



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Policy Manual

Policy Number:	113
Effective Date:	June 28, 2022
Supersedes:	N/A
Approval:	June 28, 2022
Subject:	Right to Disconnect Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 A policy to identify the parameters concerning the right to disconnect for all Town of Tecumseh employees.

2.0 Application

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all Town of Tecumseh employees and excludes members of Town Council.

3.0 Purpose

- 3.1 The Town of Tecumseh prioritizes the health and well-being of employees, including their mental health. This Policy provides the framework for disconnecting from work, understanding that it is vital for a person's wellbeing to maintain a balance between their work and personal lives.

4.0 Right to Disconnect (Bill 27, Working For Workers Act, 2021)

- 4.1 Disconnecting from work is defined as not engaging in work related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls/conferencing or the sending or reviewing of other messages, to be free from the performance of work.

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- 4.2 While technology allows the flexibility to work anywhere and at any time, the Town recognizes that an always connected work culture has the potential for psychosocial risks, such as anxiety, depression, and burnout.
- 4.3 The Town of Tecumseh recognizes that employees have a right to disconnect from work. This includes answering emails, telephone calls, video conferencing or the sending and reviewing of messages outside normal working hours, unless there is an emergency, emerging crisis or agreement within a Job Description, such as having to be “on-call” for a set schedule or to be available for “call in.”
- 4.4 This policy will not supersede the provisions of the Employment Standards Act (ESA) or the individual employee contracts for Non-Union Management.
- 4.5 For some Town of Tecumseh staff, it is a requirement of their role to be a contact in emergency situations. These employees are aware of this requirement and will be contacted through channels established for emergency response as required.
- 4.6 Situations can arise where it is not possible to deal with matters during normal working hours. In these situations, it is necessary to contact employees outside of normal working hours, including but not limited to:
- Fill in at short notice for an unscheduled absence of a team member;
 - Attend to urgent unforeseeable circumstances which may arise;
 - Attend to an emergency which may arise;
 - Attend to urgent or important operational matters requiring contact outside of normal working hours; and
 - People & Culture team contact regarding facilitation of attendance, safe return to work/workplace accommodation.
 - Attend Council meeting or Corporation meetings as necessary that are outside of regular working hours to perform all duties and obligation
- 4.7 Role of the Town of Tecumseh**
- Ensure employees are aware of their required working hours and the terms and conditions of their employment, including what their normal working hours and schedules are reasonably expected to be.
 - Support and manage employees in taking their rest periods and vacation time/time off.

- Ensure all employees receive a copy of this Policy within thirty (30) days of being in effect and all new hires are provided with a copy during orientation.
- Communicate to all employees any updates/revisions to the Policy within thirty (30) days of the revised policy taking effect.

4.8 Role of the Employee

- Take reasonable care to protect their safety, health and welfare, and the health and safety of co-workers.
- Be mindful of co-workers, and all others, right to disconnect by observing this policy. Be conscious and aware of their work-related well-being, and remedy if necessary.
- If unable to disconnect, discuss with their Manager/Supervisor.

4.9 Role of Management

- Support employees within their team to enable them to disconnect from work outside of normal working hours.
- Take measures to resolve employee concerns surrounding their working time, or their ability to disconnect from work.
- Monitor electronic communications and minimize those occurring outside of normal working hours, as appropriate.

4.10 Resolution

Should an employee continue to experience challenges in disconnecting, and measures taken in accordance with Sections 4.7 and 4.8 have not resolved the problem, they may reach out to a member of the People & Culture Team to assist in finding a resolution.

4.11 Correspondence and Communication

Where possible, emails and other communications should be monitored and/or sent during normal working hours. Appreciating that normal work hours differ for some employees, this may result in sending communications at a time which is inconvenient to others (i.e., where one employee works during the weekend and another does not). Where communications are received outside an employee's normal working hours, unless business and operational needs dictate that an immediate response is required, email recipients may respond to such communications during their normal working

hours. To assist with determining urgency, communications should be marked as “Urgent” if a response outside of normal working hours is expected/required.

4.12 Automatic Replies

All employees are required to activate an automatic response when taking vacation or time off. The response should advise the sender that the employee is off, including the start and end date and that the employee will respond to their email upon their return and/or provide alternative contact.

4.13 Meetings

When scheduling meetings, be respectful of normal working hours and set meetings within typical core hours (i.e. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday), avoiding the typical lunch period (i.e. 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.). Core hours and lunch may vary based on the individual departmental operations and therefore, exceptions may apply. Similarly, as noted in S. 4.6, it may be necessary to schedule meetings in accordance with need, rather than normal working hours.

5.0 Amendments and Compliance with Applicable Law

5.1 This Policy may be amended from time to time as necessary or appropriate, as relevant circumstances change, and at all times will be applied in accordance with Bill 27, all other applicable law and collective agreements.

6.0 Contact

Director, People & Culture

7.0 Approvals

Personnel Committee approval