



HR06 – RIGHT TO DISCONNECT

Policy Type: Human Resources

Policy Number: HR06

Reviewed: February 12, 2026

1. Purpose

The Stouffville Library Board recognizes that changes in technology have allowed employees to be constantly connected, however the Board recognizes the right of an employee to disconnect from work outside of scheduled work hours. This policy supports our commitment to support the work-life balance of our employees.

This policy is also written to comply with the *Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000, Part VII.0.1*.

2. Definitions

“Disconnecting from work” means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, including text messages, so as to be free from the performance of work.

“Employee” means a person who works at the Stouffville Library, either part-time or full-time.

3. Policy

3.1 The Right to Disconnect

The right to disconnect means that:

- Unless the communication falls in the exemptions below, employees are not expected or required to respond to work-related communications outside their regular working hours, while on break, or during any paid or unpaid time off.
- Employees on vacation or a leave of absence will only be expected to respond upon their return to work.

- Employees shall turn on an 'out-of-office' email notification and change voicemail message, if applicable, when they are taking time off, to communicate that they will not be responding until the next scheduled workday.
- Employees will not face repercussions or be penalized for not communicating outside of their regularly scheduled hours of work.

3.2 Exemptions to this Policy

From time to time, there may be legitimate situations when it is necessary to contact employees outside of normally scheduled working hours, including but not limited to:

- a. Checking availability for additional shifts, such as to fill in at short notice for a sick employee.
- b. An employee notifying a supervisor in the case of an absence.
- c. Contacting employees on a leave of absence for limited information related to their return to work or status.
- d. Contacting an employee regarding the status of their application to an internal job posting or promotion.
- e. Contacting an employee to create and post time-sensitive corporate communications to the public via social media, website, email, or press release.
- f. For any reason as described in the employee's job description or employment contract which requires them to be contacted outside of regular work hours, for example, for on-call operational responsibilities.
- g. Where an emergency arises.
- h. Where unforeseeable circumstances require contact out of normally scheduled working hours.

3.3 Workload and Productivity

The Library understands that employees may want or need to work outside their normal scheduled hours of work to meet a time-sensitive deadline, to attend to an urgent matter, or due to unforeseen circumstances, however, employees should not regularly or frequently work outside their schedule hours of work to complete or catch up on work.

Employees who cannot manage their workload during their regularly scheduled hours should meet with their direct supervisor to evaluate their current workload, priorities, and deadlines.

3.4 Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for ensuring:

1. A copy of this policy is provided to all employees within 30 calendar days of it being approved or changed.

2. A copy of this policy is provided to all new employees within 30 days of being hired.
3. A copy of every written policy on disconnecting from work that was required by the ESA is retained for three years after the policy is no longer in effect.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understand this policy as it relates to their own work and that of other employees

4. Related Documents

- *Employment Standards Act, S.O. 2000, Chapter 41*