



AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Guideline: Right to Disconnect

Effective Date: May 31, 2022

Function: Human Resources

Authorized by: Managing Director's Group (MDG)

Prescribed Review Date: January 1, 2023

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This document provides guidance regarding the management of the use of communication technology during non-working hours. This guideline complies with S. 21.1.2 of the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (the "ESA") within Ontario and does not remove other rights under the ESA and should be read alongside associated policies or guidelines and relevant and applicable legislation. This guideline is intended to contribute to the ongoing objective of Renison University College ("Renison") to ensure a healthy work environment recognizing the importance of employees' well-being.

#### Scope:

This guideline applies to all employees of Renison University College, as defined by the Ontario ESA whether they are working remotely or in the workplace. Although there is recognition that there will be occasions when it is not possible for all employees to disconnect because of their assigned roles.

#### Guideline:

The Right to Disconnect Guideline intends to ensure that employees have restorative and meaningful breaks from work. Disconnecting from work is important for an individual's well-being, and helps employees achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

#### Application:

Communications between employees, students and/or suppliers:

An employee's ability to disconnect from work depends on Renison's business and/or operational needs and the duties and obligations of the employee's position, subject to an employee's employment contract, applicable collective agreement and/or their minimum statutory entitlements under the ESA.

It is not expected that communications between employees, between employees and students, and/or between employees and suppliers, which are not related to an emergency likely to result in injury and/or damage to facilities, be sent, read, or responded to outside of an employee's regular working hours, whether in the workplace or working remotely.

In the event of an incident that may cause injury and/or damage to the facilities, an employee because of their role, may be required to send and/or respond to communications about that incident, outside of their regular working hours.

Nothing in this guideline precludes Renison or other employees of Renison from contacting colleagues, vendors/other third parties or other employees outside of what may be considered regular working hours or standard business hours, subject to any rights or entitlements the receiving colleague or

employee may have under their employment contract, applicable collective agreement and/or their minimum statutory entitlements under the ESA.

#### Maintenance of Out of Office Notifications and Voice Mail Messages:

It is recommended that all employees maintain Out of Office notifications in various communications software such as Microsoft Outlook and Teams. Additionally, voice mail messages can provide information that details an employee's working hours.

#### Reporting:

Employees are encouraged to report concerns or issues they may have that they believe impacts their ability to disconnect from work, in writing, to their immediate supervisor. If that is not appropriate or the matter cannot be resolved by doing so, employees should direct their concerns or issues to Human Resources.

There will be no reprisal to any employee who exercises their rights under this guideline or reports non-compliance with this guideline.

#### Responsibility:

Renison: inform employees of what their working hours are reasonably expected to be and are informed of the circumstances, if any, in which they will be expected to engage in work-related communications outside their working hours. The employer recognizes the working hours of employees, vendors and other third parties regarding the delivery of its communications. Renison shall retain a copy of this guideline and any revised version of this guideline for three years after it ceases to be in effect.

Employee: ensure that regular working hours are shared in various communication technologies and to recognize that non-emergency communications may not need to be read, sent, or responded to during non-working hours. Additionally, employees are asked to be mindful of colleagues', vendors' and other third parties' working hours (e.g., by not routinely emailing or calling outside of working hours or expecting answers or responses outside of working hours).

Department Chair or Director: facilitate the obligations of Renison under this guideline, monitor employee workload and develop practices that support the Right to Disconnect guideline for those they supervise, including being mindful of employees' working hours.

Human Resources: ensure communication of this guideline to all employees, regardless of their position within 30 calendar days of implementation and provide each employee with a copy of any revisions to this guideline within 30 days of changes being made.

#### Definitions:

Communications: includes emails, telephone calls, text messages, video calls or other types of messages.

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

#### References and Related Policy, Procedure, Guideline or Form:

N/A

#### Attachments:

N/A

### Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Description	Approved By
0	May 31, 2022	Issued	MDG