THE PROTESTANT SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE TOWN OF PENETANGUISHENE

POLICY MANUAL

POLICY TITLE:	SECTION/CODE:
Disconnecting From Work	**Personnel A – 1**

APPROVAL DATE:	SUPERSEDES:	NUMBER OF PAGES:	REVIEW DATE:
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POLICY STATEMENT

The health and well-being of employees is of the utmost importance. The Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene encourages and supports employees in prioritizing their own well-being.

Disconnecting from work is important for an individual's well-being, and helps employees achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance. Disconnecting from work means to not engage in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls, or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work.

POLICY PURPOSE:

To encourage and support employees in balancing their working and personal lives, whether working traditional hours in the workplace, remotely or flexibly, PSSBP has implemented this Disconnecting-from-Work policy to encourage employees to disconnect from work outside of their normal working hours, in accordance with and subject to this policy

Administrative Regulations

1.1 This policy applies to all employees, whether working remotely, in the workplace, flexibly or when mobile.

1.2 In the ordinary course of business, there will be situations when it is necessary to contact colleagues/clients/customers outside of an employee's normal working hours, including but not limited to:

(a) checking availability for scheduling;

(b) to fill in on short notice for a colleague who has called in sick or is unavailable for work;

(c) where unforeseeable circumstances may arise;

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS (Continued)

(d) where an emergency may arise;

(e) where employees voluntarily wish to communicate with one another for work-related purposes outside of their normal working hours; or

(f) other business or operational reasons that require contact outside of an employee's normal working hours.

1.3 Nothing in this policy procedure precludes the employer or other employees of the company from contacting colleagues, clients/customers, or other employees outside their normal working hours for circumstances as outlined above, or as otherwise required to meet business needs, subject to any rights or other entitlements the receiving colleague or employee may have under the Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000 (the "ESA").

Supervisor/Manager Responsibilities

1.4 Supervisors/Managers will take steps to ensure that employees, regardless of their place of work, are:

(a) informed of what their normal working hours are reasonably expected to be;

(b) able to take applicable meal, rest periods and hours free from work, as required by law, the Terms & Conditions of Employment, employment contract, and/or Collective Agreement;

(c) able to take vacation or other leave entitlements as required by law, the Terms & Conditions of Employment, employment contract, and/or Collective Agreement and not be asked to perform work during this time subject to Section 1.2 of this policy.

(d) able to work in a healthy and safe working environment.

Employee Responsibilities

1.5 PSSBP expects all employees to comply with the following in the course of their work.

Employees must:

(a) ensure that they manage their own working time and consider their obligation as an employee, while working, to take reasonable care to protect their health and safety and that of their colleagues;

(b) co-operate fully with any appropriate and/or reasonable mechanism utilized by the organization to record working time or update their working status (e.g. out-of-office messages), including when working remotely, flexibly, or when mobile;

(c) be mindful of colleagues', customers/clients' working hours (e.g. by not routinely emailing or calling outside of normal working hours or expecting answers or responses outside of normal working hours);

(d) notify their supervisor or manager in writing of any meal, rest, break or hours free-from work period which they are entitled to but were unable to use due to performing work for the Board on a particular occasion, and why this occurred;

(e) speak with their supervisor or manager if they feel their workload is preventing them from being able to take a meal, rest, break or hours-free from-work periods that they are entitled to.

Working Hours

1.6 An employee's normal working hours are as set out in their employment contract and/or applicable collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment.

1.7 Normal working hours for employees may vary. It is important to remember that all employees' ability to disconnect from work is within the context of their own individual work schedules.

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1.8 Despite the establishment of normal working hours, all employees of the organization recognize that there may be busier periods or other circumstances where work must be completed outside of normal working hours.

Communications

1.9 Where possible, work-related communications should be checked or sent during normal working hours. Due to differing/non-standard work schedules, some employees may send communications at times which are inopportune for other employees, such as evenings or weekends. The sender should consider the timing of their communication and potential for disturbance, and the recipient should understand that they will not be expected to respond until their working time recommences (or unless otherwise required and stipulated within the communication per the circumstances as outlined in Section 1.2 of this policy.

Meetings

1.10 Where possible, meetings should be scheduled during regular business hours, or normal working hours if the attendees have work schedules outside of regular business hours.

1.11 Those organizing meetings should be mindful of the time of those whom they are inviting to attend, and ensure that those invited will play an active role and have something to contribute to the matters being discussed.

Posting, Notice and Retention

1.12 A copy of this policy will be provided to each employee within 30 calendar days of implementation. Should any changes be made to the policy after its implementation, each employee will be provided a copy of the revised policy within 30 days of the revisions being made.

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1.13 This policy will be provided to all new employees upon onboarding and within 30 calendar days of the employee commencing employment with PSSBP.

1.14 A copy of this policy will be retained for three years after it ceases to be in effect.

Effective: June 2022

Cross-Reference:

Working for Workers Act, 2021

Relevant Collective Agreements

Occupational Health & Safety Policy

Health and Safety Policy