



PROCEDURE

HR-002

RIGHT TO DISCONNECT

Superintendent Responsible: Superintendent of Human Resources	Initial Effective Date: 2022/07/27
Last Updated: 2022/07/27	Next Review Date: 2026/08/28

Purpose

The Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) encourages and supports employee(s) in prioritizing their own health and well-being. Disconnecting from work is important for an individual's well-being and helps employee(s) achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

In accordance with *the Employment Standards Act (ESA)* and any *Regulations* made under *the Act*, Grand Erie supports employees with their right to disconnect from work.

1.0 Guiding Principles

- 1.1. All employee(s) are encouraged to disconnect from work outside of their normal working hours.
- 1.2. To the extent possible, work-related communications via any medium should only be sent, received, and checked during regular working hours. An employee's normal working hours and any applicable break periods are as set out in their employment contract, applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or as identified by law.
- 1.3. There may on occasion, be legitimate situations when it is necessary to contact employee(s) after-hours, including but not limited to: notification of employee(s) absences, filling vacant positions, inclement weather, emergency, urgent or unforeseen situations.
- 1.4. Although everyone should be mindful of the right to disconnect, situations can arise where it is not possible to deal with matters during normal working hours. Given that employee(s) across Grand Erie may have differing hours of work, some employee(s) may issue communications after-hours. All employee(s) must give due consideration to this operational reality when sending or receiving communications.
- 1.5. Where an employee(s) is out of the office for an extended period of time (e.g., conferences, lengthy meetings, absences, etc.) they are encouraged to set automatic replies on their voicemail, email and other communication platforms as appropriate. This will provide notification of their absence, forwarding messages and calls to appropriate designates, and set reasonable expectations for response times.
- 1.6. This procedure will be provided to all new employee(s) within 30 days of joining the employ of Grand Erie.

2.0 Definitions

As defined by the *ESA*, "disconnecting from work" means "not engaging 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".

Reference(s):

- [Employment Standards Act, 2000](#)