

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 484	
SECTION: PERSONNEL & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS	
Adopted/Original Date of Issue	May 2022
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Contact	Human Resources

## Disconnecting From Work

### Background

The Renfrew County District School Board’s Strategic Plan identifies empowering equity and well-being as one of the District’s goals. The health and wellbeing of employees is of the utmost importance to the Renfrew County District School Board. The District encourages and supports the personal well-being of its employees, while meeting their professional duties and obligations.

To encourage and support employees in balancing their professional and personal lives, the RCDSB has implemented this Disconnecting-from-Work Procedure to encourage employees to disconnect from work outside of their normal working hours in accordance with the Employment Standards Act 2000, as amended by the Working for Workers Act 2021. The District acknowledges, however, that there are times when operational requirements and/or emergencies will require the oversight of employees. The District will endeavour to minimize these instances.

Disconnecting from work is important for personal well-being, and helps employees achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance. Disconnecting from work is the disengagement from work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending and/or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the roles and Responsibilities of work.

### Procedure

- 1.1 In this procedure "after-hours" refers to any time outside of the paid work day, Monday to Friday, as well as, all day Saturday, Sunday, statutory holidays, and (if applicable) any other designated non-working days.  
The above definition may be varied depending on specific agreements with employee groups. Staff should recognize that others may have different hours of work and encourage response after one has returned to work.
  
- 1.2 The term "mass emails" refer to electronic mail messages sent to a large number of employees. Mass emails produced for the purpose of providing information related to operational matters should normally be delivered during business hours only in order to ensure that employees' non-work hours, vacation time, and personal life is respected. There may be unique situations where critical information of an urgent nature must be provided through mass emails delivered after-hours. In general, mass emails should be discouraged on the day prior to major breaks.

- 1.3 Employees are advised to disconnect from work after-hours, unless the matter is a significant operational requirement and/or an emergency that calls for immediate action.
- 1.4 This procedure provides employees with the opportunity for proper balance between work and lifestyle which ought to positively impact employee wellness.
- 1.5 A copy of this procedure shall be provided to all Renfrew County District School Board employees within 30 days of the effective date. A copy of this procedure shall also be provided to all new employees within 30 days of the employee joining the District.
- 1.6 All Renfrew County District School Board employees are expected to use their best judgment when determining whether to send a communication outside of a recipient's working hours. Similarly, all employees are expected to use their professional judgment when determining whether to respond to a communication received after hours.

**References**

Employment Standards Act, 2000  
 Working for Workers Act, 2021

**Procedure History**

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