

<b>POLICY MANUAL</b>	<b>Policy No. 3-30</b>
<b>Municipality of South Dundas</b>	<b>Effective Date: June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>
<b>Subject: Disconnecting from work policy</b>	<b>Department: All</b>

## 1. Preamble

To encourage and support Municipal employees in balancing their working and personal lives, this Disconnecting-from-Work Policy (the “Policy”) has been implemented to encourage employees to disconnect from work where/when possible.

This Policy must be read alongside all associated Municipal policies, for example flexible/remote work, vacation entitlements, health and safety policies and procedures, working time requirements, accommodation, etc., as well as any relevant and applicable legislation, and any other policy that may become applicable and/or relevant from time to time.

## 2. Application

This policy applies to all Municipal employees, as defined in the Personnel Policy Manual and by the *Ontario Employment Standards Act*, regardless of their place of work.

## 3. Employer Obligations

- a. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to ensure that its employees, regardless of their place of work, are:
  - i. informed of what their normal working hours are reasonably expected to be and are informed of the general circumstances in which they may be expected to engage in work-related communications outside their normal working hours.
  - ii. able to take applicable meal, rest periods and hours free from work as required by law, and/or contract.
  - iii. able to take vacation or other leave entitlements as required by law, and/or contract.

## 4. Employee Obligations

- a. The Municipality expects all employees to comply with the following in the course of their work. Employees will:

- i. cooperate fully with any applicable mechanism utilized by the Municipality to record working time or update their working status (e.g., out-of-office messages).
- ii. be mindful of colleagues,' customers/clients,' vendors' and other third parties' working hours.
- iii. ensure that they take ownership of their work and meet the Municipality's operational needs.
- iv. comply with the Municipality's Personnel Policy as it relates to overtime and on-call, including any requirements to obtain prior approval before performing overtime work.
- v. notify their supervisor or manager, in writing, of any right or entitlement they were unable to exercise and the reasons why.

#### **5. Ability to Disconnect from Work**

- a. An employee's ability to disconnect from work depends on the Municipality's operational needs and the duties and obligations of the employee's position, subject to an employee's employment contract, and/or their minimum statutory entitlements under the ESA.
- b. Nothing in the Policy precludes employees or elected officials of the Municipality from contacting colleagues outside of what may be considered normal working hours or standard business hours, subject to any rights or entitlements the receiving colleague or employee may have under their employment contract, and/or their minimum statutory entitlements under the ESA.
- c. This Policy does not afford employees a "right to disconnect" beyond what is within their individual employment contract, and/or their minimum statutory entitlements under the ESA, which may include rights or entitlements speaking to: normal hours of work and hours free from work, overtime pay, meal and/or rest periods, public holidays and public holiday pay, and vacation.

#### **6. Reporting Concerns**

- a. All employees **are expected and required to** report any concerns or issues they may have which they feel is impacting their ability to disconnect-from-work.
- b. Employees are encouraged to report such concerns or issues 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 the Human Resources Coordinator.

- c. Employees will not be subject to reprisal for reporting such concerns as outlined above.

**7. Posting, Notice and Retention**

- a. The Municipality shall provide notice of this Policy to employees of the Municipality within 30 calendar days of implementation. Should any changes be made to the Policy after its implementation, the Municipality shall provide notice to employees of the revision within 30 days of the changes being made.
- b. The Municipality shall advise all new employees of this Policy upon onboarding and within 30 calendar days of the employee commencing employment with the Municipality.