

<b>West Neighbourhood House</b>	
Policy Title:	<b>Right to Disconnect from Work</b>
Approved by:	Management
Approval date:	June 2, 2022
Revision dates:	

## **Policy Statement**

West Neighbourhood House is committed to fostering a safe and healthy work environment for all staff. Recent technological advancements along with an increase in remote/hybrid work arrangements have led to the risk of “hyper-connectivity”. Accordingly, this Policy sets out West Neighbourhood House’s expectations around work-related communications to assist staff in disconnecting from work during appropriate times.

## **Applicability**

- All Staff

## **Definitions**

“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.

## **General Principles and Procedures**

All West Neighbourhood House staff have the right to disconnect and have a right to the following:

1. A right not to routinely perform work outside of normal working hours (including refraining from engaging in work-related emails, calls, or messages).
2. A right not to be reprimanded for refusing to attend to work matters outside of normal working hours.
3. The duty to respect another person’s right to disconnect (e.g., by not routinely emailing or calling outside normal working hours).

## **Hours of Work**

This Policy does not amend a staff’s hours of work or rest periods. Hours of work and rest periods are defined pursuant to the collective agreement, the employment contract and/or by agreement with the staffs’ supervisor in accordance with applicable employment standards legislation.

## **Expectations Regarding Work Related Communications**

West Neighbourhood House does not expect staff to read or respond to work-related communications outside of their normal working hours, subject to the following exceptions:

- a) where operational needs require such communications and the staff has been given notice in advance;
- b) where such communications are required due to the nature of the staff's duties;
- c) where the staff's role is managerial or supervisory in nature, in which case operational or business needs may require communications outside of normal working hours;
- d) where the staff has been authorized to work flexible hours;
- e) in instances involving unforeseen operational needs;
- f) in cases of emergency;
- g) where such communication is required (e.g., on-call or shift coverage);
- h) in other situations that may arise.

## **Tools to Enable Disconnecting from Work**

Practices and for disconnecting from work may differ across West Neighbourhood House depending upon the nature of the work and the circumstances of the staff on a particular team.

All staff, where possible, should check and send emails and other work-related communications during normal working hours. While anticipating that work patterns differ, some staff may send communications at a time that is inconvenient to another staff, the sender should give appropriate consideration.

The following tools may assist staff in disconnecting from work, where appropriate:

- a) Automatic Replies/Voicemail Message – indicating the dates that they are out of the office, the date they will return to the office, and an alternate point of contact during the staff's absence.
- b) Delay Delivery – when sending e-mails if the timing of the communication may not align with that of the recipient (e.g., where the sender and recipient have different work schedules).
- c) Online Status – change status to 'offline' on Teams when on vacation or off sick.

### **West Neighbourhood House Laptops and Handheld Devices**

Depending on the role, some staff may be provided with a cell phone, tablet, and/or laptop. These devices are to be used for work purposes, during normal working hours and does not imply that staff are to be available outside of regular working hours.

### **Changes to this Policy**

This Policy is subject to change at the sole discretion of the West Neighbourhood House. Staff will be notified of any such changes in accordance with applicable employment standards legislation.

### **Questions or Concerns**

Staff with questions or concerns about this Policy should contact their Supervisor/Manager/Director or Human Resources.