



RIGHT TO DISCONNECT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The modern working environment in recent times has been drastically changed by new communication and information technologies which allows the Company and colleagues the flexibility to work anywhere and at any time. Although digital platforms bring flexibility and freedom to colleagues' they can also create an absence of limits.

The Company recognises the importance of helping its colleagues maintain a good work and home life balance but is aware that an 'always-connected' culture can shrink the boundaries of balancing work life with home life.

The Company also recognises that every colleague, regardless of their role, is entitled to switch off outside of their normal working hours and enjoy their free time away from work without being disturbed unless there is a reasonable basis to do so.

The creation of a culture in which colleagues feel they can disconnect from work and work-related devices necessitates a joint approach by both the Company and our colleagues. To encourage and support our colleagues in balancing their working and personal lives we have adopted this policy considering the Code of Practice for Employers and Colleagues on the Right to Disconnect.

POLICY

We recognise that we have a duty to implement this policy and all colleagues are expected to comply with it and have a duty and a responsibility to uphold the policy.

The Right to Disconnect refers to a colleague's right to be able to disengage from work and refrain from engaging in work-related electronic communications, such as emails, telephone calls or other messages, outside normal working hours. It is important to highlight that normal working hours will vary amongst colleagues depending on the nature of their role, work location and personal circumstances, etc.

WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of our colleagues is of the utmost importance to us and we encourage and support our colleagues to prioritise their own wellbeing. Disconnecting from work is vital for your wellbeing to help you achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

Achieving a healthy work-life balance has three main elements:

- Ensuring colleagues are aware of their normal working hours.
- Ensuring colleagues do not to suffer any negative consequences for not engaging in work outside of their normal working hours; and
- Ensuring that others are aware they have a duty to respect a colleague's work-life balance.

We encourage colleagues working from home to schedule post-work leisure activity, in order to create some separation from the end of their working day and the beginning of their personal time. All colleagues are reminded to switch off from work, to monitor their working hours and to take breaks away from work devices.

The Company will always ensure that its obligations are met in relation to the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 which was introduced in respect of maximum working hours, rest periods, holidays and night work and recognises that colleagues enjoy strong protection under this legislation. Your entitlements in this respect are set out in your employment documentation.

Colleagues must also be aware that they have a duty to take reasonable care of their health and safety in accordance with section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Accordingly, you are required to notify the Company in writing if you did not or have not been able to avail of your rest breaks from work and setting out why you believe you were unable to do so.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Company believes that colleagues should be able to disconnect from work and from phone calls, emails or messages outside normal working hours. We recognise the need for a healthy work life/home life balance and that a constant digital/telephonic connection can impact on/or restrict this balance, therefore:

- Where possible, emails/social media communications should be checked or sent only during normal working hours
- Due to differing/non-standard patterns of work in the Company, some colleagues may send communications at times which are inopportune for other colleagues e.g., weekends.
- Whilst you may receive emails from Management or colleagues outside of your normal working hours there is no general expectation on you to reply to these outside your working hours. Senders should therefore give due consideration to the timing of their communication and potential for disturbance. Recipients should understand that they will not be expected to respond until their working time commences, save for legitimate and reasonable situations where a response may be required.

The Company will endeavour to only send communications outside agreed working hours in legitimate and reasonable situations. Such situations include, but are not limited to, contact to discuss availability for rosters, to cover shifts at short notice, in emergency or urgent situations, where unforeseeable circumstances arise, etc. Where business and operational needs dictate that an immediate response is required, the sender should endeavour to indicate the level of urgency in their communication.

Furthermore, due to the nature of our business, colleague's will be required to attend all staff meetings, normally outside working hours as part of their employment. This will include monthly Manager meetings, if applicable, and weekly team meetings. Details of all meetings will be issued in advance.

PROCEDURE

The Company understands that maintaining a healthy work-life balance is likely to impact colleagues differently and we will ensure that appropriate solutions are agreed upon and implemented for different teams performing different functions.

The Company will ensure that appropriate steps are in place to ensure a colleague can exercise their right to disconnect and maintain a suitable work-life balance as far as practicable, and that this is maintained by:

- Providing training to colleagues on the proper use of any digital/telephonic communication equipment provided.
- Providing training to its Management Team to ensure they can and do comply with this duty of respect and in turn can set good examples for their teams.
- Implementing a reporting structure for all colleagues where they feel that they are unable to disconnect or maintain a suitable work-life balance.
- Ensuring that colleagues do not suffer any negative impacts from doing so.
- Keeping this policy under review.



We understand colleagues may still want to use Company digital and telephonic platforms after hours, however we request that these only be used in exceptional circumstances and as agreed with Management.

As stated previously colleagues should be aware that they are not expected to send or answer any work-related emails, calls, or messages. Where a colleague feels they cannot disconnect from work they must make this known to your manager as soon as possible. Your attention is also brought to the Company's Grievance Procedure which may be utilised if you are dissatisfied with your ability to disconnect from work in accordance with this policy.