


<b>POLICY TITLE:</b> Right to Disconnect Policy	<b>POLICY SECTION:</b> Human Resources	<b>POLICY NO:</b> 2.3
<b>RELATED BOARD POLICY:</b>	1.2.2 Recruitment, Retention and Turnover 1.4.5 Regulatory and Legislative Compliances	
<b>RELEVANT LEGISLATION:</b>	Ontario Employment Standards Act	
<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS:</b>	King's University College Faculty Association Collective Agreement King's University College Staff Association Terms and Conditions Professional Administrative Officers' Association Terms and Conditions CUPE Collective Agreement	
<b>PRIMARY APPROVER:</b>	President	
<b>SECONDARY APPROVER:</b>	Director of Human Resources	
<b>RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:</b>	Human Resources	
<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	31 May 2022	
<b>DATE(S) REVIEWED / REVISED:</b>	18 Aug 2025	
<b>POLICY REVIEW - FREQUENCY:</b>	Every three years	
<b>APPROVER SIGNATURE(S):</b>		

## 1. Purpose

1.1. This policy has been established to support employee wellness, minimize excessive sources of stress, and ensure that employees have the right to disconnect from their work. King's University College values the contributions of our employees and encourages and supports employees focusing on their mental and physical health. This policy should be read alongside King's associated policies, collective agreements, terms and conditions, employee contracts, and any applicable and/or relevant legislation.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

2.1. This policy applies to all employees and departments of King's University College.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Disconnecting from work** means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, to be free from the performance of work.
- 3.2. **Emergency** an urgent and/or critical situation, temporary in nature, that threatens or causes harm to people, the environment, King's property or disrupts operations.
- 3.3. **Employees** means paid members of the King's Community, inclusive of; academic, non-academic and leadership positions or any other individual who is an "employee" for the purposes of the Employment Standards Act, 2000.
- 3.4. **Leader** means a person (BUH, Chair, Director, Manager, etc.) whom an employee reports to.
- 3.5. **Work Hours** means the time of the day when an employee is performing their job responsibilities as directed by their individual employment contract, policies, terms and conditions or collective agreements.

### 4. Policy

#### 4.1. King's Obligations

Employees well-being and ability to disconnect from work will be promoted by King's by supporting and developing programs and resources.

#### 4.2. King's will take steps to ensure that all employees are:

- 4.2.1. Informed of the circumstances in which they will be expected to engage in work related communications outside of their work hours.
- 4.2.2. Able to take applicable meal, rest periods and hours free from work as required by law, contract, policies or applicable terms and conditions or collective agreements.
- 4.2.3. Able to take vacation or other leave entitlements as required by law, contract, policies or other applicable terms and conditions or collective agreement.
- 4.2.4. Able to work in a healthy and safe work environment.

### 5. Employee Obligations

- 5.1. All employees are encouraged to consider the following in the course of their work:
  - 5.1.1. Be considerate of colleagues' work hours (e.g. by not routinely emailing or calling outside of work hours)
  - 5.1.2. Take their applicable meals, rest periods and hours free from work as set out in their individual employment contracts, policies, collective agreements or terms and conditions.

- 5.1.3. If they feel their workload is preventing them from being able to disconnect from work, speak with their supervisor or leader in a timely manner.
- 5.1.4. Request and take their approved vacation entitlements as set out in their individual employment contract, policies, collective agreements or terms and conditions.

## **6. Disconnect**

- 6.1. Work hours may differ across departments, positions and employee and academic appointments, as a result of supporting King's academic and operational requirements. Employees have the right to disconnect from their work and communications outside of working hours without fear of reprisal. The ability for an employee to disconnect from work at a given time depends on the employee's position, employee's contract, policies, collective agreements, terms and conditions and/or minimum statutory entitlements under *the Employment Standards Act, 2000*, as well as the academic and operational needs of King's.
- 6.2. Employees must also be respectful of others' right to disconnect and should not expect their colleagues to respond, communicate, or complete work when not working.
- 6.3. Emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances may impact an employee's ability to disconnect from work. Timely matters, such as scheduling and academic, operational and support needs may result in employees being contacted outside of their work hours.

## **7. Communication**

- 7.1. Employees may feel obligated to send or respond to messages when not working. Work-related communications should be checked or sent during work hours as applicable, where possible. Some employees may send communications when other employees are not performing work, due to differing or non-standard work schedules. When sending a communication, the employee should consider the timing of their communication and whether a response outside of the employees working hours is necessary. Unless a response is otherwise required in accordance with the employee's duties, or in instances of an emergency requiring a timely response the employee receiving the email should understand that they will not be expected to respond until their work time recommences.
- 7.2. Establishing a protocol for alerting employees about situations requiring a timely or emergency response should be developed by their leaders.
- 7.3. Employees on vacation or leave are encouraged to use an out-of-office message on their email and voicemail, as well as scheduling any time off in their calendars.

- 7.4. For clarity, this procedure shall not prevent King's or its employees from engaging in communications outside of what may be considered working hours and nothing within this policy shall be considered to confer or grant employees a right or benefit beyond what they are entitled to under their individual employment contract, policies, applicable collective agreements, terms and conditions and/or minimum statutory entitlements under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*.

## **8. Reporting Concerns**

- 8.1. If an employee is not able to manage their workload during their regular hours as defined by their individual employment contract, policies, applicable collective agreements, terms and conditions and/or minimum statutory entitlements under the *Employment Standards Act*, they should meet with their leader. The employee and their leader should evaluate the current workload, priorities, and due dates. It is expected that all employees report any concerns or issues they may have that impact their ability to disconnect from work and/or impact their health and well-being.
- 8.2. Leaders will work with employees to come up with a solution to ensure:
- 8.2.1. Normal job duties can be completed during working hours; and
  - 8.2.2. Employees can remain productive and meet organizational goals and objectives.
- 8.3. In circumstances where this is not feasible, or the matter cannot be resolved by speaking to a leader, employees should direct their concerns or issues to Human Resources, or a representative of their employee group as applicable.
- 8.4. All employees are encouraged to seek assistance for concerns relating to their health and well-being. King's has resources and supports available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. Employees are not subject to reprisal for reporting such concerns as outlined within the procedure.

## **9. Duration, Review and Modification of the Policy**

- 9.1. This policy will be provided to every employee within 30 days of its approved date. A new employee will be provided with a copy of the written policy within 30 days of being hired.
- 9.2. King's has the right to change or modify this Policy. King's will retain a copy of every version of this policy as required by the ESA for three years after the policy is no longer in effect