

**Date:** 2022-05-11

**Subject:** **HR Policy Modernization: Updates to Hours of Work Policy to include Disconnecting from Work**

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**Report Number:** Corporate Support Services-2022-506

**Recommendations:**

1. That the report titled **HR Policy Modernization: Updates to Hours of Work Policy to include Disconnecting from Work**, to the Committee of Council meeting of May 25, 2022, be received;
2. That the **Hours of Work and Disconnecting from Work Policy**, as set out in Appendix A, be approved;
3. That staff be authorized to implement and administer the policy; and
4. That the **Hours of Work Policy**, AF123-2002, dated October 16, 2002 be rescinded.

**Overview:**

- Recent amendments to the [Employment Standards Act 2000](#) (ESA) require the City to establish a policy for employees on disconnecting from work by June 2, 2022.
- Since 2002, the City of Brampton has had in place the *Hours of Work Policy* (AF123-2002) which served to communicate the number of hours employees are expected to work. This report recommends an expansion of the existing policy to include provisions related to disconnecting from work to comply with the ESA.

## **Background:**

On December 2, 2021 Bill 27 (*Working for Workers Act, 2021*) came into effect which amended the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (the “ESA”) to require employers with 25 or more employees, such as the City of Brampton, to implement a written policy regarding “disconnecting from work” by no later than June 2, 2022.

Under the ESA, an employer is required to establish a policy and provide all employees with a copy of the policy within 30 days of the policy being established or revised. The ESA does not prescribe the content of the policy. It is up to the employer to establish a policy that provides guidelines to employees for disconnecting from work.

Recently, the Ministry of Labour provided guidance on what employers’ disconnecting from work policy might address, such as:

- The employer’s expectations, if any, of employees to read or reply to work-related emails or answer work-related phone calls after their shift is over.
- The policy may set out employer expectations for different situations. For example, the policy may contain different expectations depending on:
  - the time of day of the communication
  - the subject matter of the communication
  - who is contacting the employee (for example the client, supervisor, colleague)
- The employer’s requirements for employees turning on out-of-office notifications and/or changing their voicemail messages, when they are not scheduled to work, to communicate that they will not be responding until the next scheduled work day.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/your-guide-employment-standards-act-0/written-policy-disconnecting-from-work#>

## **Current Situation:**

The *Hours of Work and Disconnecting from Work Policy* outlines supervisor and employee roles and responsibilities regarding disconnecting from work outside of one’s Scheduled Work Hours.

## **Corporate Implications:**

### Financial Implications:

- There are no new financial implications associated with implementation and administration of the policy.

### Other Implications:

- There are no other implications associated with this report.

## **Term of Council Priorities:**

This report supports Brampton being a Well-Run City through continuously improving the day-to-day operations of the City through policy modernization. It also supports Brampton being a Healthy & Safe City through promoting health and well-being, and supports compliance with the ESA.

**Conclusion:**

The report seeks approval from Council on the *Hours of Work and Disconnecting from Work* policy to demonstrate the City's commitment to promote a healthy and sustainable work-life balance, foster a flourishing organizational culture, and support compliance with the ESA.

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**Attachments:**

Appendix A – Hours of Work and Disconnecting from Work Policy

Appendix B – *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, Part VII.0.1 Written Policy on  
Disconnecting from Work