

By-law 27-2022

**Being a by-law to adopt a Disconnect from Work Policy
for the Village of South River.**

WHEREAS the Village strives for fairness and clarity in employee relations through clear policy direction

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Village of South River does hereby enacts the following policy:

1. Disconnect from Work Policy # 4:01 as attached to define and explain, in Municipal context, employee rights and obligations for communications when not at work.

This by-law comes into force upon adoption by the Council of the Village of South River.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 27th DAY OF JUNE 2022.

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 27th DAY OF JUNE 2022.

Mayor, Jim Coleman

Clerk Administrator, Don McArthur



Village of South River Policies and Operational Guidelines

Policy

4:01

Section:
Health and Safety

Subject:
Disconnect from Work Policy

Date: **June 1, 2022**

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1. PURPOSE

This sets out The Corporation of the Village of South River's disconnecting from Work policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy:

- (a) "**Defined Hours of Work**" means agreed to hours of work, which include regular hours of work, overtime hours and any on call commitments, as applicable.
- (b) "**Disconnect from Work**" means not engaging in Work outside of Defined Hours of Work.
- (c) "**Emergency**" means an incident or occurrence that requires timely or immediate attention and/or action, failing which the incident or occurrence may reasonably result in an adverse impact on human health, animal health or the environment.
- (d) "**Unforeseen Circumstance(s)**" means an unforeseeable incident or occurrence that unless addressed can reasonably lead to an adverse impact on: (a) the delivery (including, for greater certainty, the failure to deliver) of the Village's services and/or programs, and/or (b) the Village's reputation.
- (e) "**Work**" means executing employment duties and/or responsibilities including but not limited to engaging in work-related communications, including telephone calls, text messages, e-mails, video calls.

3. POLICY

(a) Policy Statement

The Village recognizes that emerging information and communication technologies (i.e. laptops, smartphones, high-speed internet, remote access software), and the supply thereof to employees, has resulted in alternate work arrangements, including

remote work (telework) and new work practices and habits for impacted employees. Consequently, impacted employees may remain connected to their work outside of their Defined Hours of Work. That increased connection and work activity can lead to overwork and/or other unintended adverse health consequences such as increased anxiety, stress and/or burnout.

The Corporation of the Village of South River (the "Village") is committed to employee health and well-being. This Policy serves to support such commitment by promoting a healthy work-life balance as well as employees' right to Disconnect from Work.

(b) Policy Application

This Policy applies to all Municipal employees, although it is primarily intended for employees who can remain connected to the workplace outside their Defined Hours of Work as a result of their use and/or access to their personal and/or Municipal-issued technology, including through remote work (telework) arrangements.

(c) Right to Disconnect

- i. Subject to the circumstances set out in paragraph ii. below, Municipal employees are not expected to Work outside of their Defined Hours of Work.
- ii. Paragraph i. does not preclude the performance of Work outside of Defined Hours of Work in all circumstances. Given the Village's 24-7, 365-day a year operations and services, Employees may be called upon, and required, to do so from time to time:
 - a. in accordance with an arrangement entered into with the employee from time to time, such an agreement to, for instance, work overtime and/or to be "on-call";
 - b. in accordance with the terms and conditions of an applicable employment agreement;
 - c. in the event of an Unforeseen Circumstance(s); and/or
 - d. in the event of an Emergency; as applicable.

(d) Disconnecting from Work

- iii. In keeping with sub-section (c) above, the Village encourages employees to Disconnect from Work outside of their Defined Hours of Work, and prioritize their personal wellbeing.

- iv. Where reasonably possible, in the absence of any of the circumstances enumerated in paragraph (c) ii) above work-related communications should only be sent and/or checked during Defined Hours of Work.
- v. In the absence of any circumstances enumerated in paragraph (c) ii. above, employees are asked not to refrain from Work outside their Defined Hours of Work.
- vi. Employees are also asked to be mindful of their colleagues', supervisors' and managers' personal time and right to Disconnect from Work and not to expect, in circumstances outside of those enumerated in paragraph (c) ii) above, Work outside of their colleagues', supervisors' and/or managers' Defined Hours of Work.

4. RETALIATION / PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

Employees complying with this Policy, including specifically those exercising their right to Disconnect, shall not be subject to discipline and/or retaliation.

5. EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

- (a) The health and wellbeing of employees is paramount. Employees are strongly encouraged to maintain a good work-life balance and to Disconnect from Work outside of their Defined Hours of Work.
- (b) Any questions or issues concerning, or arising out of, this Policy should be addressed as follows:
 - i. by addressing the issue directly with your supervisor or manager, as applicable;
 - ii. if no resolution is reached after addressing the matter with your supervisor and/or manager, by reaching out to the Clerk-Administrator

6. INTERPRETATION

This Policy shall be interpreted and enforced in a manner consistent with the objective of the Policy set out in the Policy Statement section above.

7. POLICY SCOPE

This Policy sets out the Village's values and principles on the subject-matter hereof. This Policy is not intended and does not serve to amend any other policy and/or employment agreement. In the event of any inconsistency between this Policy and any

**THE CORPORATION OF
THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH RIVER**

employment agreement, as applicable, shall take precedence to the extent of the inconsistency.

8. WELLNESS RESOURCES

The Village's benefit provider has made resources available to all employees including webinars on mental wellness, health and wellness, individual counselling and more.

9. QUESTIONS

Any questions about this Policy, its application, administration and/or interpretation may directed to:

Don McArthur, Clerk-Administrator

Email: clerk@southriver.ca

Phone: 705-386-2573

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy takes shall come into force on June 1, 2022 and shall be reviewed at least on an annual basis.

REVISION	DATE	PREPARED BY
Created	May 2022	Clerk's Dept.