

Madawaska Valley

Association For

Community Living

**POLICY: DISCONNECTING FROM WORK**

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**CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCES**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living (“MVACL”) provides a wide variety of essential services and support to people with developmental disabilities and their families on a 24-7 basis. The provision of these services works to promote and facilitate community inclusion, meaningful participation and full citizenship of people with developmental disabilities.

Regardless of the nature of an employee’s working arrangement (in-person, remote, or in a hybrid or flexible arrangement), taking appropriate time to disconnect from work is vital for well-being, and is essential for maintaining work-life balance.

As required by the terms of Bill 27, Working for Workers Act, 2021 (awaiting Royal Assent), **MVACL recognizes the need to limit contact with employees after their scheduled work hours.** Employees are therefore encouraged to review and follow the guidance set out in this policy.

**DEFINITIONS**

The ESA defines “disconnecting from work” as “not engaging in work related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or receiving of other messages, in order to be free from the performance of work.”

**HOURS OF WORK**

Based on the continuous nature of MVACL’s operations, regular hours of work vary from one employee and one location to the next. Further, given the unpredictable nature of MVACL’s business, work outside of established working hours for any person or location may be required from time to time.

Direct Support Staff at MVACL have the option after the posting of the final schedule to enter N/A on days they do not wish to be contacted for emergency scheduling.

All staff have the right not to respond to email or calls when off duty. MVACL encourages employees who are off duty to disconnect from work.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Due to twenty-four hour scheduling, it is not possible to ensure all communications are sent only during an employee’s on-duty hours. All employees are expected to use their best judgement when determining whether to send a communication during a recipient’s off hours. Similarly, all employees are expected to use their best judgement when determining whether to respond to a communication received during their off hours. Employees shall also set reasonable expectations for response times.

Employees are always expected to review and respond to communications from their employer and to participate in employer processes such as :

* Scheduling
* Investigations
* Absence Management
* Accommodation planning
* Performance Management

And other types of contact, communications and meetings that occur outside of regular working hours, as may be reasonably expected for the management of their employment.at the first opportunity upon their return to work. MVACL will communicate expected response times for various types of communications.