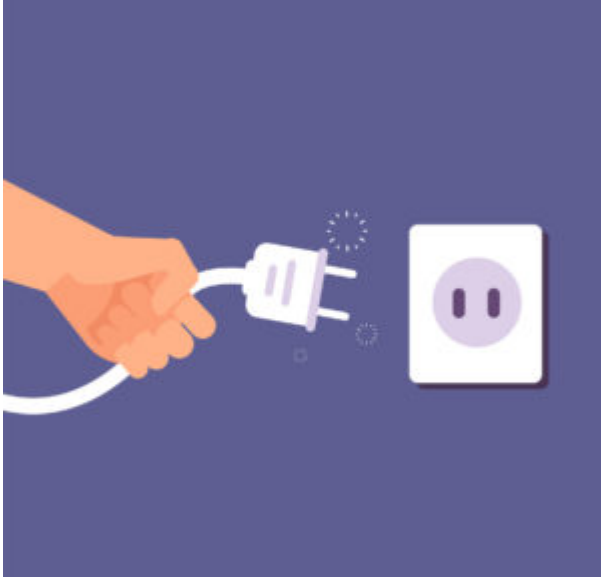


# The Right to Disconnect

written by Rory L | April 12, 2022



Never has it been more difficult for Canadian workers to achieve a proper balance between life and work. With labour in short supply, employees are being pressured to work longer hours; and as technology and telecommuting blur the lines between work and home, employees are never truly off duty knowing that even during nonwork hours they can be summoned by superiors, co-workers and clients at any moment. Consequently, a new kind of employment standard law is coming into vogue, one that gives employees the right to be free of all work communications when they're off-duty. While Ontario is the first to adopt "right to disconnect" laws, many jurisdictions are considering passing laws of their own. Even if it's not required, giving employees a right to disconnect could provide a significant boost to recruitment, retention and morale. The starting point is to adopt a written right to disconnect policy that includes at least 5 elements:

1. A clear definition of the "right to disconnect";
2. Responsibilities of employees while exercising their disconnect rights, e.g., leaving appropriate automatic reply messages on their voicemail;
3. Enforcement protocols and manager responsibilities;
4. Provisions requiring managers and co-workers to be aware of employees' normal working hours and respect their disconnect rights;
5. Assurances that employees won't suffer retaliation for asking about or exercising their disconnect rights.