



Right to Disconnect Protocols

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is to describe St Columban's College's commitment to our employees right to disconnect from work.

This protocol must be read in conjunction with the relevant Enterprise Agreement, BCE's People Policy, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Flexible Working Arrangements Policy St Columban's College policies relating to email, electronic communication, social media and privacy, and Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane Code of Conduct.

2. COMMITMENT

St Columban's College prioritises our employees wellbeing and allows the ability to disconnect from work in their personal lives. The right to disconnect ensures our people have sufficient recovery time between work and can balance electronic communications and their personal lives.

3. PROTOCOL STATEMENT

St Columban's College recognises, respects and supports the right of employees to disconnect from work and not respond to work-related electronic communications outside designated hours.

The employee Right to Disconnect Protocols encourage employees to disconnect from work to:

- promote engagement, productivity and wellbeing
- balance work demands and personal commitments
- support working flexibly
- facilitate talent attraction and retention

These protocols are modelled by our leaders and promoted in an open and transparent way.

These protocols apply to all forms of electronic communication originating from the employer, other staff, parents / carers, students and or other members of the school community, including emails, texts, telephone calls, messages, video calls or sending or reviewing other messages.

4. RESPONSE TIMES

- 4.1 St Columban's College has an expectation that employees reply to electronic communication from the employer, students, parents/carers, colleagues or others will occur within their ordinary hours of work.
- 4.2 Where contact is made by the employer, students, parents, colleagues or others outside the span of hours outlined above, employees will respond within two business days, when reasonably practicable, with consideration to individual leave and flexible work arrangements.

- 4.3 Employees are encouraged to use email functions such as 'delay send' to avoid emailing colleagues out of ordinary work hours. Employees may like to consider using email notifications or signature blocks to indicate work hours and/or designated leave times.
- 4.4 Employees may be required to connect and/or respond outside the designated span of hours in circumstances such as:
- public emergencies
 - critical incidents
 - receiving information about expectations for the start of school terms or return from leave
 - where potential harm to others may otherwise result
 - where it may be necessary to comply with legal obligations
- 4.5 These protocols will commence on 1 October, 2024.

5. PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The Principal or delegate will be responsible for:
- communicating with parents / carers, students, staff and other members of the school community regarding the content and commencement date of these protocols
 - monitoring the compliance with these protocols
 - reviewing annually and consulting with employees on any changes made

6. IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 These protocols are subject to:
- a) other clauses in the relevant Enterprise Agreement; and
 - b) reasonable requirements that require an employee to provide any notification or otherwise communicate with an employer.

Example 1 – An employee has an obligation to notify an employer when accessing personal leave in accordance with clause 8.5 of the Enterprise Agreement.

Example 2 – An employee can be requested and reasonably required to communicate and provide medical information or attend a medical examination when on personal leave to enable an employer to consider a safe return to work, plan for the employee's further absence or review the capacity of the employee.

- 6.2 Concerns in relation to the implementation of these protocols can be raised with the Principal.

7. REFERENCES

- Catholic Employers Single Enterprise Agreement – Religious Institute/Diocesan Schools Queensland 2023-2026
- [Right to disconnect - Fair Work Ombudsman](#)