

INVER DESIGNS DAC

THE RIGHT TO DISCONNECT POLICY

Inver Designs DAC is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its employees. Disconnecting from work is vital for a person's wellbeing as well as sustaining a good work-life balance.

The company recognises that every employee has the right to, and should, disconnect from work outside of their normal working hours unless there is an emergency or agreement to do so, for example "while travelling with customers".

To show our support and encourage employees to disconnect from work and create a good work-life balance, whether an employee is working traditional hours in the workplace, working remotely or has a flexible working arrangement, we have developed this policy which is in line with best practice in support of an employee's right to disconnect.

What does the Right to Disconnect mean?

The Right to Disconnect refers to, *"an employee's right to be able to disengage from work and refrain from engaging in work-related electronic communications, such as emails, telephone calls or other messages, outside normal working hours"*.

Needs of the Business

Naturally there may, on occasions, be legitimate situations when it is necessary to contact colleagues/ clients/ customers outside of normal working hours, including but not limited to:

- Where unforeseeable circumstances may arise,
- Where an emergency may arise,
- Where business and operational reasons require contact out of normal working hours.

Although everyone should be mindful of the right to disconnect, it is important that we are also mindful that situations can arise where it is not possible to deal with matters during normal working hours.

Employer and Employee Obligations

To encourage a culture where employees feel they can disconnect from work, it is important that a joint approach from the company and employees is taken and that we recognise we all have obligations to achieve this.

Employer's Obligation

- Provide employees with written information on their working time, in accordance with the Terms of Employment Information Act, 1994 - 2014
- Provide employees with details of what their normal working hours are reasonably expected to be under the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018
- Ensure employees take rest periods, in accordance with the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997.
- Ensure a safe workplace, including reviewing their risk assessment and, where necessary, the safety statement, in line with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (SHWWA) and take account of our obligations under section 8(2)(b) of the SHWWA which extends to 'managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees at risk',
- To not penalise an employee for acting in compliance with this policy and any relevant provision or performing any duty or exercising any right under section 27 of SHWWA.

Employee's Obligations

- Ensure you manage your own working time while at work, take reasonable care to protect your safety, health and welfare and the health and safety of co-workers.
- To fully cooperate with any time recording methods which the company use to record working time including when working remotely.
- To be mindful of fellow colleagues', customers'/clients', and all others, right to disconnect (e.g., by not routinely emailing or calling outside normal working hours).
- To notify your manager, in writing, of any statutory rest period or break you were unable to receive on a particular occasion and the reason for not receiving such rest period or break.
- Be conscious of your work pattern and aware of your work-related wellbeing and taking remedial action if necessary.

Role of Management

Managers should be mindful of times emails are sent and should they notice that a member of their team is continually sending emails at odd hours, they should speak to the employee as soon as possible, as this may indicate they are finding it difficult to manage their workload during normal working hours.

Working Hours

Employee's working hours will naturally vary within the Company and everyone's working hours are set out in their Terms and Conditions of Employment. All employees have the right to disconnect in the context of their own normal working pattern and should you have any queries regarding this, please speak to your manager.

Communications

It is important all employee's personal time is respected, and everyone has the right to disconnect from work outside normal working hours. Therefore, where possible, e-mails etc. should be checked and/or sent only during normal working hours, whilst also appreciating that where work patterns differ, some employees may send communications at a time which is inconvenient to another i.e., where one employee works during the weekend, and another does not. Where this is the case, the sender should consider the timing of their communication and understand that the recipient will not be expected to respond until their return to work.

Where a manager sends communications outside normal working hours, unless business and operational needs dictate that an immediate response is required, employees do not need to respond to communications received outside normal working hours.

Automatic Replies

All employees are required to activate an automatic response to "my contacts only" in outlook when taking annual leave to cover the full period of annual leave being taken. The response should advise the sender that you are on annual leave, including the start and end date of the period of annual leave and that you will respond to their email on your return or alternative contact details should be provided in the automatic response.

Meeting

It is important that virtual and face to face communication is also respected and in this regard all employees should be mindful of the time of those whom they are inviting to attend a meeting, ensuring those invited play an active role and have something to contribute to the matters being discussed.

Handheld Devices

Some employees, depending on their role, may be provided with handheld devices such as mobile phone, laptop, tablet etc. It is important to be aware that these are provided to employees to allow flexibility in how such employees complete their work. This does not imply that the employee always makes themselves available for work.

Employee Wellbeing

As previously mentioned, the health and wellbeing of our employees is of great importance to Inver, and we strongly encourage our employees to adapt, if needed, and maintain a good work-life balance. Thus, we encourage all employees, including those who work remotely or work a flexible arrangement, to be proactive, to book in time with family/ friends or engage in an activity after their normal working day to allow themselves to switch off and disconnect from work.

In addition, it is important that those undertaking a flexible working arrangement or remote working, disconnect themselves from work and monitor their working hours and remember to take their breaks as this is also important for their own mind and wellbeing.

Raising Concerns

Should an employee have any issues in exercising their right to disconnect, they should raise this with their line manager immediately to resolve the issues on an informal basis.

Where the issue is unresolved or an agreement cannot be reached, the matter can be formally raised under the company Grievance Policy.

All employees are asked to co-operate with Inver Designs DAC management to achieve a healthy and safe workplace for all. Employees are asked to read this document carefully and understand their role in health and safety in Inver Designs DAC. This statement shall be reviewed annually, and changes shall be made at any time in the light of experience and developments at Inver Designs DAC or changes in legal requirements. Suggestions from staff are welcomed and encouraged so that this statement can be continuously improved.

Signed,



John O'Loughlin

Chief Executive