

*This resource is a sample after-hours communication policy developed by the Alliance for Action on Work-Life Harmony. Employers may adopt this sample policy to meet the needs of their workforce as necessary, including employees who are on Flexible Work Arrangements.*

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## Sample Policy for After-Hours Communication

### 1. Objective

The advent of connectivity technology and globalisation over the years has given rise to an 'Always On' work culture and environment that would adversely affect employee well-being. The purpose of the after-hours communication policy is to outline how **[Organisation Name]** can support work-life harmony for all employees as well as align to the recommendations<sup>1</sup> from the various government agencies and tripartite partners.

**[Organisation Name]** recognises the importance of establishing reasonable expectations for employees to achieve work-life harmony and wishes to establish an after-hours communication policy for all employees. There is a recognition that after-hours communication may not be entirely avoidable across the organisation due to the nature of different jobs but the policy's principles and intent should hold, where possible.

### 2. Nature of work

Whilst the policy is intended to cultivate a work culture conducive to support employees' well-being in **[Organisation Name]**, it is fully recognised that situations may arise when it is necessary to contact employees outside of stipulated working hours. It is also acknowledged that various roles are conducted in different ways such as telecommuting or flexible operation to be responsive to customer and business needs as required.

Examples of business-critical and/ or time-sensitive situations includes but are not limited to urgent matters or emergencies such as security breaches, equipment breakdown affecting business operations, health and safety issues, cybersecurity threats etc.

### 3. Expectations on after-hours communication

**[Organisation Name]** shall establish reasonable expectations for work-related communication after-hours and to communicate to existing and new employees upon hiring.

Supervisors should be mindful when communicating with employees after stipulated working hours regardless of the platform of communication, which includes: phone calls, SMS and messaging applications.

This policy should apply to employees who are on leave. These employees should not be contacted unless it is urgent and there is no other alternative.

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<sup>1</sup> For more recommendation, organisations may refer to the [Tripartite Advisory on Mental Well-being at Workplaces](#) or visit the Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP) at [www.tal.sg/tafep](http://www.tal.sg/tafep)

#### **4. Communication**

*[Organisation Name]* shall determine the mode of communications in various situations. In critical matters, required personnel may be contacted via *[organisation's established mode of contact]*.

When contacting others, the employer/employee shall clearly state (1) issue/ problem statement requiring urgent attention; (2) required actions; (3) time to complete and (4) desired outcome.

*[Organisation Name]* shall declare a list of persons from each department as the point of contact for critical business issues. This list shall be frequently reviewed and shared with all employees. Alternate arrangements such as team rosters shall be made available to all employees as well.

#### **5. Employee's responsibility**

Each employee shall understand the importance and parameters of the after-hours communication policy by:

- Keeping to his/her job scope deliverables in a timely manner so that the occurrences of important tasks escalating to critical and highly urgent stages can be minimised
- Respecting other employees' established working hours and to avoid routinely contacting them for work-related matters after hours
- Providing feedback to supervisor on parameters of the after-hours communication policy

#### **6. Human Resource Manager's responsibility**

The Human Resource Manager shall provide guidance on the organisation's after-hours communication policy by:

- Clearly stating the policy parameters, including likelihood of urgent cases occurring
- Incorporating the after-hours communication policy in material for various employment stages, including on-boarding processes
- Managing concerns and grievances on the implementation of this policy when matter is unable to be resolved between supervisor and employee
- Ensuring employees are not unduly penalised when they are unable to respond to work-related matters after-hours

#### **7. Pilot period – implementation**

When deemed necessary by the supervisor and the human resource manager, departments can proceed with a three-month trial to review and enhance the policy accordingly.

At the end of the trial period, the supervisor and the employees involved should complete an evaluation and make suitable recommendation for continuance of the policy in *[Organisation Name]*.