



YOUNG MEMBERS'  
**MENTAL HEALTH**  
MATTERS

# RIGHT TO **DISCONNECT**



  
**UNISON**  
*the public service union*

# YOUNG MEMBERS' MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

**In the last few years, the way we work has changed. Hybrid and remote working has many advantages, but it can also mean that the difference between personal and work life has blurred.**

The Right to Disconnect is the right not to receive or respond to work-related messages, phone calls and emails outside of work hours. Instead of being expected to check messages, answer phone calls and respond to emails, the Right to Disconnect sets out a clear distinction between work time and personal time.

This improves work-life balance. People can spend time with their families and loved ones without being disturbed by work messages. Research has shown that being expected to respond to messages outside of work hours can affect stress levels and cause anxiety and disturbed sleep.

There's also a fairness issue. An 'always on' work culture can be unfair to disabled workers, carers and women.

Many employers already have policies on the Right to Disconnect, but UNISON is calling for a change to the law, so that everyone can have a better work-life balance.

In some countries, this is already the case: France brought in a right to disconnect in 2018, and Ireland introduced this in 2021.

UNISON believes this should be the law here as well.