

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 10081**



---

**Introduced by Representative Rolando Ledesma Macasaet**

---

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

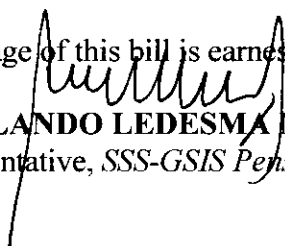
In today's increasingly digitalized workplace, the distinction between professional obligations and personal life has become progressively blurred. The widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICT), including electronic mail, instant messaging platforms, and video conferencing applications, has resulted in an environment where employees are often expected, whether expressly or implicitly, to remain constantly available beyond regular working hours. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as "*telepressure*," has contributed to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion among workers.

Numerous studies have shown that prolonged and excessive reliance on information and communication technologies (ICT) has contributed to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and other adverse psychological effects among individuals. In the workplace, employees are increasingly exposed to telepressure, which creates an expectation of constant availability and responsiveness beyond regular working hours. Such conditions undermine psychological well-being, impair work-life balance, and contribute to emotional exhaustion and burnout.

Constant digital connectivity undermines employees' ability to rest and recover, adversely affects mental well-being, and diminishes the work-life balance of the Filipino workforce. Existing studies likewise indicate that persistent telepressure creates anticipatory stress that may lead to anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

Pursuant to Section 3, Article XIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which mandates the State to afford full protection to labor and promote humane conditions of work, this measure seeks to recognize and institutionalize an employee's right to disconnect from work-related digital communications outside of regular working hours, subject to lawful and reasonable exceptions. By establishing a legal framework for the Right to Disconnect, this proposed Act aims to promote the mental health and well-being of employees, protect their personal and family life, and foster healthier, more humane, and sustainable working environments.

In view thereof, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**ROLANDO LEDESMA MACASAET**  
Representative, SSS-GSIS Pansiyonado Partylist

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 10081**

---

**Introduced by Representative Rolando Ledesma Macasaet**

---

1     **AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT TO DISCONNECT FOR EMPLOYEES,**  
2     **PROHIBITING WORK-RELATED ELECTRONICS COMMUNICATIONS**  
3     **OUTSIDE OF WORKING HOURS EXCEPT IN AUTHORIZED CIRCUMSTANCES,**  
4     **PROVIDING FOR ITS ENFORCEMENT, AND PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR**  
5     **VIOLATIONS THEREOF**

6     *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippine Congress*  
7     *assembled:*

8     **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the "**Right to Disconnect Act of**  
9     **2026.**"

10    **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – Pursuant to Section 3, Article XIII of the Philippine  
11    Constitution, the State shall afford full protection to labor by promoting humane working  
12    conditions and protection of workers' welfare.

13    It is the policy of the State to safeguard the mental health, well-being, and work-life balance of  
14    employees by formalizing their right to mentally and digitally "switch off" from work-related  
15    communications during non-working hours.

16    **SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall be  
17    defined as follows:

18    (a) *Right to Disconnect* – refers to the right of an employee to refuse, ignore, postpone, or  
19    decline to read, monitor, receive, acknowledge, or respond to work-related electronic  
20    communications outside official working hours without suffering any adverse employment  
21    consequence.

22    (b) *Work-Related Electronic Communication* – refers to any communication concerning an  
23    employee's official duties, assignments, instructions, meetings, reports, compliance  
24    requirements, or other work-related matters transmitted through electronic mail, telephone or  
25    cellular calls, text messaging, web-based or application-based messaging services, video  
26    conferencing platforms, collaboration software, or any similar present or future digital  
27    communication technology.

28    (c) *Non-Working Hours* – refers to all periods outside an employee's official working hours as  
29    prescribed by law, employment contract, Civil Service rules, collective bargaining agreement,  
30    company policy, or lawful work schedule, including meal breaks, rest periods, weekly rest  
31    days, holidays, approved leaves, and other periods during which the employee is not required

to render service.

(d) *Emergency* – Refers to an unforeseen, sudden, and urgent situation that poses an immediate threat to life, public safety, health, or causes a critical, unavoidable disruption to core business operations.

(e) *On-Call Employee* – an employee who is officially designated by the employer to remain available to return to work or handle urgent duties during a specific period outside of regular working hours.

**SECTION 4. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to all employees in the public and private sectors regardless of employment status, position, rank, or mode of engagement, including but not limited to the following:

(a) Permanent, regular, probationary, casual, contractual, project-based, seasonal, fixed-term, part-time, job order, Remote work arrangements, hybrid work arrangements, flexible work arrangements;

(b) Contract of Service (COS);

(c) Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations (GOCC's);

(d) Local Government Units (LGU's);

(e) State University and Colleges (SUC's);

(f) Constitutional Commissions; and

(g) Private Establishments.

**SECTION 5. Right to Disconnect** – Employees shall have the explicit right to refuse to monitor, read, or respond to work-related communications outside of their designated working hours.

**SECTION 6. Prohibited Acts.** – It shall be unlawful for any employer, supervisor, manager, head of office, or authorized representative to:

(a) Contact an employee through any work-related electronic communication beyond official working hours, except as provided under Section (12) of this Act;

(b) Make after-hours availability or responsiveness a condition for hiring, promotion, renewal of appointment, incentives, performance evaluation, or continued employment;

(c) Require an employee to install, maintain, or use work-related communication platforms on any personal or employer-issued device for the purpose of requiring responses beyond official working hours;

**SECTION 7. Statutory Presumption Against After-Hours Communication.** – Employers, managers, and supervisors shall generally refrain from contacting employees through digital communication channels outside official working hours.

**SECTION 8. *Mandatory Company-Level Right to Disconnect Policies.*** – All employers shall, in consultation with employee representatives or through collective bargaining, formulate and implement a written Right to Disconnect Policy. These policies must explicitly specify:

- (a) Authorized digital communication channels for work-related matters;
- (b) Clear response expectations and timelines during regular work hours and complete restriction during off-hours;
- (c) Standard emergency protocols and escalation procedures; and
- (d) Measures to respect rest periods, vacation leave, and personal/family life.

**SECTION 9. *Compensation for After-Hours Digital Work.*** – Any employee who is contractually required or authorized under strict exceptions to monitor or respond to work-related digital communications during after-work hours shall be rightfully compensated with:

- (a) Overtime Pay in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 442 (Labor Code of the Philippines) for the actual time spent reviewing and responding to the communication;
- (b) An On-Call Allowance for hours spent waiting for potential communications; or
- (c) Compensatory Time-Off to balance the disrupted personal time.

**SECTION 10. *Anti-Retaliation Provision.*** – No employer shall subject an employee to retaliation, intimidation, or any form of administrative or disciplinary action for exercising their Right to Disconnect. Prohibited retaliatory actions include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Demotions or reduction in salary/benefits;
- (b) Negative performance evaluations based solely on after-hours unavailability;
- (c) Written warnings or suspension; and
- (d) Denial of promotion or career advancement opportunities.

**SECTION 11. *Complaint and Dispute Resolution Mechanism.*** – Any employee whose rights under this Act have been violated may file a grievance or complaint through the following channels:

- (a) The company's internal grievance machinery or human resource channels;
- (b) The Single-Entry Approach (SEnA) under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for rapid conciliation and mediation; and

(c) The National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) for adjudication if a settlement is not achieved through SEnA.

**SECTION 12. Exemptions.** – The provisions of this Act shall not apply to personnel performing frontline emergency and public safety functions whose duties necessarily require immediate response outside official working hours, including members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, the Bureau of Fire Protection, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, emergency medical responders, disaster risk reduction and management personnel, and other similarly situated personnel as may be determined under the Implementing Rules and Regulations and whenever the following circumstances occur:

(a) Where there exists an actual or imminent threat to life, health, public safety, or property;

(b) During a declared state of calamity or national emergency;

(c) Where the employee has been lawfully designated as on-call and is entitled to corresponding compensation under existing laws, rules, regulations, or employment agreements;

(d) To personnel performing frontline emergency and public safety functions whose duties necessarily require immediate response outside official working hours.

The employer shall bear the burden of proving that any communication made beyond official working hours falls within the foregoing exemptions.

**SECTION 13. Administrative Fines** – Any violation of the prohibited acts under Section 6 of this Act shall be subject to the following administrative penalties:

(a) First offense – A fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00);

(b) Second offense – A fine of One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00);

(c) Third and subsequent offenses – A fine of Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00) and, where applicable, recommendation for the suspension or revocation of the employer's business permit or appropriate operating authority, without prejudice to other liabilities provided under existing laws.

Each affected employee shall constitute a separate violation.

**SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).** – Within ninety (90) days from the effectiveness of this Act, the Secretary of Labor and Employment shall, in consultation with labor unions, civil society organizations, and employer federations, promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to effectively implement the provisions of this Act. Mandated that employers shall provide annual written notice informing employees of their rights under this Act.

**SECTION 15. Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

**SECTION 17. Repealing Clause.** – Presidential Decree No. 442 (The Labor Code of the

Philippines) and all other laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

**SECTION 18. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.