

	Administrative Regulation	
	Policy#	2.3
	Effective:	03/23/2021
	Revised:	02/05/2025
<h1>Workplace Relationships</h1>		Owner: Human Resources

Note: Terms in **bold** and *italics* throughout this policy are defined below.

PURPOSE:

To foster a positive and professional work environment that supports employee well-being and minimizes real or perceived conflicts of interest.

SCOPE:

This regulation applies to all City employees, volunteers, and elected officials.

POLICY:

Employees are encouraged to consider any possible ***conflict of interest*** before entering a ***personal relationship*** with coworkers. Employees who enter a personal relationship with a colleague must maintain professionalism and keep personal matters separate from workplace interaction. Employees in ***supervisory*** roles must not engage in personal relationships with those they supervise or whose employment conditions they may influence, including decisions related to hiring, promoting, disciplining and compensating.

The City also prohibits relationships between individuals in inherently unequal positions where one party has real or perceived authority, influence, or power over the other's employment conditions or career progression, includes both formal and informal supervisory relationships.

PROCEDURE:

1. Disclosure Requirements

- 1.1. Employees who enter into a personal relationship with a colleague must promptly inform their direct supervisor.
- 1.2. Employees who become aware of a supervisor engaging in personal relationships with someone in their ***chain of supervision*** must report it to Human Resources (HR).

2. Professionalism in the Workplace

- 2.1. Employees must maintain professional conduct and refrain from behaviors that may make others uncomfortable, such as public displays of affection, flirting, or inappropriate language.

- 2.2. Management personnel are expected to model appropriate professional behavior in all work-related settings and avoid behaviors that could be perceived as inappropriate or unprofessional.

3. **Addressing Workplace Impact**

- 3.1. When a personal relationship is disclosed, HR and department leadership will assess and address any potential conflicts. Steps may include, but are not limited to:
 - 3.1.1. Reassignment of one employee to another department role.
 - 3.1.2. Removing a supervisor from decision-making authority over the other employee.
- 3.2. If a supervisor relationship exists between two employees in a personal relationship, the City and the employees will explore potential transfer options. If no suitable solution is available:
 - 3.2.1. One employee must resign within 180 days of notification.
 - 3.2.2. The City may adjust supervisory reporting relationship to maintain impartiality.
 - 3.2.3. If no alternative position is available, the supervisor may be subject to a demotion or, at the discretion of the City Manager, termination.
- 3.3. Employees involved in a personal relationship may be asked to sign an acknowledgment confirming their understanding of workplace expectations.

4. **Guidelines for Supervisors**

- 4.1. Supervisors must recognize that personal relationships with subordinates can lead to concerns about favoritism, misuse of authority, or workplace discomfort.
- 4.2. Supervisors should avoid social interactions with direct reports that could be perceived as inappropriate or compromise workplace integrity.

5. **Prior Relationships**

- 5.1. If a supervisor has had a prior relationship with a subordinate, they should not participate in employment decisions affecting that individual, whenever possible.

6. **Non-retaliation**

- 6.1. The City prohibits retaliation against employees who report concerns or participate in investigations related to this policy. Any retaliatory conduct will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

DEFINITIONS:

1. ***“Chain of Supervision”*** is a reporting structure in which one employee directly or indirectly supervises another employee.
2. ***“Conflict of Interest”*** is a situation where an employee’s personal interests could interfere with (or appear to interfere with) their ability to make objective work-related decisions.
3. ***“Employee”*** is any individual working for the City, including elected officials, volunteers, interns, or contractors.
4. ***“Personal Relationship”*** is one involving dating, cohabitating, domestic partnership, or any intimate or financial connection within the past twelve (12) months.
5. ***“Supervisor”*** is any individual responsible for overseeing, directing, or evaluating another employee’s work, including but not limited to managers, directors, and team leads.

RESOURCES:

Administrative Regulations:

1. [Standards of Conduct](#)
2. [Hiring of Family Members](#)
3. [Respectful Place to Work](#)