

**POLICY NO. 615**

Area: Human Resources

*Original signature on file in the  
Office of General Counsel*

Date Adopted: May 20, 2003

Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtis Pettis, Vice President and CFO  
Administration and Finance

Revisions Approved: November 14, 2019; April 26, 2024

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Subject: **POLICY ON NEPOTISM AND CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

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A. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the position of the University on employing relatives and other close associates of an employee. This policy applies to all University employees who are involved in the hire and supervision of employees.

B. Policy

The University must avoid any conflicts of interest in the hire and supervision of, or interactions with, a family member, near relative, close friend, spouse, partner or personal associate in the same organizational unit or elsewhere in the University.

Close personal relationships, whether family or otherwise, shall constitute neither an advantage nor a deterrent to appointment or hire by the University, provided the individual meets and fulfills the appropriate University appointment standards and qualifications for the position.

However, no individual shall be assigned to a department or unit under the direct supervision of an employee with whom he or she has a family or close personal relationship, or where an employee has or may have direct effect on that individual's progress or performance. A conflict of interest can arise where an employee makes or participates in employment decisions affecting another person with whom the employee has a family or other close personal relationship, as identified and defined in this policy. Where such a conflict arises, the employee must declare the interest and withdraw from the hire and supervision of the employee or otherwise adhere to this policy.

C. Definitions

Under the above policy the following definitions are applicable:

- Family relationship includes father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister.
- Close personal relationship includes anyone who has such a close association,

family connection, or the like, with a University employee, that it creates a conflict of interest for the University employee who cannot then be appropriately impartial and objective regarding hiring or other employment decisions pertaining to that person.

- Supervision is generally defined as the authority to schedule, assign, evaluate, commend, reward, promote, relieve, discipline, censure, demote, remove another employee, or substantially influence such action for or against an employee.

#### D. Disclosure Required

Both the hiring supervisor and the candidate for employment must disclose any family or close personal relationship with anyone else employed with the University, even if not involving or contemplating a potential supervisor and subordinate relationship at that time. Any family or close personal relationship not disclosed but later discovered may be addressed through transfer or as a disciplinary matter up to and including discharge/termination.

Family or other close personal relationships that occur during employment must be immediately disclosed by the employees involved, or any other employee who discovers or learns of it. Every attempt to avoid the supervisor and subordinate relationship between the employees involved will be made at that time (i.e., transfer or realignment), with termination of one of the employees involved being the option of last resort.

#### E. Non-Participation on Selection Committee or in Hiring Decision

All hiring decisions must be based on merit and within the qualifications and selection criteria for the position. An employee with any conflict of interest due to a relationship with a candidate must declare it and cannot participate on the selection committee or otherwise participate in, or influence, the hiring decision. If the area of expertise of the position is so narrow that an employee with a family or personal relationship with the candidate must be involved in the hiring process for the candidate, the Director of Human Resources, Provost, Chief of Staff, or other Vice President must be notified, as appropriate, so that leadership can oversee and ensure the integrity of the hiring process.

#### F. Recommendations

If an employee has a recommendation regarding a candidate, the employee may share that information with anyone involved in the hiring decision. The recommendation may be taken under consideration.