

Memo to: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders
From: Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, President
Subject: Nepotism Policy

UH-Downtown/PS 02.A.03
Issue No. 15
Effective date: 04/20/2023
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Nepotism in employment is a violation of state law, University of Houston System Board of Regents Policy, and University of Houston System Policy. This Policy Statement describes the employment conditions that are covered by these regulations and the sanctions for violation of these regulations.
- 1.2 This policy statement has been developed to avoid possible conflicts of interest, which could result from related persons exercising peer judgment or administrative review of matters pertaining to employment, retention, promotion, or salary determination.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Nepotism: Nepotism is defined as favoritism shown to a relative by employment on the basis of relationship.
- 2.2 Relative: For purposes of this policy, relative is defined as anyone related to the employee within the second degree of kinship or the third degree of lineage and includes the following relations:
 - 2.2.1 The employee's spouse;
 - 2.2.2 The employee or the spouse's natural and adopted children, parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, brothers, sisters, half brothers and sisters, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, first cousins, and second cousins; and persons married to them.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 Relatives of members of the University of Houston System Board of Regents shall not be employed by the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) unless the employment took place at least one year prior to the appointment of the Board member.
- 3.2 Relatives of other University of Houston System and UHD employees shall not be employed by UHD in positions where the employee has the official authority to hire, recommend or approve the hiring, salary, or promotion of the relative.

- 3.3 Relatives of UHD employees shall not be employed by UHD in a supervisory-subordinate relationship even if it results from marriage after the employment relationship was formed.
 - 3.3.1 The supervisory-subordinate relationship shall be interpreted to include all levels of line administrative supervisors, from the lowest to the highest, not just the immediate supervisor.
 - 3.3.2 If two UHD employees marry, both may not continue to hold such positions beyond the specific appointment period if the continued employment of the married persons violates the supervisory-subordinate relationship policy.
- 3.4 The provision of the nepotism policy applies to all positions, full-and part-time, regular and temporary, regardless of funding source.
- 3.5 Violation of the nepotism statute is a misdemeanor. Employees violating the statute are subject to a fine and reassignment and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination. Violators may constitute one of the following:
 - 3.5.1 An employee knowingly approves the employment, reemployment, change in status, compensation, or dismissal of a relative,
 - 3.5.2 An employee who doesn't divulge he/she is a relative of a prospective employee, or
 - 3.5.3 An applicant who doesn't divulge he/she is a relative of a current UHD employee or a relative of one of the members of the University of Houston System Board of Regents.
- 3.6 This policy in no way affects the fundamental provisions of equal employment opportunity at UHD.
- 3.7 The responsibility for checking applications to ascertain that all who are hired at UHD meet the requirements of the University's nepotism policy shall rest with the hiring manager or supervisor.
- 3.8 The Vice President for the Office of Human Resources (VPHR) is responsible for interpreting the UHD nepotism policy.
- 3.9 The VPHR is responsible for including the University's nepotism policy in the staff handbook.
- 3.10 The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, or designee, is responsible for including the University's nepotism policy in the faculty handbook.

3.11 The Vice President for Student Life and Student Success is responsible for referencing the University's nepotism policy in the student handbook.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 The responsibility for checking if applicants for faculty, staff and student positions meet the requirements of the University's nepotism policy shall rest with the hiring manager.

4.1.1 Applicants for employment at UHD (for faculty, staff, temporary and student worker positions) are required to declare if they are related by blood or marriage to UHD employees, as well as the University of Houston System Board of Regents. The hiring manager must ensure that applicants are screened carefully to avoid violating this policy.

4.1.2 The Office of Human Resources will verify that hiring managers are in compliance with this policy when extending an employment offer.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Vice President for Office of Human Resources

Review: Every three years on or before February 1st.

Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 08/11/81

Issue #2: 08/11/83

Issue #3: 10/19/84

Issue #4: 05/15/85

Issue #5: 06/11/86

Issue #6: 09/15/88

Issue #7: 12/20/94

Issue #8: 08/09/99

Issue #9: 04/08/02

Issue #10: 05/24/04

Issue #11: 11/26/08

Issue #12: 02/17/11

Issue #13: 03/09/15

Issue #14: 08/20/18

7. REFERENCES

[UH System Administrative Memorandum 02.A.21](#)

[UH System Board of Regents Policy 57.07](#)

[Texas Government Code Chapter 573](#)