

Iowa County Nepotism and Fraternization Policy

February 2010

This policy applies to all Iowa County employees receiving remuneration from the County unless this Policy conflicts with the provisions of an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Purpose:

Iowa County recognizes that in order to fulfill its mission of efficiently and effectively serving the public interest, the County's employees must be free from both perceived and actual conflicts of interest. In particular, certain personal and business relationships between County employees may jeopardize public trust in the County, and negatively impact the County's operations. Compliance with this policy is intended to prevent the perception of favoritism among employees and promote a harassment-free working environment

Policy:

It is the policy of the County to restrict the employment of decision-makers involving close relatives, or employees dating or otherwise involved in an intimate relationship with the same department, shift and/or work unit.

Definitions:

1. "Immediate Family" For the exclusive purpose of the Nepotism & Fraternization Policy, the term "immediate family" is defined as an employee's spouse, mother, father, guardian, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild, and grandparent, as well as the various combinations of half, step, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from the family members named herein.
2. "Intimate Relationship" The term "intimate relationship" is defined as an employee's spouse, live-in companion, fiancée, or a dating couple.
3. "Dating" is one or more social meetings under circumstances that may lead to the exchange of personal affection, romantic, emotional attachment and/or sexual or physical intimacy.

Rules of Conduct:

1. No member of an immediate family or intimate relationship shall be involved in decision making or serve as decision-makers concerning another member of the immediate family or an intimate relationship, unless written approval is received from the County Administrator

2. When evaluating these requests, the County Administrator may consider work location, shift, the department in which the individual would work, the number of available qualified applicants, and whether normal recruitment and selection procedures have been followed, to ensure that all applicants have had an equal opportunity to apply for the position. Finally, the County Administrator may consider whether it is a sound business practice to have members of an immediate family or intimate relationship serve as decision-makers concerning another member of the immediate family or an intimate relationship, and whether or not reasonable measures can be taken to alleviate any problems or appearance of impropriety.
3. Due to the nature of their respective responsibilities with all Iowa County departments' operations, both the Finance Director and Personnel Director are prohibited from immediate family members, or persons with whom they have an intimate relationship being employed by Iowa County.
4. In the event a relationship develops between a manager or supervisor and an employee under their supervision, the management employee is responsible for bringing the matter to the attention of their immediate supervisor.
5. In the event a relationship develops between employees in a department, shift, and/or work unit, it is the responsibility of those employees for bringing the matter to the attention of their immediate supervisor.
6. Any violation of the terms of this Policy or failure to fulfill one's obligations under this Policy may result in reassignment and/or discipline, up to and including termination, as the County deems appropriate under the circumstances.
7. Iowa County Board of Supervisors may not participate in any County employment selection process that includes applicants who are an immediate family member or who they are involved in an intimate relationship with. Consistent with the terms of the Iowa County Ethics Ordinance, Iowa County Board of Supervisors may not participate in any official action that substantially affects the work responsibilities, salary, hours, career progress, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment of an immediate family member. In such cases where a possible conflict of interest occurs, the County Board member must recuse themselves from that official action.

This Policy supersedes the Nepotism Policy included in PART II G of the *Iowa County Personnel Policies for Management and Non-Represented Employees*. This does not affect requirements under the County's *Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Policy*.