

	Nepotism	
	Section No: 1.05	
	Category: Employment Policies	
	Resolution Number: 257-2026	
	Effective Date: September 1, 2026	
	Supersedes: former Section 29, Resolution 2009-195 – March 24, 2009	
	Next Review Date: September 1, 2028	
	Responsible Office: Human Resources	
Policy Applies to:	☒ All City employees (Full-time, Part-time, LSEs, temps, etc.) ☐ All City and School Employees	☐ Full-Time employees only ☐ Other: _____

Relevant Definitions

For purposes of this policy, an **immediate family** member includes:

- Spouse
- Domestic partner, where recognized by law
- Parent, stepparent, or legal guardian
- Child, stepchild, foster child, or legal ward
- Sibling, half-sibling, or stepsibling
- Grandparent
- Grandchild
- Mother-in-law, father-in-law
- Son-in-law, daughter-in-law
- Brother-in-law, sister-in-law
- Any individual residing in the employee's household
- Any individual for whom the employee has a legal or financial responsibility

Personal Relationship includes individuals who are engaged, dating, involved in a romantic relationship, or have a relationship that could reasonably create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Policy

The City prohibits employment practices that create a conflict of interest or the appearance of favoritism due to family or personal relationships. Employees are expected to avoid situations in which personal relationships could improperly influence, or appear to influence, employment decisions or the administration of City business.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit the employment of qualified individuals who are related to current employees, provided the employment does not create a conflict of interest or violate the provisions of this policy.

Employment Restrictions

The City will not permit an employee to:

- Directly supervise - including **within their chain of command, or** evaluate an immediate family member or an individual with whom the employee has a personal relationship.
- Participate in decisions regarding the hiring, promotion, transfer, discipline, compensation, scheduling, evaluation, termination, or other employment actions involving an immediate family member or person with whom the employee has a personal relationship.
- Influence or attempt to influence employment decisions involving an immediate family member or **with whom the employee has a** personal relationship.
- Participate in procurement, contracting, purchasing, or financial decisions that provide a direct personal benefit to an immediate family member or individual with whom the employee has a personal relationship.

Disclosure Requirement

Employees are required to promptly disclose any family or personal relationship that may create an actual or perceived conflict of interest under this policy.

Applicants are expected to disclose relationships with current City employees during the hiring process if the relationship could create a conflict under this policy.

Failure to disclose a relationship that results in a conflict of interest may result in corrective action.

Existing Employees

If a prohibited relationship develops after employment begins, including through marriage, domestic partnership, or another qualifying relationship, the affected employee(s) must notify the Human Resources Director as soon as practicable.

The City will review the circumstances and determine the appropriate action to eliminate the conflict of interest. Depending on operational needs and available opportunities, this may include:

- Reassignment of supervisory responsibilities;
- Transfer to another position or department;
- Modification of reporting relationships;
- Recusal from employment-related decisions; or
- Other appropriate measures.

The City cannot guarantee that a transfer or reassignment will be available.

Hiring and Promotion

Employment decisions involving an applicant or employee with a family or personal relationship to a current employee shall be based solely on qualifications, experience, and the needs of the City.

Individuals participating in the hiring process must disclose any conflict of interest and recuse themselves from all discussions, interviews, evaluations, recommendations, and employment decisions involving the related applicant or employee.

Exceptions

The City Manager may approve a limited exception to this policy when it is determined that:

- No actual conflict of interest exists;
- Appropriate safeguards can be implemented to eliminate the appearance of favoritism;
- The exception is in the best interest of the City; and
- The Human Resources Director concurs that the exception complies with applicable law and City policy.

Any approved exception must be documented in writing.

Administration

The Human Resources Department is responsible for interpreting and administering this policy and may require employees to provide information necessary to evaluate potential conflicts of interest.

Consequences of Policy Violation

Violations of this policy, including the failure to disclose a prohibited relationship or participation in employment decisions involving an immediate family member or personal relationship, may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Related Information or Procedures:

N/A

Other Provisions:

Nothing in this policy should be construed to conflict with or supersede state or federal law, or as interfering with the constitutional rights of employees.

While the city is committed to the principles embodied in this policy, the policy itself is not intended to state contractual terms and does not constitute a contract between the city and its employees. Furthermore, this statement constitutes ONLY the policy of the city. A finding of a violation of this policy does not mean that the conduct violates state and/or federal laws.

Contacts

The Human Resources Office can address questions regarding this Policy: phone: (423) 229-9401, email: HROffice@kingsporttn.gov