



Anti-Nepotism Policy

Policy Number:	HR-HC-002
Department:	Human Resources
Section:	Hiring at the City
Subject:	Anti-Nepotism
Effective Date:	January 1, 2012
Revision Date:	January 1, 2024

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Consistent with the principle that City employees and prospective employees will be selected, evaluated, and advanced on the basis of individual merit, the City aims to eliminate the influence and/or perception of nepotism in City hiring and employment related decisions to maintain confidence in the integrity of our employment practices.

SCOPE

1. This policy applies to all potential employees and existing employees at the City.
2. For the purposes of this policy, the following relationships are considered to be a 'related person':
 - i. Parent and child,
 - ii. Brother and sister,
 - iii. Grandparent and grandchild,
 - iv. Aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, and cousin,
 - v. Spouse and common-law partner,
 - vi. Guardian and ward, and
 - vii. Partner.

* All the above include both 'step' and 'in law' relationship where applicable.

DEFINITIONS

Direct Relationship – A reporting relationship where an individual has the authority to direct and control the activities and work assignments of another employee, participate in the performance review, approve merit increases, administer coaching or disciplinary action, approve time away from work and/or approve overtime, to name a few examples. For the purposes of this policy, a unionized employee who regularly directs the work of another unionized employee would be considered a direct reporting relationship with the employee.



Indirect Relationship – A reporting relationship that involves individuals reporting through a Lead Hand or Foreperson/Supervisor to a Manager, Senior Manager, Department Head, Executive Director/General Manager or Chief Executive Officer (CAO) wherein the higher-level management employee has the authority to make decisions associated with employees in their respective work units. For example, an employee who works in the Water Operations Branch and who takes direction from a Lead Hand would be in an indirect reporting relationship with the Supervisor, Manager, Department Head, General Manager and/or CAO.

Nepotism – Favouritism granted to a 'related person', usually in the form of hiring practices or other employment related decisions without regard or with lesser regard to the individual's merit, qualifications, or performance.

Partner – For the purposes of this policy, partner means an intimate relationship with another person that falls outside of a formal marital or common law relationship.

PROCEDURE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employment related decisions concerning existing or potential City employees are free from any real or perceived improper influence based on relationships.

1. A conflict of interest exists when an employee is in a direct or indirect reporting relationship with a 'related person' as defined within the scope of this policy. As a result, employees at the City should not be in a direct or indirect reporting relationship with a 'related person'. At the same time, it is recognized that the City should not improperly restrict an individual's opportunity to pursue employment or changes in employment at the City as long as there is no conflict of interest.
2. Employees who become a 'related person' over the course of their employment may continue as employees if no conflict of interest exists, meaning that there is no direct or indirect reporting relationship. If there is a direct or indirect reporting relationship between the two 'related persons', the employees will both complete and submit a Conflict of Interest Notification Form and submit to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). A decision on next steps will be determined by the CAO, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources.
3. The hiring process promotes equitable employment opportunities and candidates are selected in accordance with the Hiring at the City Policy. At no time should an employee attempt to use a relationship to influence the hiring process. 'Related persons' will not participate in any component of the hiring process, including being a member of the selection committee or involved in any decisions or recommendations associated with the other related person's employment. Should an employee in Human Resources be involved in the recruitment process or have access to recruitment documents through their normal course of work and a 'related person' is considering applying for a position with the City, the employee will complete a Conflict of Interest Notification Form and submit to the Director of Human Resources as soon as the employee becomes aware of the possible conflict of interest.
4. Related persons will not participate in or be privy to any performance evaluations or decisions related to promotion, compensation, hours of work or other conditions of employment of the other related person.



5. In the event of a lack of candidates, a need for specialized skills, short term assignments of less than sixty (60) calendar days or other unique circumstances as determined on a case-by-case basis, the restriction against hiring related persons may be waived in the best interest of the City upon the approval of the CAO in consultation with the Director of Human Resources. In this case, the applicable candidate/employee(s) will be required to submit a Conflict of Interest Notification Form and a management plan will be required to outline supervision and evaluation procedures that will mitigate possible conflicts of interest.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee

It is the responsibility of the employee to:

- a. Understand and comply with the policy associated with Anti-Nepotism; and
- b. Immediately disclose any potential conflicts by completing a Conflict of Interest Notification Form, where applicable.

Department Management

It is the responsibility of Department Management to:

- a. Understand and comply with the policy associated with Anti-Nepotism; and
- b. Ensure that employees are not hired into positions where their duties would create a conflict of interest with a related person.

Human Resources

It is the responsibility of Human Resources to:

- a. Provide guidance and advice associated with the policy related to Anti-Nepotism; and
- b. Work with the hiring manager to ensure that employees are not hired into positions where their duties would create a conflict of interest with a related person.

REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

1. Code of Conduct Policy
2. Hiring at the City Policy
3. Conflict of Interest Notification Form
4. *Ontario Human Rights Code*