

Nepotism Policy

Effective Date: Adopted 1/87; Revised: 8/89, 12/90, 6/92, 5/95, 12/96, 4/97, 3/17

§-I. PURPOSE

To provide regulations concerning the employment of relatives within the same department. In adopting a nepotism policy, the County has legitimate interests in attempting to discourage and prevent certain behaviors and/or issues, including, conflicts of interest, the appearance or existence of favoritism, family conflicts, and the appearance, existence or toleration of harassment or discrimination in the workplace.

§-II. SCOPE

All employees of the Board of Commissioners, including full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal employees, employees on restricted duty, and employees in secondary employment jobs of an official capacity.

§-III. DEFINITIONS

Direct chain-of-command relationship applies to Department of Public Safety employees. For the purposes of Police and Fire & Emergency Services, the direct chain of command includes all ranks up to and including Police Major and Fire Battalion Chief. For the purposes of E-911, the direct chain of command includes all ranks up to and including Assistant Director.

Family member is defined as a spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, step-parent, stepchild, step-sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, half-brother, half-sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law. These relationships shall include those arising from adoption.

Personnel actions and investigations include, but are not limited to, hiring decision, promotions/assessments, pay raises, transfers, duty assignments, disciplinary and/or corrective actions, and workplace investigations.

Secondary Employment of an Official Capacity applies to sworn or certified (i.e., P.O.S.T. certification or certification by the State of Georgia) employees of the Department of Public Safety, and is defined as work for an employer other than the department during off-duty hours involving the performance of duties in the employee's certified capacity.

Work Location is defined as the geographic location where an employee is ordinarily assigned or reports to work or as otherwise designated by management

§-IV. POLICY

This policy is intended to ensure that employees who are family members will not directly supervise or report to one another, will not participate in personnel actions or investigations involving another family member, and will not otherwise exercise influence over another family member's employment.

Cobb County prohibits (1) the hiring or continued employment of a family member to work on the same shift and in the same work location as another family member, (2) the hiring or continued employment of a family member that would result in a supervisory/subordinate or direct chain-of-command relationship (3) the participation by a family member in a workplace investigation of an employment matter or in proposing or effecting any personnel actions involving another family member, and (4) family members performing Secondary Employment of an Official Capacity for the same employer at the same location during the same hours.

§-V. PROCEDURES

- A. Disclosure of Family Member Relationships. Applicants for employment must disclose the identity of family members working in the department for which they are applying. Employees who become family members following their employment must disclose the identity of other family members working in the same department.

Employees in the same department who plan to marry must notify the Department/Agency Director as soon as possible, but in any event no later than the date of their marriage, to allow for the department to make sufficient arrangements consistent with this policy.

Applicants or employees who fail to disclose their relationships with family members employed in the same department may be subject to disqualification, corrective action, or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

B. Family Member Relationships Arising After Employment. In the event employees become family members after their dates of employment, the following procedures shall apply:

- (1) If the new family member relationship results in a supervisory or chain-of-command conflict, the department has discretion to make employment decisions and/or assignments consistent with Section IV of this policy.
- (2) If no supervisory or chain-of-command conflict exists, the department has discretion to make employment decisions and/or assignments consistent with Section IV of this policy.
- (3) Where feasible, the department may transfer or reassign any family member (other than those already employed on the effective date of this revision) to avoid any direct supervision, and to comply with this policy within thirty (30) days, and shall provide at least a ten (10) day notice to the employee of the new assignment.
- (4) If a transfer or reassignment cannot be arranged, either person may resign. If neither person chooses to resign, the less senior employee with the department shall be separated from his/her employment.

C. Secondary Employment.

The department shall not approve a request to engage in Secondary Employment of an Official Capacity where one family member would supervise another family member or where family members would work for the same employer at the same location during the same hours.

D. If an investigation and/or personnel action involves a family member under the chain of command of another family member (who would ordinarily be the decision-maker), the higher ranking decision-making employee shall recuse him/herself from any involvement in the personnel action and investigation.