

**YAKIMA COUNTY
NEPOTISM POLICY
POLICY NO. HR - 017**

I. PURPOSE

In its employment practices, Yakima County seeks those persons best qualified to fulfill its service obligations to the citizens of the County. Accordingly, members of the same family may be employed by the County when it has been determined that they are the most qualified candidates for the positions. However, a person may not be hired, transferred or promoted to a position that would result in a relationship where the employee is involved in the recruitment, screening, appointment, termination of appointment, promotion, demotion, approval of salary increase or decrease, supervision, or evaluation of a member of the employee's immediate family or of a person with whom the employee shares an intimate relationship or a substantial economic interest. Otherwise, family relationships shall not be used as a basis for granting or denying employment rights, privileges, or benefits.

This policy supersedes all previous Nepotism policies. Provisions of negotiated labor contracts which conflict with this policy take precedence over this policy to the extent applicable.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Nepotism: The practice of showing favoritism to relatives in hiring and employment practices.
- B. Member of the immediate Family: For purposes of this policy, the term "member of the immediate family" is defined as:
1. Spouse - a person who is a husband or a wife through marriage.
 2. Registered Domestic Partner – an unmarried partner as defined in Chapter 26.60 of the Revised Code of Washington whose partnership has been recorded in the Washington Domestic Partnership Registry.
 3. Parent –the biological or adoptive parent of the employee.
 4. Parent-in-law –the parent of a Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner
 5. Child –the natural born, adopted or foster child of the employee or of the Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner
 6. Sister –the sister of the employee who is related by blood or adoption.
 7. Brother –the brother of the employee who is related by blood or adoption.
 8. Sister-in-law –the sister of the Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner.
 9. Brother-in-law –the brother of the Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner.
 10. Grandparent –the grandparent of the employee.
 11. Grandchild –the Grandchild of the employee.
 12. Any person with whom the employee has a personal relationship of a consensual romantic or sexual nature.

III. POLICY

- A. An applicant for a job with an office or department of Yakima County may not be hired if that applicant has a member of his or her immediate family working in the same office or department and the employed member of his or her immediate family would be responsible, in whole or in part, for supervision of the job applicant or auditing his or her work if said applicant were to be hired.
- B. An applicant for a job with Yakima County or an employee of Yakima County may not be hired, promoted, or assigned to a position wherein he or she would have supervisory or audit responsibilities over a member of his or her immediate family.
- C. An employee involved in an intimate or familial relationship must inform his or her supervisor and the Human Resources Department when nepotism or conflict of interest occurs, or where the potential for nepotism or conflict of interest may exist.
- D. An employee who, during his or her period of employment, is or becomes a member of the immediate family of a person who has direct supervisory or auditing responsibilities over the position occupied by the employee may be subject to discharge. Yakima County generally will attempt to identify other available positions, but if no alternate position is available, the County retains the right to decide which employee will remain employed by the County.
- E. An employee may appeal any adverse employment decision based on this policy directly to the Board of Yakima County Commissioners within ten (10) days of the adverse decision. The Board may waive the application of this policy if deemed in the public interest.
- F. This policy shall be effective March 1, 2014. It shall not be given retroactive effect and shall not affect employees whose relationships existed prior to the effective date, except for promotion or transfer situations or immediate family status changes occurring after the effective date.

Adopted Copy Available at
Yakima County Human Resources
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Yakima, WA 98901