

Nepotism

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Scope

This policy applies to all University of Nebraska at Omaha (“University”) employees, including faculty, staff, student workers, and temporary employees.

Policy Statement

In accordance with Board of Regents Bylaws §3.2.2, no employee of the University shall engage in nepotism, meaning that no employee, including any University supervisor, shall hire, promote, or advance nor recommend the hiring, promotion, or advancement of any family member at the University or within the University of Nebraska System (“NU”).

Pursuant to the Board of Regents Bylaws, §3.2.2.4, the President or the cognizant Chancellor may, upon a written showing of good cause, grant an exception to this policy. The written justification shall be filed with the appropriate University records officer and shall be considered a public record.

When an exception is approved, the University requires the relinquishment of supervisory and evaluative responsibilities (recusal) between family members to avoid conflicts of interest or perceptions of favoritism. Recusal is required regardless of position type and applies to all evaluative relationships, including faculty-student, supervisor-employee, and administrator-staff relationships.

All potential personnel actions involving immediate family members shall be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Department (for staff) or the Office of Academic Affairs (for faculty) within seven (7) days of becoming aware of such situation. Human Resources and/or Academic Affairs shall act as soon as practicable.

In addition to the other penalties provided by law, any University employee violating the above provisions may be subject to disciplinary action.

Reason for Policy

This policy ensures compliance with:

- University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws §3.2.2 (Nepotism), and

- Nebraska Revised Statutes §49-1499.03 and 49-1499.07, which prohibits public officials or employees from supervising or recommending employment actions involving family members.

It also promotes fairness, transparency, and public trust in University employment practices.

Procedures

1. Notification

- Any employee who becomes aware of a potential nepotism situation must notify their immediate supervisor and department administrator.

2. Review

- The supervisor and administrator will notify the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, who will consult with the Chief Compliance Officer to determine next steps.

3. Exception Requests

- If an overriding business necessity exists, the hiring area may submit a written exception request outlining:
 - the nature of the relationship,
 - the justification for the exception, and
 - measures to ensure professional conduct and prevent conflicts of interest.
- Before submission to the Chancellor for approval or denial, the request must be endorsed by both the hiring area's highest level of supervision (including but not limited to the Dean, Department Head, and/or Unit Leader) and the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources.
- The Chancellor's decision is final.

4. Recordkeeping

- Academic Affairs shall maintain all approved exception requests for academic appointments with copies to the University Compliance Office.
- Human Resources shall maintain all approved exception requests for non-academic and/or staff positions with copies to the University Compliance Office.

5. Recruitment Review

- If a potential nepotism issue arises during recruitment, Human Resources will assess and advise the hiring area prior to advancing the applicant.

No personnel action shall proceed until final written approval is received from the Chancellor.

Definitions

Nepotism: The act of hiring, promoting, or advancing a family member or recommending the hiring, promotion, or advancement of a family member at the University or within the NU System including initial appointment and transfer to other positions.

Family member: Any person related to the individual by blood, marriage (including the common designations of step or in-law relationships), or adoption as the individual's spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, sibling, grandchild, or grandparent. Family also includes any person who the individual or the individual's spouse claims as a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

Supervisor: An individual who has authority, in the interest of the University, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline employees, responsibility to direct them or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend any such action if the exercise of such authority is not merely of a routine or clerical nature but requires the use of independent judgment.

Related Information

- University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws §3.2.2 (Nepotism)
- Neb. Rev. Stat. §49-1499.03 (Employment of family members)
- Neb. Rev. Stat. §49-1499.07 (Disclosure and recusal requirements)
- University of Nebraska Human Resources Handbook of Policies

History

This policy was developed and approved prior to the implementation of the campus policy development and approval process approved by the Chancellor's Cabinet in October 2015. This policy was revised in both January 2021 and January 2026 to ensure continued compliance and alignment with applicable University policies and procedures and Nebraska State Statutes.

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