

## HIRING OF RELATIVES/NEPOTISM

The policy prevents improper working relationships by prohibiting employees from supervising others with whom they have a familial, cohabitant, or amorous relationship. It is the intent of the policy to avoid conflicts of interest, as well as situations that may impair objective judgment or bias.

Members of an employee's family or other conflicted relationship as stated above will be considered for employment on the basis of their qualifications. However, immediate family may **not** be hired, if employment would create actual or substantial interference with the business operations of RAILS or would violate Illinois law or applicable conflict of interest laws. A nepotism self-disclosure form is available from Human Resources.

Due to the potential for perceived or actual conflicts, such as favoritism or personal conflicts from outside the work environment, which can be carried into the daily working relationship, RAILS may hire relatives of persons currently employed only if:

- a) candidates for employment will not be working directly for or supervising a relative, and
- b) candidates for employment will not occupy a position in the same line of authority in which employees can initiate or participate in decisions involving a direct benefit to the relative. Such decisions include hiring, retention, transfer, promotion, wages, and leave requests.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for ensuring policy compliance. Department directors are responsible for monitoring changes in employee reporting relations after initial hire to ensure compliance with this policy.

Employees are responsible for immediately reporting any changes to their supervisor.

If any employee, after employment or change in employment, enters into one of the above relationships, one of the affected individuals must seek a transfer or a change in the reporting relationship. Such changes must be approved by the RAILS Executive Director. If a decision cannot be made by the affected employees within 14 days of reporting, reassignment will be made at the direction of the Executive Director and the HR Director.

This policy must also be considered when assigning, transferring, or promoting an employee.

Employees who marry or establish close personal relationships may continue employment as long as it does not violate this policy. If the conditions outlined above should occur, attempts may be made to find a suitable position within RAILS to which one of the employees can transfer. If accommodations of this nature are not feasible, the employees will be permitted to determine which of them will resign.

- Any relationship that interferes with the RAILS culture of teamwork, the harmonious work environment, or the productivity of employees will be addressed by applying the progressive discipline policy up to and including employment termination.
- Anyone employed in a managerial or supervisory role needs to heed the fact that personal relationships with employees who report to them may be perceived as favoritism, misuse of authority, or potentially, sexual harassment.
- Employees who disregard this policy will receive disciplinary actions up to and including employment termination.