

Standard Practice Guide Policies

Appointment of Relatives or Others with Close Personal or External Business Relationships; Procedures to assure Equal Opportunity and to Avoid the Possibility of Favoritism (Nepotism) 201.23

Applies to: All Faculty and Staff

I. Policy

The basic criteria for appointment and promotion of all University staff shall be appropriate qualifications and performance. Relationship to another individual employed by the University shall constitute neither an advantage nor a deterrent to appointment by the University, provided the individual meets and fulfills the appropriate University appointment standards.

There shall be neither favoritism toward nor discrimination against any individual in appointment, promotion, wages, hours, or other conditions of employment based upon that individual's being a relative of or having a close personal relationship or external business relationship to another person employed by the University. (After this called relative for purposes of this SPG.)

All supervisors are responsible for maintaining objectivity in their work relationships, and avoiding situations which raise the question of favoritism or discrimination prohibited by this SPG.

This policy does not apply to or supplant situations covered under the University's Sexual Harassment Policy - [SPG 201.89-0 \(/policy/201.89-0\)](#), the Faculty-Student Relationships Policy – [SPG 601.22 \(/policy/601.22\)](#) or the Employee-Student Relationships Policy – [SPG 601.22-1 \(/policy/601.22-1\)](#).

II. Regulations

If an individual is to be assigned to a position that is under the supervision or control of a relative who has or may have a direct effect on the individual's progress or performance, or an individual is to be assigned to a position with the same immediate supervisor as a relative, a management plan must be devised and approved by the head of the organizational unit (e.g., Dean or Director) and that of the unit's senior Human Resources officer.

A management plan is also required when an individual already assigned to a position becomes a relative of a supervisor, subordinate, or someone who works for the same immediate supervisor.

The purpose of the management plan is to outline supervision and evaluation procedures that will mitigate possible conflicts of interest. The management plan must address reporting relationships, supervision, and evaluation that will assure that there will be no decision making based upon relationships in promotion, wages, hours, or other conditions of employment. The plan should address the management of the approval and review process for expenditures and travel to preclude any potential appearance of nepotism, conflict of interest, or conflict of commitment. To ensure continuity and appropriateness, a unit review of the approved management plan should take place in the event of any change in reporting relationships, and on an annual basis at a minimum.

The University's online application form for Regular appointments will include a section requiring the applicant to list all relatives employed by the University in the department for which the applicant is applying. The University's paper application form for Temporary appointments will include a section requiring the applicant to list all relatives employed by the University and the departments in which they are employed. The same information is to be obtained from candidates for instructional and primary positions when they are offered positions.

III. Procedures

Procedures to assist in the development of Management Plans can be found at <http://hr.umich.edu/procedures/spg201-23.html>. (<http://hr.umich.edu/procedures/spg201-23.html>)

IV. Definitions

A. Relative: For the purpose of this policy, relative is defined as a staff member’s spouse, daughter, son, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, grandchild, aunt, or uncle, niece or nephew (or the spouse of any of these) of either the staff member or the staff member’s spouse, or any other person who is part of the staff member’s household.

This definition is not to be construed to exclude the possibility of questions of favoritism arising with regard to other relatives, or other close personal or external business relationships

B. Favoritism: For the purpose of this policy, favoritism is defined as the basing of decisions regarding appointment, promotion, wages, hours, or other conditions of employment on relationship rather than on objective standards and the needs of the unit.

C. Nepotism: For the purpose of this policy, nepotism is defined as favoritism toward relatives.

Notes

This policy was reviewed in January 2013. No changes were made.

This SPG was reviewed in June 2018 with the addition of the section to whom the SPG applies.

File Attachments

Printable PDF of SPG 201.23, Appointment of Relatives or Others with Close Personal or External Business Relationships; Procedur (<http://www.spg.umich.edu/sites/default/files/policies/201x23.pdf>)

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All Faculty and Staff

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Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Related Policies:

Employee-Student Relationships (/policy/601.22-1)

Faculty-Student Relationships (/policy/601.22)

Sexual Harassment (/policy/201.89-0)

Related Links:

Procedures (<http://www.umich.edu/~hrraa/procedures/spg201-23.html>)

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