



DODGE COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Dodge County recognizes that the employment of close relatives and those in a close personal relationship can have the potential to cause serious concerns involving favoritism and employee morale and can also create the appearance of impropriety. In these circumstances, all parties involved, including supervisors and managers, are open to charges of inequitable consideration in decisions concerning work assignments, transfer opportunities, performance evaluations, promotions, demotions, disciplinary actions, pay increments, sexual harassment and terminations. In addition to claims of partiality, personal relationship conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into the workplace, which has the potential to negatively impact day to day operations and negatively affect other employees in the workplace.

For these reasons, Dodge County disfavors a supervisor or manager supervising an employee with whom the supervisor or manager has a close personal relationship. A close personal relationship involves situations such as the following:

- The employee is a close relative of the supervisor or manager, such as a spouse, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, cousin, or an in-law of the same.
- The employee is in a romantic relationship with the supervisor or manager such that it is or is perceived by one or both parties as more than a general friendship.
- The employee is involved in an outside business relationship with the supervisor or manager as a partner, owner, shareholder, employee, vendor, or contractor.

A supervisor or manager involved in a close personal relationship shall inform the Department Head, County Administrator or Human Resources Director immediately. Efforts will be made to ensure fair treatment in the workplace for the individuals involved. If the Department Head identifies that a close personal relationship exists, then the Department Head shall promptly notify the Human Resources Director.

The County may consider the following measures to avoid workplace conflicts if practical and in the interests of the County:

1. Inform the supervisor or manager and the subordinate involved in the close personal relationship of the County's expectations of professional behavior applicable both on and off duty and compliance with County policies including the County's policy commitment against sexual harassment.
2. Remove responsibility for various important supervisory or managerial decisions involving that subordinate from the supervisor or manager involved in a close relationship with the subordinate.

3. Assign responsibility for supervision of the subordinate to another manager within the department.
4. Assign responsibility for performance evaluations, investigations, complaint management, and any compensation or merit-based pay decisions relating to the subordinate to another manager within the department.
5. Afford protections for the assigned manager by having the manager's responsibilities with regard to the subordinate reviewed by the Human Resources Director.
6. Inform the subordinate of the new chain of command, reporting, and supervision structure.
7. If a vacant position is available and the employee meets the minimum qualifications of the vacant position, the Department Head of each Department and the County Administrator reserves the right to transfer the employee into the vacant position.
8. Inform co-workers that gossiping and rumor-mongering are inappropriate and that employees are required to use the appropriate channels to report concerns and observations.
9. Inform the supervisor or manager and the subordinate involved in the close personal relationship and their coworkers of the County's Ethical Advocate hotline and the applicable personnel policies and procedures.
10. Separation from employment for the supervisor or manager or the subordinate involved in the close personal relationship.

The measures listed above shall not be considered an all-inclusive list, may not be applicable or necessary in every case and should be implemented with the assistance of the Human Resources Director. The Department Head shall consult with the Human Resources Director prior to implementing any of the measures herein.

In the case of a Department Head being involved in a close relationship with a subordinate, the County Administrator, in consultation with the Human Resources Director, shall consider the measures described herein.

The supervisor or manager is responsible for maintaining a positive and productive work environment conducive to professional growth, development and opportunities for all employees.

Dodge County maintains a strong commitment and policy against unlawful harassment in the workplace (Unlawful Harassment Policy) and a Grievance Procedure. Employees are encouraged to refer to these policies to address issues, if any, that may arise.

This policy is not intended to be a barrier to hiring qualified employees nor shall it be interpreted as excluding family members of County employees from applying for Dodge County employment.

