


Policy Title:	Relationship Disclosure Policy		
	OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	Category	
		Administrative Policy #	
		Revision #	
		Review Frequency	As Needed – no less frequently than triennially
Administrative Division	Human Resources	Reviewed By	Chief Administrative Officer, General Counsel, Human Resources Director
BOWC Approval		Last Reviewed/Update Date	
Implementation Date			

1. OBJECTIVE

- 1.1. To establish guidelines regarding appropriate workplace behavior, to establish clear boundaries between employees' personal and business interactions, to promote a positive work environment, to promote unbiased decision making, to ensure fair treatment of all employees, and to prevent disruption of the workplace that may result from consensual, romantic relationships between co-workers or supervisory/reporting relationships between relatives.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. DWSD recognizes and respects the rights of employees to engage in social interaction and form personal relationships with others in the workplace. DWSD is not seeking to prohibit or interfere with the personal affairs of employees or unduly intrude into employees' privacy. However, there may be certain instances in which intimate personal relationships between employees (or with contractors) or instances where relatives have supervisory/reporting relationships have the potential to impact working conditions.
- 2.2. Personal relationships, especially between supervisors and subordinates, may undermine the sound operation of DWSD functions due to: a) the appearance of favoritism in employment decisions; b) loss of employee morale; c) interference with the functioning of a supervisory-subordinate relationship; d) the creation of a hostile working environment for fellow co-workers; and e) allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Board” means the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) Board of Water Commissioners.

“Contractor” means a person who directly provides services to DWSD within or outside of its offices or facilities pursuant to a contract. The term Contractor includes both independent contractors and contract employees of DWSD. If a Contractor is a partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or other form of business organization, this policy shall apply to the individual(s) within that Contractor's entity who directly provide services to DWSD or directly supervise the delivery of those services. With the exception of the reporting requirement in Section 3 of this policy, for purposes of this policy, the term Contractor shall be interchangeable with the term Employee.

“Employee” means a member of the Board, a person employed by the DWSD, whether on a full-time or part-time basis, and any individual who provides services to DWSD within or outside of its offices or facilities pursuant to a personal services contract.

“Leadership Team Member” means the Employee who exercises management authority and responsibility over the operations for a group of employees.

“Indirect Supervisor” or “Indirect Supervision” means those Employees who are not direct Supervisors but who exercise various levels of supervisory and management authority within DWSD that encompass a direct Supervisor’s, Contractor’s or another Employee’s job performance, conduct, or contract management. Indirect Supervisor or Indirect Supervision includes, but is not limited to DWSD’s Board, Director, Deputy Director, Chief Engineer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, a member of Leadership Team, or any other person vested with supervisory or management authority within an Employee’s chain of command.

“Relative” means a person who is related to a public servant as spouse or as any of the following, whether by marriage, blood or adoption: parent, child, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

“Romantic or sexual relationship” means a relationship of a romantic, dating and/or sexual nature entered into with the consent of both parties.

“Supervisor” is defined as the authority figure providing direct oversight of another person’s employment and advancement, including but not limited to hiring, work conditions, compensation, promotion, and/or discipline.

“Work Assignment” means that activity or group of activities to which an Employee or Contractor devotes the majority of their time and effort while working on behalf of DWSD.

“Work Location” means the DWSD location or locations where an Employee or Contractor performs his or her job assignments while working on behalf of DWSD.

4. SCOPE

4.1. This policy applies to all DWSD employees, contractors, student interns, volunteers, and other persons employed by DWSD regardless of sexual orientation. Failure to comply with this policy is a violation of DWSD’s Employee Standards of Conduct policy and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to comply with this policy by a contractor may be considered grounds for breach of its contract and termination of the contract.

4.2. The provisions of the policy apply regardless of the sexual orientation of employees.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Human Resources Director

5.1.1. The Human Resources Director is responsible for publishing this policy; communicating this policy to all employees; review, approval and publishing of divisional standard operating procedures; and updating this policy as necessary.

- 5.1.2. The Human Resources Director, or delegate, is responsible for interpreting and enforcing this policy.

5.2. Management

- 5.2.1. DWSD management is responsible for being familiar with, understanding, and acting in full compliance with this policy. Management shall initiate appropriate action through elevation and notification of relationships that may create actual or the perception of conflicts of interest to Human Resources. Failure of management to report such relationships to Human Resources may result in disciplinary action.

5.3. Employee Responsibilities

- 5.3.1. DWSD employees are responsible for being familiar with, understanding, and acting in full compliance with this policy.

6. POLICY

6.1. Relationships

- 6.1.1. DWSD strongly believes that a work environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between employee personal and business interactions is necessary for effective business operations. Although this policy does not prevent the development of friendships or romantic relationships between co-workers, it does establish procedures as to how relationships are conducted during working hours and within the working environment.
- 6.1.2. Individuals in supervisory or managerial roles and those with authority over others' terms and conditions of employment are subject to more stringent requirements under this policy due to their status as role models, their access to sensitive information, and their ability to affect the employment of individuals in subordinate positions.
- 6.1.3. This policy does not preclude or interfere with the rights of employees protected by the National Labor Relations Act or any other applicable statute concerning the employment relationship.

6.2. Reasonable and Necessary Accommodations

- 6.2.1. Management may take reasonable and necessary actions to accomplish the intent of this policy.

7. PROCEDURE

7.1. Conduct Requirement

- 7.1.1. Employees who have a romantic or sexual personal relationship with other employees/contractors are expected to adhere to the following:
 - 7.1.1.1. During Work Assignments and in Work Locations, conduct themselves in an appropriate, professional workplace manner that does not interfere with others or with overall productivity, including refraining from personal exchanges (i.e. personal or sexual comments, joking, affection, etc.).

- 7.1.1.2. During non-Work Assignment time, such as lunches, breaks, and before and after work periods, conduct themselves in an appropriate workplace manner when engaging in personal exchanges on DWSD premises.
- 7.1.1.3. Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in physical contact that would be deemed inappropriate by a reasonable person standard while anywhere on DWSD premises, regardless of whether they are performing Work Assignments.
- 7.1.2. Supervisors are prohibited from directly supervising Relatives. Indirect reporting relationships are generally allowed.
- 7.1.3. All Employees must refrain from engaging in favoritism or making business decisions influenced by personal relationships. Business decisions shall be made based on the best interests of DWSD.
- 7.1.4. All employees must ensure that personal relationships do not negatively impact job performance, the work environment or the ability to supervise others.
- 7.1.5. Employees who allow personal relationships with co-workers to adversely affect the work environment will be subject to DWSD's disciplinary policy. Failure to change behavior and maintain expected work responsibilities is viewed as a serious disciplinary matter.

7.2. Disclosure

- 7.2.1. Employees, Supervisors and Indirect Supervisors between whom there is a reporting/supervisory relationship and a romantic or sexual relationship are required to immediately disclose the relationship to Human Resources. While both Employees are required to disclose the relationship, Supervisors are held to a more stringent standard. Involved parties will be required to sign the Relationship Disclosure form.
- 7.2.2. Supervisors are required to immediately disclose reporting/supervisory relationships between Relatives. While both Employees are required to disclose the relationship, Supervisors are held to a more stringent standard. Involved parties will be required to sign the Relationship Disclosure form.
- 7.2.3. Upon disclosure of the relationship, the Human Resources Department will:
 - 7.2.3.1. Determine whether the relationship has the potential for, or the appearance of conflicts of interest, sexual harassment, favoritism, or negative impact to the workplace. Matters such as the ability to hire, fire, promote, assess performance and set compensation are examples of situations that may require reallocation of duties to avoid any actual or perceived conflict.
 - 7.2.3.2. Meet with both parties to determine a possible resolution regarding the supervisory relationship, which may include reorganization of duties/responsibilities, position transfer or reassignment.
 - 7.2.3.3. Maintain confidentiality of relationships. Information will be disclosed only as necessary when reorganizing duties/responsibilities, position transfer or reassignment.
- 7.2.4. Failure to cooperate with DWSD to resolve a conflict or problem posed by a relationship between Employees and Supervisors or Indirect Supervisors in a mutually agreeable fashion may be deemed insubordination and result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.