

	LANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY	Number: G.O. 4.09
		Issue Date: June 26, 2007
		Revision Date: August 1, 2016; June 15, 2021; September 21, 2021
CHAPTER: Employee Conduct		Related Policy: APM Chapter 3 Section 14 Issue 10; G.O. 6.02 (Recruitment and Selection)
SUBJECT: Relations Between Sheriff's Office Employees		Related Laws:

POLICY: Staff shall remain professional in their contacts with other employees.

Public trust requires that employees avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest between their professional responsibilities and their personal relationships with other employees. This applies to all staff, but is particularly true for relationships between superiors and subordinates within the same chain of command.

DEFINITION: Family or personal relationship is defined as mother, father, spouse (or domestic partner), sister, brother, child, grandparent, grandchild, stepmother, stepfather, stepchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, or other relative residing in the employee's immediate household. Employees are also advised to consider personal relationships are also defined as other non-blood relationships; including dating, cohabitating or partnered couples.

Fraternization – For this policy is defined as a romantic relationship between members of the Sheriff's Office that results in an actual or reasonably perceived adverse impact on (but not limited to): The chain of command or the authority/objectivity of a supervisor.

Probationary Employee – A “Probationary Employee” is considered to be any employee who has been hired by the Sheriff's Office but has not completed Entry level training, the Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) and their entire probationary period.

Romantic Relationship – Is described as a level of personal affection and familiarity not typically shared by coworkers and includes but not limited to: dating, physical intimacy, sexual activity or other similar behavior(s).

RULE (S): Management, supervisory and any employees with decision making authority over another employee will recuse themselves on all work related decisions regarding subordinate employees who are relatives or with whom they have a personal and/or romantic relationship.

For this policy “immediately” means within your first shift back to work.

PROCEDURE:

I. Staff Will Remain Professional In Their Contacts With Other Employees

- A. Family, personal or romantic relationships within the workplace have the potential to result in conflict, liability, or harassment. Any incidents between family members or those in a personal and/or romantic relationship that may violate this policy will be reported to the Division Commander personally or by accessing the chain of command immediately. The goal of this policy is to provide command staff with enough information to prevent conflict arising from family, personal or romantic relationships while attempting to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the involved parties.
1. Employees involved in a family, personal or romantic relationship may not exercise power or authority over another in the workplace, including serving as a direct supervisor to the other, or involvement in promotion, awards, appointment, assignments, termination, discipline, or evaluation of work performance.
 2. Family, personal or romantic relationships involving more than one level in the chain of command will be reported directly to the Division Commander.
 3. The Division Commander should take appropriate action to eliminate the conflict while keeping in mind the best interest of the employees and the Sheriff's Office. The Division Commander may counsel employees involved in a family, personal or romantic relationship regarding the expectations of the Sheriff's Office surrounding the relationship. These expectations may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Command staff will treat information regarding family and personal relationships confidential; however, the involved employees should be aware that such relationships are difficult to conceal from other employees due to the observant nature of law enforcement staff.
 - b. Both parties are expected to not engage in workplace conflicts that involve the other party unless involvement is necessary to preserve officer safety or the safety and security of Correction facilities, such as a use of force situation.
 - c. Both parties are expected to maintain their professionalism by avoiding displays of affection and other physical contact in the workplace or on County paid time.
 - d. The Sheriff or his designee may make changes in the workplace to prevent family, personal or romantic relationship conflicts. Such changes may include change of assignment for one or both parties, change in supervisory responsibility, and/or specific instructions regarding workplace responsibilities. Such changes will be made in the best interest of both parties and the Sheriff's Office.

- B. Any Sheriff's Office employee who engages into dating, cohabitating or partnered couples with another Sheriff's Office employee, volunteer, or an employee affiliated with a contractor that directly works with the Sheriff's Office must notify their supervisor immediately. If the dating, cohabitating or partnered couples is between employees of different work groups or divisions, then both employees' supervisors will be notified.

II. Fraternization

- A. Management and supervisory employees of the Sheriff's Office are prohibited from entering into a romantic relationship or fraternize with a probationary employee. Any supervisor wanting to enter into a romantic relationship with a non-probationary employee must notify command prior to/or immediately after engaging into the relationship. Romantic relationships between a supervisor and non-probationary staff that result in fraternization is prohibited. Failure to comply with the notification requirement or the terms of this policy may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to demotion or termination of employment.
- B. Deputies who are Field Training Officers (FTO) will not enter into romantic relationship with any probationary employee that the FTO is currently training. If an FTO enters into a romantic relationship with a probationary employee they must notify their supervisor prior to/or immediately after entering into the relationship. That FTO then will not be allowed to train the probationary employee.
- C. Any employee who has authority over another employee will not enter into a romantic relationship with that employee. An example of this would be deputies and cadets.