

# **POLICY NO. 615**

**Area: Human Resources**

*Original signature on file with  
Administration and Finance*

Date Adopted: May 20, 2003

Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Cynthia Jackson-Hammond  
President, Central State University

Revisions Approved: November 14, 2019

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**Subject: POLICY ON NEPOTISM AND CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

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*Effective Immediately*

## **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the University's position on employing relatives and other close associates of staff. This policy applies to all University employees who are involved in hiring or supervising other staff.

## **Policy**

The University must avoid any conflicts of interest in the hiring and supervision of, or interactions with, a family member, near relative, close friend, spouse, partner or personal associate in the same organizational unit or elsewhere in the University.

Close personal relationships, whether family or otherwise, shall constitute neither an advantage nor a deterrent to appointment or hire by the University, provided the individual meets and fulfills the appropriate University appointment standards and qualifications for the position. However, no individual shall be assigned to a department or unit under the direct supervision of an employee with whom he or she has a family or close personal relationship, or where an employee has or may have direct effect on that individual's progress or performance.

A conflict of interest can arise where an employee makes or participates in employment decisions affecting another person with whom the staff member has a family or other close personal relationship, as identified and defined in this policy. Where such a conflict arises, staff must declare the interest and withdraw from the situation, if possible, or otherwise adhere to this policy.

## **Definitions**

Under the above policy the following definitions are applicable:

1. FAMILY RELATIONSHIP includes father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister.

2. CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP includes anyone who has such a close association, family connection, or the like, with a University employee, that it creates a conflict of interest for the University employee who cannot then be appropriately impartial and objective regarding hiring or other employment decisions pertaining to that person.
3. SUPERVISION is generally defined as the authority to oversee another person during the execution of performance of the latter person's duties and responsibilities. Supervision also includes the authority of an employee to schedule, assign, evaluate, commend, reward, promote, relieve, discipline, censure, demote, remove another employee, or substantially influence such action for or against another employee.

### **Disclosure Required**

Both the hiring supervisor and the candidate for employment must disclose any family or close personal relationship with anyone else employed with the University, even if not involving or contemplating a potential supervisor and subordinate relationship at that time. Any family or close personal relationship not disclosed but later discovered will be addressed as a disciplinary matter (dishonesty in failing to disclose). Transfer or termination may occur, depending on the situation.

Family or other close personal relationships that come into being during employment must be immediately disclosed by the employees involved, or any other employee who discovers or learns of it. Every attempt to avoid the supervisor and subordinate relationship between the employees involved will be made at that time (i.e., transfer or realignment), with termination of one of the employees involved being the option of last resort.

### **Non-Participation on Selection Committee or in Hiring Decision**

All hiring decisions must be based on merit and within the minimum qualifications and selection criteria for the position. An employee with any conflict of interest due to a relationship with a candidate must declare it and is not to participate on the selection committee or otherwise participate in, or influence, the hiring decision. If the area of expertise of the position is so narrow that an employee with a family or personal relationship with the candidate must be involved in the hiring process for the candidate, the Director of Human Resources, Provost, Chief of Staff, or other Vice President must be notified, as appropriate, so that leadership can oversee and ensure the integrity of the hiring process.

### **Recommendations**

If an employee has a recommendation regarding the candidate, he or she may share that with anyone involved in the hiring decision except subordinates of that employee. This is so a supervisor does not inadvertently (or otherwise) pressure or have undue influence on subordinate employees involved on the selection committee or in the hiring decision.