

CORONA POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER

Chief of Police

July 26, 2004

Approved by:

Chief Richard O. Gonzales

Office of the Chief #2004-01

Alphabetical Title: Employee Fraternization Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to establish Department policy on relationships between and among Department employees, which give rise to an actual or perceived potential conflict of interest with professional responsibilities and/or which create an adverse impact on supervision, safety, security or morale within the Department.

POLICY

- 1) The City of Corona and the Corona Police Department recognize the rights of employees to become involved in personal or business relationships with their co-workers and clients. However, it is the policy of the Corona Police Department to ensure that its employees carry out their duties with impartiality and fairness so that public and organizational confidence in the actions of our employees is maintained. It is important that we remain vigilant of perceptions and that we eliminate the appearance of impropriety.
- 2) Public trust, safety and morale require that employees avoid the appearance of a conflict between their professional responsibilities and any involvement in a romantic or sexual relationship with other employees. In order to promote efficient operation of the Department and avoid misunderstandings, complaints of

AUTHORITY

In determining rules and regulations governing the employment of City employees who become related, as defined in this policy, after they have been hired by the City, the City is guided by the principles enunciated in the California Fair Employment and Housing Act which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of marital status. However, the Act and the Regulations defining the Act do authorize certain restrictions being placed upon married City employees or upon people deemed related as a result of marriage. (E.g. where for business reasons of supervision, safety, security or morale, the City may refuse to place one spouse or other relative under the direct supervision of another spouse or other relative and refuse to place both spouses or other relatives in the same department, division or facility if the work involves potential conflicts of interest or other hazards greater for married couples or other relatives than for other persons. (2 Cal. Administrative Code, Section 7292.5; Government Code Section 12940 (a) (3)).

DEFINITIONS

- 1) **“Personal Relationship”** for purposes of this policy, is a relationship involving a supervisor and subordinate, and is based on marriage, by blood, through dating, romantic relationship, cohabitation, or other intimate means.
- 2) **“Business Relationship”** for purposes of this policy is a relationship between two or more people that is based on a financial or business partnership.
- 3) **“Supervisor”** a person who has authority, direct or indirect, over another by virtue of their rank or job classification.
- 4) **“Subordinate”** a person who is answerable to another person based on their job classification.
- 5) **“Conflict of Interest”** a conflict between the private interests and public obligations of a person in an official position; or any relationship which may create a substantial risk of impairment of job performance.
- 6) **“Dating”** one or more social meetings under circumstances that may lead to exchange of personal affection, emotional attachment and sexual or physical intimacy.
- 7) **“Romantic Relationship”** exists when a supervisor/subordinate become

relative living in the same household as the employee or another individual related by blood, marriage, or quasi-marriage in the same household as a Department employee. Relative includes significant other or domestic partner.

PROCEDURES

1. Supervision

- A. An employee generally shall not directly supervise a relative or other where a personal relationship exists.
- B. An employee shall not recommend advancement, contribute to a performance rating, or make a decision on the assignment or placement of a relative or other where a personal relationship exists.
- C. An employee shall not be assigned or contribute to the investigation of an internal affairs complaint and/or disciplinary action of a relative or other where a personal relationship exists.
- D. Permanent assignments that place a supervisor or manager anywhere in the chain of command over a relative or other where a personal relationship exists must be approved by the Chief of Police.
- E. Occasional functional supervision of a relative or other where a personal relationship exists may be unavoidable, however, should not be the norm. The supervisor or manager will be excluded from involvement in any disciplinary or evaluation process involving their relative or other where a personal relationship exists.

2. Personal, Financial or Business Relationships.

- A. All members of the Department are obligated to perform their duties and responsibilities consistent with the best interest of the Department. No member of the department shall allow personal relationships/financial or business interests to conflict with professional responsibilities of job performance. The avoidance of actual or perceived conflict of interest is important not only for co-workers, but particularly for superiors and subordinates, by rank or pay grade, within the Department.

3. Duty to Notify.

- A. In the event members of the Department are involved in a supervisor/subordinate relationship or enter into a personal, financial or business relationship which gives rise to an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest between professional duties and the relationship, they shall notify their division commander in person as soon as possible.
- B. Once the division commander becomes aware of a personal, financial, or business relationship which gives rise to an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest (as defined under this Directive), the division commander shall take appropriate action to eliminate the conflict of interest. In evaluating the circumstances, the division commander shall consider the needs of the individual(s) and those of the department.
- C. Employees who find themselves working in close proximity to a relative or other where a personal relationship exists shall make their circumstances immediately known to their division commander.
- D. Failure by an employee to report relationships to their division commander compromises the integrity of the Department's chain of command, disrupts the work environment, causes decline in morale and can reduce productivity. Any failure to report relationships as required by this Directive shall constitute misconduct and a violation of Department policy and may subject an employee to disciplinary action.
- F. The duty to notify does not apply to peer relationships.

4. Marriage or Cohabitation

- A. If a supervisor and a subordinate marry or cohabit, the division commander will review the working relationship of the two employees and determine if it creates a potential conflict of interest or an adverse impact on supervision, safety, security or morale. If it does, reasonable effort will be made to transfer, reassign, or otherwise resolve the situation so that one of the employees is placed in a position where the conflict no longer exists. Prior to any reassignment, the Department will receive input from the involved employees.

5. Special Assignments

- Who work closely together in specific work units, such as patrol zones, sections in the detective division, and/or other official positions must be approved by the Chief of Police.
 - Shall not be in a direct supervisory relationship between and amongst themselves.
- B. It will be incumbent upon the subordinate to select assignments which will not put them under the supervision or management of a relative.

6. Members of the Public

- A. Department personnel shall refrain from developing personal or business relationships with witnesses, victims, or any other parties to matters of official business, including active investigations and/or prosecution that affect the agency's ability to accomplish its mission.
- B. Employees who believe they may have an actual or potential conflict of interest shall make their circumstances known to the division commander. In evaluating the circumstances, the supervisor shall consider the needs of the individual(s) and those of the department.