



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 11, 2012

TO: City Employees

FROM: Paul M. Rensted
Human Resources Director *Paul M. Rensted*

VIA: Michael D. Mallinoff **M.D.M.**
City Manager

RE: Attached Policy

Attached is a new policy relating to dating and personal relationships in the workplace. The policy addresses personal relationships between employees and supervisory personnel, and establishes standards for all employees who are involved in a personal relationship with another employee. This policy is effective immediately. All City staff members are expected to follow the policy and will be subject to disciplinary action for failure to do so.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Dating/Personal Relationships Policy

The City of Annapolis strongly believes that an environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between personal and business interactions is most effective for conducting business. Although this policy does not prevent the development of friendships or consensual romantic relationships between coworkers, it does establish clear boundaries as to how relationships will progress during working hours and within the working environment. Individuals in supervisory, management or other influential roles are subject to more stringent requirements under this policy due to their status as role models, their access to sensitive information and the ability to make work and employment decisions.

Procedures

1. During working time and in working areas, all employees are expected to keep personal exchanges limited so that others are not distracted or offended by such exchanges and productivity is maintained.
2. During non-working time, such as lunches, breaks and before and after work periods, employees are not precluded from having appropriate personal conversations in non-work areas as long as their conversations and behaviors could in no way be perceived as offensive or uncomfortable to a reasonable person.
3. Employees are strictly prohibited while on City premises from engaging in physical contact that would in any way be deemed inappropriate by a reasonable person, whether during working hours or not.
4. Employees who allow personal relationships with co-workers to affect the working environment will be subject to the appropriate provisions of the City disciplinary policy, which may range from counseling to more severe sanctions. Failure to change behaviors and maintain expected work responsibilities is viewed as a serious disciplinary matter.
5. Employee off-duty conduct is generally regarded as private, as long as such conduct does not create problems within the workplace. An exception to this principle, however, is romantic or sexual relationships between an individual in a supervisory, management or other influential role and a subordinate.
6. Any City employee involved in a consensual personal relationship with an individual in a supervisory, management or other influential role must immediately disclose the relationship to the immediate supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. This disclosure will enable the City to determine whether any conflict of interest exists because of the relative positions of the individuals involved. While both employees involved in a consensual relationship are individually responsible for disclosure, the failure of a supervisor, manager, executive or anyone else in a sensitive or influential position to disclose a personal relationship will be regarded as a serious lapse in his or her management of the workplace and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7. When problems or potential risks are identified the City will work with the parties involved to consider options for resolving the conflict. The initial solution will be to make sure that the parties involved no longer work together on matters where one is able to influence the other or take any personnel action related to the other.
8. If an employee, whether or not he or she is involved in the relationship, believes that he or she has been or is being adversely affected by a personal relationship among co-workers, he or she is encouraged to promptly report the concern to an immediate supervisor or to the Human Resources Department.
9. Any supervisor, who receives a report of a personal relationship, must immediately inform the Director of Human Resources and act in accordance with this policy. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
10. Employees are also reminded that the provisions of the City's Discrimination and Harassment Policy are still in effect, regardless of the existence of a personal relationship.
11. Individuals who have questions or are uncertain as to the application of this policy should speak to a member of the Human Resources Department.