It is not unusual for family members and/or friends to work for the same organization, especially for large establishments like the District or other public agencies. However, it can raise issues when an employee uses his/her authority, discretionary power, or influence to obtain or secure employment or promotion for an individual without proper regard to his/her qualifications. This kind of situations is generally referred as nepotism, cronyism, or favoritism in the workplace. More specifically, nepotism occurs when this type of favoritism is exercised for a person related by blood or marriage regardless of that relative’s merit and fitness to the job.

**IMPACT OF NEPOTISM AT WORK**

Regardless of how it occurs, nepotism and favoritism at work can have a number of negative effects on the business, organization and the employees. For the organization, workplace nepotism creates inconsistency in application of standards, policies, rules, and evaluation processes, and this generally negates appropriate checks and balances related to work practices. Also, because of nepotism, the employer may not be hiring the most qualified individuals to do the work, and the performance of the department and the organization will suffer. Moreover, some cases of nepotism or favoritism may lead to legal ramification for the organization. As for the employees, if nepotism is observed in the unit/department, it negatively impacts the employees’ productivity, motivation, job satisfaction, morale, and retention with the organization. The bottom line is — nepotism can be very harmful and costly to the organization and its employees.

**THE DISTRICT’S POLICY REGARDING NEPOTISM**

Similar to most other employers, the District has rules and policies that prohibit employees from using the authority, discretionary power, or influence associated with their positions to obtain or secure the employment (permanent and temporary) or promotion of an individual related by blood or marriage. However, there is an exception — if a relative has gone through the District’s standard examination process under competitive conditions based on merit and fitness and is deemed to be the best qualified for the position, then he/she may be hired with the provision that either the employee or supervisor causing the nepotism situation be reassigned at
the first opportunity. For more information about the District’s policy regarding nepotism, please review the following links:


**DEALING WITH NEPOTISM**

If you encounter a situation where nepotism may exist, please consider the following actions:

- **Advise your supervisor or hiring authority when a family member or a friend is participating in a hiring interview.** This holds true for both permanent and temporary positions. Even though our employment application requires applicants to disclose this information, the information may or may not filter down. Therefore, it is the best practice to always notify your supervisor when a situation may be considered as nepotism.

- **Do not serve on interview or evaluation panels where a family member or a friend is being interviewed or evaluated.** You should not put yourself in a situation where you will not be able to objectively evaluate your relative or friend, or your objectivity will be questioned by others.

- **Do not influence the screening, evaluation, or interview process for employment or promotional opportunities where a family member or a friend is participating, including avoiding writing recommendation or introduction letters.**

- **Advise your college administration, typically the Vice President of Administration Services, of your concern if you become aware of a situation involving nepotism.** In addition, you may also consider contacting the Division of Human Resources or Personnel Commission with such information; there will be no retaliation or other negative consequences associated with this action.

We’d like to hear from you! Please visit the following survey link to provide us with valuable feedback on our bulletins: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VB7MVGS](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VB7MVGS).