

# Sample Policy: Employment of Relatives

The following sample policy was excerpted from [The Book of Company Policies](#), published by HR Specialist, © 2007. Edit for your organization's purposes.

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“The employment of relatives in the same area of an organization may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into day-to-day working relationships.

“For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

“Relatives of persons currently employed by XYZ may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative. XYZ employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.

“If the relative relationship is established after employment, the individuals concerned will decide who is to be transferred. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, management will decide.

“In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment.”

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## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

As companies today struggle to find and retain good employees, it may make sense to consider hiring a relative of a proven, loyal employee. But relatives working together don't always make for one big happy family, as many companies have discovered. Family conflicts can spill over into the workplace, or other employees may mutter about favoritism if, say, their manager is also supervising her own daughter.

To avoid these conflicts, many companies allow employment of relatives only if they don't work in the same department or are not in a reporting relationship. A written policy can help ensure consistency. How will you define who is a “relative”? And if two employees get married or form a domestic partnership, who will decide which one needs to be transferred or terminated? Think through these issues, and establish a policy that's right for your company.