

Employee/Client Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

361.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the guidelines for, and to define appropriate relationships between employees of this department and clients or their families, as well as with criminally oriented individuals. This policy applies to all employees.

361.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Personal Relationship – Includes marriage, cohabitation, dating or any other intimate relationship, including friendship.

Business Relationship – Serving as an employee, independent contractor, compensated consultant, owner, board member, shareholder, or investor in an outside business, company, partnership, corporation, venture, or other transaction.

Criminally Oriented Individuals – Individuals who are under criminal investigation or probation supervision in any jurisdiction, convicted felons, parolees, fugitives, registered sex offenders, or individuals who engage in serious violations of state and federal laws.

Conflict of Interest – Any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest in which it reasonably appears that an employee's action, inaction, or decisions are or may be influenced by the employee's personal or business relationship. The presence of a conflict of interest is independent of the occurrence of impropriety.

Relative - A person who is related by blood or marriage.

361.2 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

- Executive Committee

361.3 POLICY

For the development and maintenance of a professional relationship between employees of this department and its clients, employees shall not establish or continue personal or business relationships with clients or their families or with criminally oriented individuals. Personal or business relationships with clients or their families as well as with criminally oriented individuals threaten to discredit the department and compromise the safety and security of its employees, clientele, and the public.

361.4 CONFLICTING RELATIONSHIPS

- (a) In order to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest, employees of this department shall refrain from developing or maintaining personal or business relationships with clients and their families, victims, or witnesses during the course of,

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or as a direct result of any official contact. Employees are not to contact or correspond with clients or their families except as required by their official duties.

- (b) Except as required in the performance of official duties or, in the case of relatives, employees shall not develop or maintain personal or business relationships with any individuals who they know or reasonably should know are criminally oriented.
- (c) Employees shall immediately notify their chain of command in writing of any circumstance which the employee knows or reasonably should know could create a conflict of interest or other violation of this policy. Any exception to this policy must follow prior approval from the Chief Probation Officer or designee.
- (d) If a personal, business, or familial relationship existed before the individual became a client of the department, the employee shall notify their chain of command in writing as soon as the individual's client status became known by the employee. Every effort will be made to avoid conflict for the employee and client.
- (e) Whenever employees are placed in circumstances that would require them to take enforcement action or provide official information or services to any relative or individual with whom they are involved in a personal or business relationship, and who is also a client of the department, they shall promptly notify their immediate supervisor.
- (f) Any employee who engages in or fails to notify their chain of command of any conflicting relationships as described in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

361.5 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY

Upon being notified of, or otherwise becoming aware of any circumstance that could result in or constitute an actual or potential violation of this policy, supervisors shall promptly notify their chain of command of such actual or potential violations. The Division Director or designee shall consult with the designated Assistant Chief/Chief Deputy, as deemed necessary, to determine appropriate action.

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