

## 34. **Personal Relationships**

Spectrum Society values and relies upon the professional integrity of all its employees. In order for the Society's operations to be conducted and perceived to be conducted in a professional and proper manner, this policy provides guidance in areas where personal relationships between employees of the Society overlap with working relationships.

### **Personal relationships defined**

A personal relationship is defined as any of the following:

- a) a family relationship
- b) a business / commercial / financial relationship
- c) an intimate relationship

### **Personal relationships between employees**

The professional relationship between employees is vital to effective teamwork and service to the people we support. Although the existence of a personal relationship between employees does not necessarily constitute a barrier to employment or promotion of either party, staff are expected to declare to their line supervisor any personal relationships which they are involved in with a co-worker. Likewise, applicants for employment are expected to declare any personal relationships with existing Spectrum employees as part of their application for employment.

Management reserves the right to reassign employees who are involved in a personal relationship if there is a real or perceived conflict of interest.

### **Personal relationships between employees and management or supervisory personnel**

Employees are entitled to equality of treatment by management and supervisory personnel. Management and supervisory personnel are strongly advised not to enter into personal relationships with employees of Spectrum, as it may compromise the objectivity and professionalism of the supervisory relationship.

Where a personal relationship already exists, the management / supervisory employee will not be involved in hiring, promotion or disciplinary decisions, or have a direct working relationship with the employee, without the specific approval of their Coordinator. Pre-existing personal relationships must be declared to the Coordinator.

If a personal relationship develops between a management or supervisory employee and a subordinate, it must be declared to the Coordinator. The Society reserves the right to reassign management or supervisory personnel who enter into such a relationship. Management or supervisory personnel who enter into a personal relationship with a subordinate and do not inform their Coordinator, or who in any way compromise Spectrum's interests as a result of the relationship, may be dismissed.

### **Harassment**

Any personal relationships that are pre-existing or that develop between employees of Spectrum are presumed to be consensual, that is, agreed upon by both parties. Under no circumstances will an employee pressure a co-worker or subordinate into a personal relationship, or pursue a

personal relationship that is not consensual. Such conduct will be considered harassment and will be grounds for discipline up to and including dismissal. See the Code of Conduct for more information on harassment.

**Guidance with identifying and declaring personal relationships**

Employees who are uncertain about whether they should take action regarding a personal relationship are invited to seek guidance, in confidence, from their Coordinator or from Human Resources.