UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
Policies and Procedures

Proposed Policy Number and Title:	**301 Employment of Relatives and Workplace Relationship Management**
Current Policy Number and Title:	Not applicable

Approval Process*		
☒ Regular	☐ Temporary	☐ Compliance Change
☒ New ☐ Revision ☐ Revision—Limited Scope ☐ Deletion	☐ New ☐ Revision ☐ Revision—Limited Scope	☐ New ☐ Revision—Limited Scope ☐ Deletion

*See UVU Policy 101 *Policy Governing Policies* for process details.

Draft Number and Date: Stage 1 Draft, October 22, 2026
President's Council Sponsor: Marilyn Meyer
Policy Steward: Drew Burke, Lori Harris

POLICY APPROVAL PROCESS DATES		
REGULAR	**TEMPORARY**	**COMPLIANCE**
Drafting and Revision Entrance Date: 12/12/2024 **University Entities Review** Entrance Date: 10/26/2026 Close Feedback: 2/25/2027 **Board of Trustees Review** Entrance Date: _____ Approval Date: _____	**Drafting and Revision** Entrance Date: _____ **Board of Trustees Review** Entrance Date: _____ Approval Date: _____	**President's Council Approval** Approval Date: _____ **Board of Trustees Ratification** Ratification Date: _____

Policy Office Draft

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
Policies and Procedures

POLICY TITLE	Employment of Relatives and Workplace Relationship Management	**Policy Number**	301
Section	People and Culture	**Approval Date**	
Subsection	Hiring Practices	**Effective Date**	
Responsible Office	Office of the Vice President of People and Culture	**Last Review**	

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 Professional and supportive relationships are an important part of the Utah Valley University community and help advance the University's mission. However, when family, romantic, and household relationships among university community members also involve employment relationships, this may create real or perceived conflicts of interest, abuses of authority, or concerns about biased treatment. This policy provides guidance to help prevent and address nepotism and issues arising from these relationships.

2.0 REFERENCES

2.1 *Prohibiting Employment of Relatives,* Utah Code Ann. § 52-3-1 (2026)

2.2 *Utah Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act,* Utah Code Ann. § 67-16-1 (2026)

2.3 UVU Policy 114 *Individual Conflict of Interest and Commitment*

2.4 UVU Policy 162 *Title IX Sexual Harassment*

2.5 UVU Policy 165 *Discrimination and Harassment*

2.6 UVU Policy 168 *Whistleblower Anti-Retaliation*

2.7 UVU Policy 210 *Independent Contractors*

2.8 UVU Policy 302 *Hiring of Staff and Student Employees*

2.9 UVU Policy 306 *Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring of Faculty Positions*

2.10 UVU Policy 309 *Executive Employees: Recruitment, Compensation, Termination*

2.11 UVU Policy 326 *Workplace Conduct*

Policy Office Draft

2.12 UVU Policy 333 *Background Checks*

2.13 UVU Policy 335 *Staff Grievance*

2.14 UVU Policy 649 *Faculty Sanction and Dismissal for Cause*

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Conditions of employment: a benefit, privilege, responsibility, requirement, or aspect of the employment relationship that affects an employee's work status, duties, compensation, benefits, evaluation, discipline, promotion, supervision, scheduling, or work environment. Some examples include (1) serving on a hiring panel; (2) hiring, promoting, or transferring; (3) assigning or reassigning work; (4) preparing, conducting, or contributing information to a performance appraisal; (5) approving work hours, vacation, sick, or other leave time; (6) having any involvement with a rank, tenure, pay, or promotion process or committee; (7) granting or denying permission for any work-related travel or events; (8) approving any financial transactions for work-related expenses; (9) initiating or overseeing an investigation or disciplinary process; and (10) participating in any university awards, recognition, or rewards process that involves the nomination, evaluation, or selection of recipients.

3.2 Employee: A person employed by the University in any capacity, whether executive, faculty, staff, student-employee, or work-study employee, and whether employed full-time, part-time, or in a temporary capacity**.**

3.3 Household member: Any person who resides in the same residence as an employee.

3.4 Influence: Efforts to affect others' decisions, whether directly or through another person, in relation to a condition of employment of a relative, romantic partner, or household member.

3.5 Nepotism: Any action affecting a condition of employment based on an employee's family or household relationship with the benefiting individual.

3.6 Preponderance of the evidence: The evidentiary standard used under this policy. A determination is made by a preponderance of the evidence when the available information shows that it is more likely than not that a relationship creates, could create, or is likely to create a conflict of interest, favoritism, inappropriate influence, or another concern addressed by this policy.

3.7 Relative: A parent, spouse or domestic partner, child, sibling, half-sibling, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law, child-in-law, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, or first cousin, as well as any step or foster relationship. These relationships may arise through birth, marriage, adoption, or other lawful means.

Policy Office Draft

3.8 *Relationship Disclosure Form*: The form used by People and Culture for employees to disclose actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest arising from relationships covered by this policy.

3.9 Relationship Management Plan (RMP): A written plan of action by which an employee's conflict or potential conflict can be managed or eliminated.

3.10 Romantic partner: For this policy, two or more people engaged in a romantic relationship.

3.11 Romantic relationship: A relationship characterized by romantic, amorous, intimate, or dating interactions. Whether a relationship is considered romantic under this policy depends on the nature of the interactions, not the duration of the relationship.

3.12 Volunteer: An individual who is unpaid in their service at the University, offers services freely without coercion or pressure to serve, and has no expectation of receiving pay or other benefits.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 Policy Scope

4.1.1 This policy applies to all university employees.

4.2 Relationship to Other Policies

4.2.1 Conduct specifically defined in and prohibited by the UVU policies in section 2.0 is subject to the procedures outlined in the applicable policy.

4.2.2 UVU Policy 165 *Discrimination and Harassment* prohibits employees from engaging in sexual conduct with subordinate employees or subordinate students amid the potential for the abuse of power. Reports of such conduct will be handled in accordance with Policy 165.

4.3 Supervision of Relatives or Household Members

4.3.1 Executive, faculty, staff, student employees, and work-study employees may not directly or indirectly supervise, manage, exercise decision-making authority, or exert influence over the conditions of employment of a relative or household member.

4.4 Organizational Structures and Reporting Relationships

4.4.1 To maintain fairness and prevent actual or perceived conflicts of interest and influence, employees may not work in the same division, college, or school as a relative or household member unless an exception is granted under this policy. Employees may not exercise authority

Policy Office Draft

or influence on a family or household member's conditions of employment or share a first or second-level supervisor with a relative or household member.

4.4.2 Student employees who share a household but are not relatives as defined by this policy may work in the same division, college, or school, provided neither can influence the other's conditions of employment.

4.4.3 Employee Relations (ER) or a designee may determine whether relative or household member relationships, organizational structures, or circumstances involving a relationship addressed by this policy create an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or inappropriate influence. They may require appropriate measures to address a conflict, including reassignment, transfer, or separation of employment. For qualifying exceptions, see section 5.2.

4.5 Romantic Relationships

4.5.1 Romantic partners must avoid conduct prohibited by this policy and any employment situation where they may exert influence over the supervision, management, decision-making authority, or any condition of employment of a romantic partner.

4.6 Disclosure

4.6.1 Employees are expected to voluntarily disclose a current or upcoming violation of this policy by using the *Relationship Disclosure Form*. Individuals who fail to disclose a current or upcoming violation of this policy that is discovered by other means may be subject to corrective action under university policy up to and including termination of employment.

4.7 Resolution of Noncompliant Relationships

4.7.1 One of the parties involved in a relationship or issue covered by this policy will be required to request an exception or obtain another position that complies with this policy within 90 calendar days. During this period, the individual is expected to continue fulfilling all duties and performance expectations of their current position. Both individuals will have the option to choose which party will obtain an alternate position.

4.7.2 People and Culture may assist in identifying suitable positions; however, it is the responsibility of the employee or employees involved to pursue and secure the new placement. The University cannot guarantee that a suitable position will be available.

4.7.3 If no suitable position is found or an exception to this policy under section 5.2 is not granted by the Vice President of People and Culture, their designee, or the President within 90 calendar days, the parties must jointly decide and notify the Vice President of People and Culture or their designee within five calendar days which party will be separated from employment.

Policy Office Draft

4.7.4 If the parties cannot agree on which party will transition to comply with this policy, the University will decide within five (5) business days. The transition may involve separation from employment or an offer to transfer to another position or area of the University. The affected party may remain in their current position for no more than 30 calendar days beyond the initial 90-day transition period. The University may shorten or eliminate the transition period if additional policy violations are identified.

4.7.5 An employee whose separation from employment is required under this policy retains any applicable grievance rights under UVU Policy 335 *Staff Grievance* and under UVU Policy 649 *Faculty Sanction and Dismissal for Cause*.

4.8 Changes Within Existing Relationships

4.8.1 When changes to existing relationships result in a relative or household relationship, employees must disclose this change to their immediate supervisor and ER through the *Relationship Disclosure Form* within 30 calendar days of the event. Supervisors receiving these reports must consult with ER to ensure they address potential issues related to supervisory responsibilities and organizational or reporting structures.

4.8.2 Similarly, when an existing relative or household relationship dissolves, the parties must recognize potential biases and refrain from behaviors that may create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

4.8.3 Failure to disclose changes within existing relationships may result in disciplinary action up to and including separation of employment.

4.9 Violations

4.9.1 Individuals who violate this policy, including the terms of a fully signed relationship management plan (RMP), may be subject to corrective action under university policy up to and including separation of employment. The University may also take other actions required by state and federal law. These may include filing a criminal complaint under the *Utah Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act* or reporting policy violations to outside agencies or sponsors.

4.10 Reporting Violations

4.10.1 Any person who has a reasonable belief that a violation of this policy exists must report their concern to their immediate supervisor, to ER, or through EthicsPoint by calling 877-228-5401 or submitting online at https://my.uvu.edu/workplace/peopleandculture/performance-and-development/incident-report.html

4.10.2 Supervisors must immediately notify ER of any concerns, reports, or identified policy violations involving a relative or household relationship in the workplace.

Policy Office Draft

4.11 Prohibited Retaliation

4.11.1 Retaliation is strictly prohibited against anyone who reports a potential violation, assists someone with a report of a violation, participates in any manner in an investigation, or in the resolution of a report made under this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation, reprisals, or adverse action related to an individual's employment or education. An individual who retaliates will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. (See UVU Policy 168.)

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Request for an Exception

5.1.1 Requests for an exception to section 4.3 or 4.4 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A written request from the individual must be submitted to ER and the requesting party's immediate supervisor. ER will review the request for accuracy and completeness and provide a recommendation.

5.1.2 The Vice President of People and Culture or their designee will review ER recommendations and may consult with the Office of General Counsel or the University President as needed. The final decision will be made by the Vice President of People and Culture, their designee, or by the University President, as indicated in 5.2. below. ER will inform the parties involved of the final decision.

5.2 Requirements for Granting an Exception

5.2.1 Exceptions may be granted under the following circumstances:

5.2.2 The university employee will be employed for a period of 12 weeks or fewer;

5.2.3 The university employee is a volunteer as defined by university policy;

5.2.4 The university employee is the only person available, qualified, or eligible for the position;

5.2.5 The University President determines that the person requesting the exception is the only individual available or best qualified to perform supervisory functions for the University.

5.2.6 The individual is a student employee participating in a university-related academic program, such as a work-study or internship program, and they cannot benefit from a family or household relationship or influence another individual's conditions of employment.

Policy Office Draft

5.3 Transition of Existing Arrangements

5.3.1 Any previous exceptions or conflict of interest management arrangements require the development of a new RMP under this policy. Approval of previous or existing plans and arrangements is not guaranteed and is subject to this policy's requirements.

5.4 Relationship Management Plan

5.4.1 Within 10 business days of being notified by ER that a RMP is needed, the employee must work with their supervisor to create and submit a proposed RMP. ER may discuss the plan with the employees, their supervisors, and other relevant parties to suggest changes. The employee cannot engage in any activity related to the proposed RMP until the plan has been approved by ER and signed by the employee and ER.

5.4.2 If an exception is granted, an RMP will, insofar as possible, address and mitigate any potential conflicts of interest involving supervisory, organizational, or reporting relationships with a relative or household member.

5.4.3 After the employee, supervisor, and ER sign the RMP, a copy will be given to the employee, their immediate supervisor, ER, and any involved parties. The parties are responsible for following the plan, and the designated supervisor must monitor its effectiveness.

5.4.4 The relevant parties and ER must review the RMP annually, or whenever there is a change in position or other circumstances that may affect the plan, to assess its relevance and identify any necessary changes. If no changes to the plan are needed, ER generates a new copy of the RMP that is signed by the employee, their designated supervisor, and ER. If there are plan changes, the updated RMP is submitted in accordance with this policy.

POLICY HISTORY		
Date of Last Formal Review: Click here to enter a date.		
Due Date of Next Review: Click here to enter a date.		
Date of Last Action	**Action Taken**	**Authorizing Entity**
	New policy approved through the regular policy process.	UVU Board of Trustees

Policy Office Draft