



Policy Title:	Personal Relationships in the Workplace
Policy #:	06-001-0180
Effective Date:	9/24/2025
Approved by:	Telly Delor, Chief Operating Officer
Functional Area:	Human Resources
Responsible Leader:	Stephanie Shank, Human Resource Director
Policy Owner:	Kristy Dennis, Human Resource Manager
Applies to:	Community Agency Contractor, Contracted Network Providers, Directly Operated Programs, Specialized Residential Providers, SCCCMH Staff, SCCCMH Board

Purpose: St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) is committed to fostering a cooperative, inclusive, and productive work environment that reflects our core values: Compassion, Accessibility, Relationships, Empowerment, and Service Excellence (CARES). The purpose of this policy is to prevent potential conflicts of interest, favoritism, and harassment that may arise from *personal relationships* in the workplace. By establishing clear expectations for conduct between employees—including supervisory personnel—this policy promotes ethical behavior, equitable treatment, and a culture of trust that supports personal and organizational well-being. It is the policy of SCCCMH to have zero tolerance for harassment of employees, students, volunteers, and applicants, including sexual harassment, and zero tolerance for retaliation due to making a harassment complaint or due to recipient rights activity.

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) that applies to all SCCCMH employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary, contract, volunteers, and interns. It is applicable to individuals at all levels of the organization, including supervisors, managers, directors, and officers.

II. Standards

- A.** An employee involved in a personal relationship with another employee may not:
 - 1. Work in the same department as the individual with whom they are involved (unless disclosed and approved by Leadership).

2. Supervise or be supervised by that individual; or
 3. Hold a position that influences the terms, conditions, or advancement of the other's employment.
- B.** Managers, Supervisors, Directors, and Officers are strictly prohibited from entering into or maintaining a personal relationship with a *subordinate*. This includes direct reports as well as individuals within the same supervisory chain of command.
 - C.** Even in the absence of a direct reporting relationship, SCCCMH reserves the right to take prompt and appropriate action if a personal relationship creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest, disrupts the work environment, or raises concerns about favoritism or unfair treatment.
 - D.** Employees who become involved in a personal relationship with a co-worker, especially one involving a supervisory-subordinate dynamic, are required to promptly disclose the relationship to Human Resources. Disclosures ensure transparency and enables the organization to take appropriate action to prevent workplace disruption or conflict.
 - E.** When a personal relationship is disclosed, SCCCMH will determine the course of action to be taken.
 - F.** Failure to comply with this policy, including failure to disclose a qualifying relationship, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Violations that involve supervisory-subordinate relationships will be considered particularly serious due to the potential for abuse of power and conflicts of interest.
 - G.** All SCCCMH employees will receive training on this policy during onboarding and through periodic refresher sessions. The policy will be clearly communicated and readily accessible to promote understanding and compliance.
 - H.** Employees seeking support or clarification regarding workplace relationships, conflict of interest concerns, or policy interpretation are encouraged to contact Human Resources. Confidential support is available through Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources as well.

III. Procedures, Definitions, and Other Resources

A. Procedures

Actions

Action Number	Responsible Stakeholder	Details
1.0	Human Resources Department	1. Provide all new employees with training on this policy during onboarding and ensure all existing employees participate in periodic refresher training.
2.0	Supervisor	2. Monitor their departments for signs of personal relationships that could pose conflicts of interest.
3.0	Employee	3. Promptly notify Human Resources Department if employee enters into a personal relationship with a co-worker or supervisory-subordinate relationship.
4.0	Human Resources Department	4. Document the disclosure and begin an assessment of the work-related dynamics involved (e.g., department, supervision, influence over employment terms). Forward findings to Leadership.
5.0	Leadership	5. Determine the course of action to be taken (e.g., transfer or other mitigation measures).

B. Related Policies

N/A

C. Definitions

1. *Personal relationship*: A relationship between individuals who have or have had a continuing relationship of a romantic, dating, or intimate nature.
2. *Subordinate*: Any employee whose job tasks, performance assessments, or work environment are directly or indirectly influenced by another employee. This includes direct reports as well as individuals within the same supervisory chain of command.

D. Forms

N/A

E. Other Resources (i.e., training, secondary contact information, exhibits, etc.)

N/A

F. References

N/A

IV. History

- Initial Approval Date: 09/24/2025
- Last Revision Date: BY:
- Last Reviewed Date: BY:
- Non-Substantive Revisions: N/A
- Key Words: personal relationships, subordinate