



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING**

#25-1075

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: January 6, 2026

TITLE: Second Reading - Ordinance Amending Chapter 2, Section 2-43
"Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" of the Code of Ordinances of the
City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to Remove the Restriction that Relatives
Cannot Work in the Same Department and Establish a Prohibition Against
Direct Reporting Relationships Between Relatives - **(Commission
Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission approve an amendment to Chapter 2 "Administration", Section 2-43 "Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida (Code of Ordinances). This amendment to the Code is to remove the restriction that related City employees cannot work in the same department and to establish a prohibition against an employee directly reporting to a relative or a relative's direct supervisor.

Background

Currently, Chapter 2, Section 2-43 "Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" of the Code of Ordinances states that City employees who are related shall not be employed in the same department. If City employees become related during employment, the City Manager may, when practical and reasonable, transfer one of the employees to another department. An employee shall not be transferred into a department if a related employee is already employed in that department.

The City's current ordinance is more restrictive than Section 112.3135, Florida Statutes, which prohibits public officials from appointing, employing, promoting, or advancing a relative to a position over which the public official exercises jurisdiction or control. The City Attorney's Office has advised that the existence of a reporting relationship between relatives does not inherently violate Section 112.3135, Florida Statutes. Rather, a violation occurs only if the supervisory employee engages in an action explicitly prohibited by the statute. Accordingly, the amendment to the ordinance will establish two (2) degrees of separation between relatives, prohibiting an employee from directly supervising their relative or from supervising their relative's direct supervisor.

Staff conducted a City-wide review to determine the number of interdepartmental familial relationships, identifying one-hundred and sixty-nine (169) such relationships. Departments in which familial relationships exist, listed in order from highest to lowest, include Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Fire Rescue, Development Services, and Finance.

As a result, staff recommends amending the ordinance to remove the restriction on the employment of relatives within the same department and instead prohibit employees from directly reporting to relatives, with at least two (2) degrees of separation between relatives based on supervisory and reporting roles. This amendment will bring the City into compliance with its own ordinance, avoid unnecessarily restricting hiring and promotional actions beyond what is required by state law, and reduce the risk of violations under Section 112.3135, Florida Statutes.

The first reading of the ordinance was considered by the City Commission on December 16, 2025, and approved without any modification (CAM #25-1054).

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029 Strategic Plan*, specifically advancing:

- Business Growth and Support Focus Area, Goal 6: Build a diverse and attractive economy

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are United*.

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Internal Support Focus Area
- Implementation Element
- Goal 1: Fort Lauderdale Comprehensive Plan shall accomplish City's *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan* regarding the City's future growth and the six Cylinders of Excellence and shall be the City's primary policy document to guide all of its activities and development.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Current Ordinance

Exhibit 2 – Proposed Ordinance

Prepared by: Kristin Milligan, Deputy Director, Human Resources

Department Director: Jerome Post, Human Resources