



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

#25-0058

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: May 20, 2025

TITLE: Discussion Regarding Amending Chapter 2, Section 2-43 of the Code of Ordinances "Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

The purpose of this item is to provide opportunity for review and discussion of an upcoming proposal from staff to approve an amendment to the Chapter 2 "Administration", Section 2-43 "Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" of the Code of Ordinances (Code) of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida (City). This proposed amendment to the Code would remove the restriction that precludes related City employees from working in the same department and add a provision that allows relatives to work in the same department to the extent it does not violate applicable Florida law and neither employee supervises the other relative employee.

Currently, Chapter 2, Section 2-43 "Restrictions on Employment of Relatives" of the Code defines relatives and stipulates that City employees who are related shall not be employed in the same department. If City employees become related during employment, then the City Manager, when practical and reasonable, may transfer one of the employees to another department. An employee shall not be transferred into a department if a related employee is currently 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 in or to a position for which the public official exercises jurisdiction or control. The restrictive nature of the City's current ordinance does not align with current best practices and becomes prohibitive in the City's recruitment of qualified individuals for employment.

Additionally, a report from the City Auditor from 2021 included a recommendation that the City amend the current policy surrounding nepotism due to the ordinance's ambiguity regarding the difference between an employee being hired into a relative's chain-of-command versus being promoted into it. As such, Staff recommends addressing both issues simultaneously by removing language prohibiting employment of relatives in the same department and adding language explicitly prohibiting employment of relatives in an

employee's chain-of-command regardless of whether the circumstance arises due to appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement.

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 – City Auditor's Report

Exhibit 3 – Proposed Ordinance

Prepared by: Kristin Milligan, Deputy Director of Human Resources

Department Director: Jerome Post, Director of Human Resources