



## **RU Policy No. 2.5**

**Responsible Division:** Office of Human Resources

**Originally Issued:** 11/2017

**Last Revised:** 11/2017

**Revised Effective Date:** 11/2017

### **Policy on Consensual Romantic or Physical Relationships**

#### ***Policy Statement***

Roosevelt University is committed to the preservation of the dignity and worth of all members of the University community, and to the elimination of conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. As a general matter, the University strongly discourages romantic or physical relationships between an Employee and another Employee, and prohibits such relationships between an Employee (as defined below) and a student. Certain relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions or educational decisions. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the Employee or Student is suspect and may be viewed by others – including, at a later date, by the Employee or Student – as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of conflicts, bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion, and exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work and learning environment. Accordingly, the purpose of this Policy is to address romantic and/or physical relationships between Employees and/or Students.

The University reserves the right to modify or amend this Policy at any time, at its sole discretion. Any change to this Policy will become effective at the time designated above, and the changes will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. This Policy does not constitute an express or implied contract between Roosevelt University and any past, present, or prospective student, employee (including administrator, faculty, or staff), contractor, or volunteer.

Unless otherwise stated, the following definitions apply to this Policy:

- “Employee” shall refer to all employees (including administrators, full-time and part-time faculty, and staff), contractors, and volunteers.
- “Employment decisions” shall refer to the terms and conditions of an employment applicant or Employee’s employment with the University, including employment or promotional opportunities, benefits, privileges, and working conditions.

- “Student” shall refer to all prospective and current students of the University.
- “Educational decisions” shall refer to the terms and conditions of a student applicant or Student’s education at the University, including access to programs, grades, and learning environment.

### ***Policy***

The University specifically prohibits the following romantic or physical relationships:

- One between two Employees where one Employee reports directly or indirectly to the other Employee in the relationship (except as provided below\*);
- One between an Employee and a Student (except as provided below\*\*); and
- Any other relationship where there is the potential that either party could exercise undue influence over the other party and/or could use their status to inappropriately benefit the other party.

An Employee who violates this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

\*If any Employee commences a consensual romantic or physical relationship with another Employee where one Employee reports directly or indirectly to the other Employee, the parties must notify the Vice President of Human Resources/Chief Human Resources Officer. Once the relationship is made known to the University, the University will review the situation, including the reporting structure between the two Employees, to determine whether one or both Employees need to be moved to another job or Division. If it is determined that one party must be moved and there are jobs in other Divisions available to both, the parties may decide who will be the one to apply for a new position. If the parties cannot amicably come to a decision, or if the party is not chosen for the position to which they applied, the parties will again contact Human Resources, which will decide which party should be moved. That decision will be based on which move will be least disruptive to the University as a whole. If it is determined that one or both parties must be moved, but no other jobs are available for either party, the parties will be given the option of terminating their relationship or resigning from the University.

\*\* If a current Employee and prospective Student or a prospective Employee and current Student are in a consensual romantic or physical relationship before the prospective Student or Employee commence their relationship with the University, their relationship shall not be a violation of this Policy so long as the relationship is disclosed to, and managed through, the University’s conflict of interest and conflict of commitment policy and procedures.

### **Complaints and Anti-Retaliation**

Any person who has a good faith belief that they have experienced or witnessed a violation of this Policy must report the incident to the Office of Human Resources, who will intake the complaint and send it to the appropriate party for investigation and response.

It is a violation of University policy to retaliate against a person who submits or participates in the investigation of a complaint of conduct that violates this Policy.

***Entities Affected by this Policy***

All Divisions of the University.

***Related Documents***

See RU Policy No. 1.5 (Policy on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment); RU Policy No. 2.1 (Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, and Retaliation). Please also reference any complaint resolution or other procedures implemented pursuant to this Policy.

***Revision and Implementation***

The Vice President of Human Resources shall have the authority to revise this Policy, subject to the approval of the President's Executive Council.

The following shall have the authority to establish any procedures necessary to implement this Policy:

- The Vice President of Human Resources; and
- The Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (and/or, as authorized by the VP, the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students).