FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT			
Subject:	**Hiring of Relatives in the Finance and Administration Department**	**No.**	**FA-104.00**
		Effective Date:	**May 1, 2006**
Issue Date:	**May 1, 2006**	**Revision No.:**	

1. PURPOSE

To define the Department's position on the hiring of relatives.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Department of Finance and Administration employees and supersedes all former Finance & Administration Department policies, procedures and directives. For purposes of this policy, employee includes both full-time and part-time employees as well as temporary workers employed by an employment service and assigned to the department. Unpaid interns and paid interns placed in the department through a city sponsored internship program are not considered employees under this policy.

3. POLICY

It is the policy of the Finance and Administration Department to discourage the employment of relatives within the department. As a city government financial entity, it is important to avoid favoritism, conflicts of interests, threats to confidentiality, and any suggestion of nepotism, as well as to prevent potential problems in areas of job assignments, career development, interpersonal relationships and supervision.

4. DEFINITION OF TERMS HEREIN

4.1 "Relative" is defined as brother, sister, parent, child or stepchild, grandparent, nephew, niece, first cousin, grandchild, and/or their spouses; or a spouse, or the brother, sister, parent, child or stepchild, grandparent, nephew, niece, or first cousin of that spouse, or any family member of the same household.

4.2 "Division" is an organizational subdivision of the Finance and Administration Department as described in departmental organizational charts.

4.3 "Sphere of influence relationship" is defined as the supervisory, administrative and/or auditing authority derived from one's position that can directly or indirectly affect an employee's conditions of employment.

4.4 "Finance and Administration Department " – the F&A department includes those divisions in the chain of command of the Director of F&A. It does not include the divisions of the Mayor's Office that are included in F&A budget. These are the Office of the Chief Administrator, the Office of the Agenda Director, the Governmental Affairs and Public Policy Office, 3-1-1, the Special Events Office and the Office of Emergency Management.

Approved:	Date Approved:	Policy No.
Judy Gray Johnson	April 24, 2006	FA-104.00

5. POLICY AMPLIFICATION

As of the effective date of this policy, it shall be the responsibility of every employee to immediately notify their Supervisor and Division Manager in writing of all relatives who currently work for the Finance and Administration Department

5.1 It is the purpose of this policy statement to avoid creating any new situations where relatives are employed in "sphere of influence" relationships. Therefore, hiring or transfer of relatives of existing Finance and Administration Department employees into the department shall be strictly prohibited.

5.2 The Department realized that certain relationships among employees may exist that are contrary to this policy. As of the effective date of this policy, current relationships shall be subject to the guidelines established in the Mayor's Policy No. 104 entitled "Hiring of Relatives". No new relationships inconsistent with this policy shall be permitted and attempts shall be made to assign affected employees to different divisions.

5.3 Current employees in the Department who become related as a result of marriage shall immediately notify their supervisor and shall not be allowed to work in the same division. The Division Manager shall be notified immediately by the supervisor. The following guidelines shall be used when one employee must transfer out of a division.

5.3.1 The affected employees should attempt to decide for themselves which employee shall seek transfer and notify his/her supervisor.

5.3.2 In cases of marriage between employees where neither employee volunteers to transfer, the employee with the least seniority shall be required to seek transfer.

5.3.3 If an employee marries the relative of another employee, the employee who marries shall be required to seek transfer, provided neither employee volunteers to transfer.

5.3.4 Prior to a marriage which will result in a conflict with this policy, an employee should make every attempt to seek transfer and will be assisted by the HR Division. However, once an employee has married, the HR Division shall assist the employee for a period of 60 days to attempt to locate a suitable transfer, either within this department, or another City department.

5.3.5 If a transfer cannot be obtained, the employee shall be expected to resign his/her employment with the City of Houston or be subject to termination/indefinite suspension.

5.4 Division level managers, and above, shall under no circumstances have relatives employed in the Department to avoid accusations of favoritism or discrimination in conditions of employment. All supervisory personnel should exercise extreme

caution and discretion in personal relationships with other employees or their relatives in order to avoid the appearance of favoritism, conflict of interest, or accusations of sexual harassment.

5.5 Questions and conflicts regarding this policy shall be addressed to the Deputy Director of Administrative Services, who shall immediately make known to the Director any exception to this policy.