DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
NAVY REGION HAWAII
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18 Nov 11

FRATERNIZATION AND FAVORITISM POLICY

As Commander, and as a command, we will not tolerate fraternization or favoritism. Proper social interaction among officer, enlisted members, and civilians is encouraged as it enhances unit cohesion, morale, and esprit de corps. Further, fraternization and favoritism are prohibited because they erode the authority and respect for senior personnel, have an enormously negative effect on good order and discipline, and seriously undermine the command's (our) effectiveness.

"Fraternization" is the term traditionally used to identify personal relationships that contravene the customary bounds of acceptable senior-subordinate relationships. Although it has most commonly been applied to the officer-enlisted relationship, fraternization also includes improper relationships and social interaction between officer members as well as between enlisted members, regardless of service affiliation, that are unduly familiar and are prejudicial to good order and discipline or are of a nature to bring discredit upon the Naval service. "Favoritism" is the term used to identify situations in which civilian employees abuse their senior position for personal gain and actual or perceived preferential treatment. Fraternization and favoritism are gender-neutral concepts, which focus on the detriment to good order and discipline resulting from the erosion of respect for authority inherent in an unduly familiar senior-subordinate relationship, and not the gender of the employees or members involved.

It is impossible to set forth every act that may be prejudicial to good order and service discrediting because the surrounding circumstances often determine whether the conduct in question is inappropriate. Prohibited relationships are those that call into question a senior's objectivity, result in actual or apparent preferential treatment, undermine the authority of a senior, or compromise the chain of command. Examples of prohibited relationships and inappropriate behavior include, but are not limited to the following: forming private business partnership; flirting; dating; cohabitation; intimate or sexual relations between officer and enlisted members; and intimate or sexual relations between officer members or between enlisted members that are considered unduly familiar given the rank and position of the persons involved.

The responsibility for preventing inappropriate relationships must rest primarily with the command's senior civilian and military leaders. But this policy is applicable to all members and employees. Seniors throughout the chain of command will be especially attentive to personal associations, ensuring their actions and the actions of their subordinates are supportive of the chain of command and good order and discipline. All offending conduct will be addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. I (we) expect every military and civilian supervisor and manager, and all employees, to support our command's fraternization and favoritism policy. Concerns or questions regarding this policy may be addressed to any member of your chain of command, up through and including me. Other available points of contact include the Region Equal Opportunity Advisor and Staff Judge Advocate.

F. L. PONDS