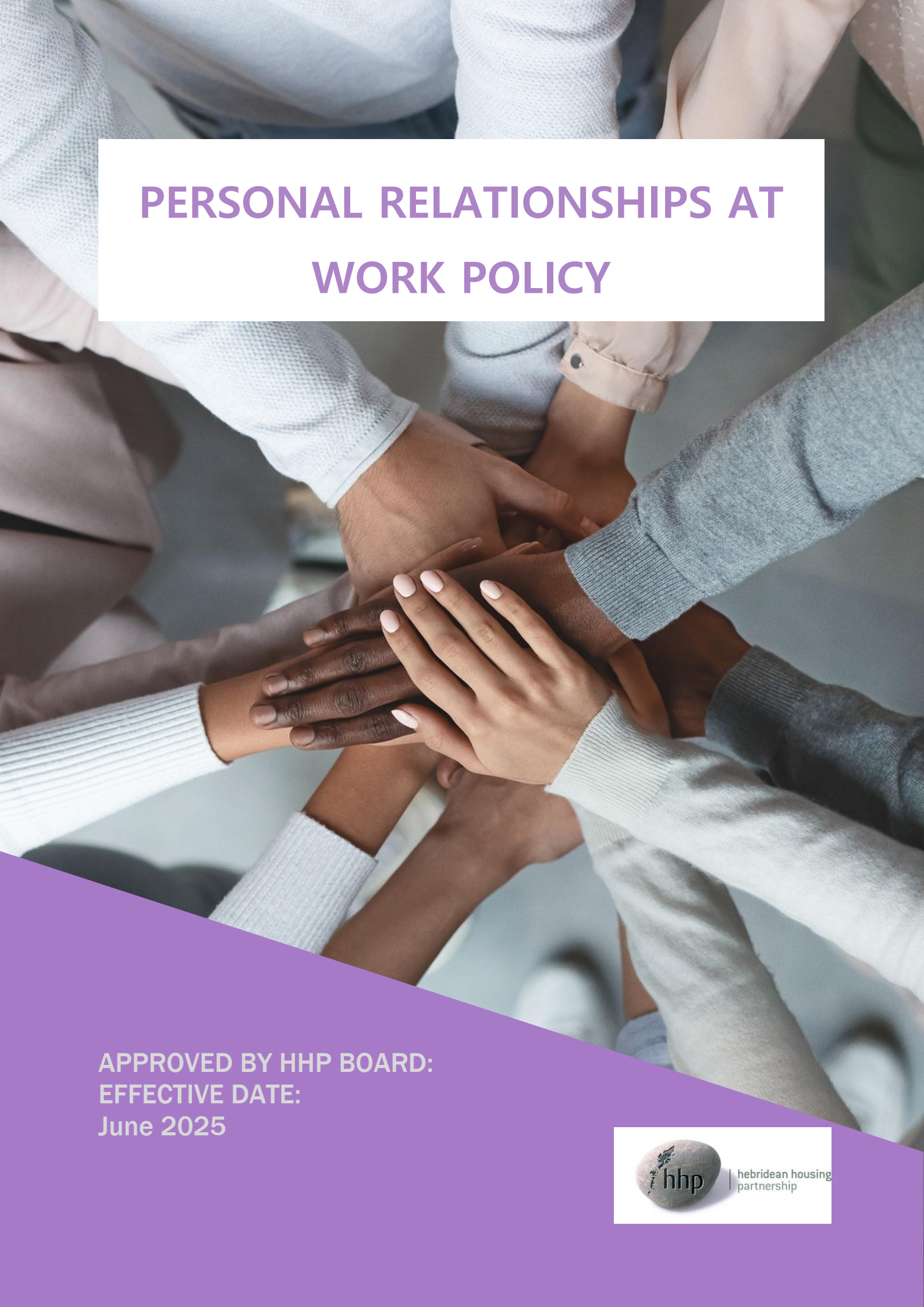




PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK POLICY

APPROVED BY HHP BOARD:
EFFECTIVE DATE:
June 2025



hebridean housing
partnership

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We recognise that employees may form friendships and sometimes personal relationships with colleagues or those connected with their work. While we do not wish to interfere with these relationships, we are duty bound to ensure that all staff behave appropriately, adhering to our standards of conduct set out in our policies, and avoid behaviours which could lead to allegations of impropriety.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the standards expected regarding personal relationships connected with work. You should speak to your line manager if you are unsure of the standards expected of you. If the expected standards set out below are not met, we will manage any breaches following our disciplinary procedure.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all HHP staff. The policy and procedure are non-contractual. We may charge it at any time as is appropriate. Should changes be made, we will carry out consultation.
- 1.4 It applies to job applicants in so far as applicants are advised to declare "significant social relationships" with existing staff and contractors.

AIMS

- 2.1 Our primary aims are to comply with all relevant legislation.
- 2.2 To be clear on our standards and expectations concerning personal relationships at work.
- 2.3 To manage any situations out with the expected standards in accordance with this policy.
- 2.4 To manage situations that may arise in a fair, consistent and appropriate way, and comply with all relevant discriminatory legislation.

REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 We expect you will:
 - not allow any close personal relationships with a colleague, contractor, client, customer or supplier to influence your conduct, judgement or decisions while at work.
 - declare a close personal relationship with a colleague or any other person connected to your employment to your line manager. If the relationship is between

a manager/supervisor, we expect this to be declared to a more senior manager and the Director/Chief Executive.

- respect your surroundings, your colleagues, and our organisation.
- be aware of your behaviour in any social media interaction connected to personal relationships at work.
- follow the highest standards of behaviour at conferences and all other internal or external events where you are there in connection with HHP.

3.2 You can expect:

- to treat any information concerning a personal relationship connected to your work in the strictest of confidence. This will also be recorded on the personal files of both employees if both of you are staff.
- to discuss the situation with those involved, this will be done by an appropriate senior manager. We may move one or both employees to another job in another department/section/team or, consider other working arrangements in line with the needs of the organisation will discuss options with both employees and seek to reach an agreement regarding the transfer of one or both employees.
- If appropriate measures or working arrangements cannot be put in place, the organisation may terminate the employment of one or both as a very last resort.
- to apply similar principles to an employee who is in a close personal relationship with a client, customer, contractor or supplier, in particular where the employee's job has the authority or a close connection with the individual. We expect the relationship to be declared to the employee's line manager. In these circumstances, we may move the employee to another job in another department/section/team or, consider other working arrangements in line with the needs of the organisation or, as a very last resort may terminate the employment with the employee.
- In situations where a close personal relationship with a Board Member or, another volunteer, a client, customer, contractor or supplier, the Board Member/volunteer will be excluded from any discussions connected to the person they have a personal relationship with. If this is not possible or appropriate, the Board member may be required to step down from their position.

TERMINATION PROCESS SUMMARY

- 4.1 If termination of employment is the last and final consideration available after other avenues have been explored, the following fair process will be followed:
- 4.2 The employee being invited by a Director to put forward suggestions for alternative working arrangement that meets our business needs.
- 4.3 We will take all suggestions put forward into consideration. If we do not deem any suitable and, if we believe that there may be a risk that our business activities and judgements, either internal or external, may be at risk of allegations of impropriety, then we will produce a short report outlining the reasons why dismissal is recommended.
- 4.4 The employee being invited to a formal meeting in writing. At the meeting, they will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague, and both parties (the employer and employee) will be given the opportunity to put forward their case.
- 4.5 The meeting will be conducted by those with the authority to dismiss the employee in question.
- 4.6 The panel deliberating (in private) over the information put before making a decision.
- 4.7 The decision of the panel being communicated in writing to the employee within 7 days of the decision being made, this letter will also provide details of how to appeal the decision.
- 4.8 The employee being paid all accrued annual leave and flexi not taken to the date of termination, as well as any payment in lieu of notice as set out in their contract of employment if a decision to dismiss is made.

MONITORING & REVIEW

- 5.1 We will monitor the implementation of this policy by exception reporting to the Executive Team.
- 5.2 We will review this policy every 3 years. More frequent reviews will be considered if, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy guidance.

INTERPRETATIONS & ABBREVIATIONS

The following interpretation and abbreviations are used in this policy:

WORD	INTERPRETATION
<i>HHP or Partnership</i>	Hebridean Housing Partnership
<i>Board</i>	Means the Board of the Hebridean Housing Partnership
<i>Board Members</i>	All Members of the Board including co-opted Members
<i>Significant Social Relationship</i>	Where a person whose close relationship with an individual affects that individual's behaviour, attitudes and self-esteem. This usually exists with a family member, spouse, child, common law partner, close friend, sexual partner, business partner of a person who may serve as a role model to an individual or a person whose acceptance and approval is sought.
<i>Team</i>	In this context, refers to a work grouping as defined in our organisational structure, or any other regular or ad-hoc grouping which has been created to further or organisation aims.
<i>Personal Relationship</i>	Any relationship, from friendship through to two people 'being in a relationship together'

All references to the masculine gender in this policy shall read as equally applicable to the feminine gender



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