

## DRCR.net Nepotism Policy

The Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network provides equal opportunity to all qualified persons, and shall not have the effect of showing partiality or granting any special favors to any investigators or staff.

### Definition

In general, nepotism, defined as the act of showing “favoritism” toward relatives, is dissuaded by the Network. Nepotism may exist when relatives or persons who have a “significant personal relationship” where there is “managerial authority” of one over the other, where there is a perceived or identified conflict of interest, or where there is perceived favoritism between management and a Network member.

### Significant personal relationships may include:

- Wife/Husband
- Parent(s)
- Grandparent(s)
- Sister(s)/Brother(s)
- Son(s)/Daughter(s)
- Aunt(s)/Uncle(s)
- Niece(s)/Nephew(s)
- Cousin(s)
- Half-Brother(s)/ Half-Sister(s)
- Foster Parent(s)
- Foster Children
- The Spouses of the Relative(s)
- Persons Who Have A “Significant Personal Relationship” to the Management Staff Member

### Policy Application:

#### 1. Leadership Positions

Individuals in Network leadership positions (e.g. Operations Group or Executive Committee) will refrain from voting on decisions which may affect an individual with which they have a significant personal relationship.

The following are examples where voting may be restricted (other examples may exist):

- a. Selection of protocol chair, Vice-Chair, writing committee member, protocol development committee member, and individual to submit a Network abstract
- b. Approval of a new site or new investigator, dropping a site or investigator, placing a site or investigator on probation or other disciplinary actions.

#### 2. Clinical Sites

Although the DRCR.net does not have a definitive rule prohibiting persons at clinical sites with managerial authority from having a significant personal relationship, clinical sites are encouraged to

44 consider the sensitivities that may result from this relationship before hiring or promoting a person with a  
45 significant personal relationship. For example, it may be difficult for an investigator with a significant  
46 personal relationship with the coordinator to discuss issues related to poor site quality or poor protocol  
47 compliance.

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49 **Reporting**

50 Individuals in Network leadership positions or Coordinating Center staff should inform the Principal  
51 Investigator of the Coordinating Center and/or Network Chair if they have a significant personal  
52 relationship with a Network participant, which may affect their Network responsibilities. The existence of  
53 a relationship does not necessarily imply that nepotism is present. The situation may require special  
54 management by the DRCCR.net to ensure that perceived or actual favoritism does not exist. Special  
55 management may require minor changes in responsibility.