



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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### COMMANDING OFFICER'S PREVENTION OF FRATERNIZATION POLICY

Fraternization is not acceptable in the workplace or off duty. It is my personal commitment to ensure a working environment free from fraternization at this command. These prohibited relationships (or the perception of these relationships) can create unnecessary tension between personnel in a unit, and seriously jeopardize the career potential of the people involved. Unduly familiar relationships in the workplace breed contempt and are totally inconsistent with Navy policy.

Members engaged in fraternization are subject to disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice when the actions of the relationships are determined:

- to not respect the difference in rank or grade; or
- to be prejudicial to good order and discipline; or
- to bring discredit to the Naval service.

Fraternization is a gender-neutral concept. Its focus is on the senior-subordinate relationship, not the gender of the members involved. Fraternization is defined as:

- Any personal relationship between an officer and an enlisted member which is unduly familiar and does not respect differences in rank or grade.
- Any personal relationship between officers or enlisted personnel which are unduly familiar and does not respect the differences in rank or grade where a senior-subordinate supervisory relationship exists.
- Additionally, relationships in which a senior-subordinate relationship exists between civil service employees and military members or between civil service supervisory-subordinate employees could leave the impression of preferential treatment. These relationships are prohibited due to their impact upon morale. Disciplinary action will be taken against civilian members who violate command policies.

Fraternization is prohibited between a junior and a senior enlisted in the same command whether the senior has an actual or perceived position of authority over the junior. By long-standing custom and tradition, Chief Petty Officers (E-7 to E-9) are

separate and distinct leaders within their assigned command. Chief Petty Officers provide leadership not just within their direct chain of command but for the entire unit. Due to this unique leadership responsibility, relationships between Chief Petty Officer and junior personnel (E-1 to E-6) that do not respect differences between grade or rank are typically prejudicial to good order and discipline when they are within the same command.

I will not tolerate staff members behaving inappropriately with other staff members. Anyone observed doing so will be removed from the situation, and if appropriate, other administrative or disciplinary actions will be taken. Each member shall not allow their personal associations and the actions of their subordinates to undermine the support of the military chain of command and the principles of good order and discipline.

I charge each and every one of you to ensure the widest dissemination of information on this subject. Our staff personnel must be superb role models and the conduct of our senior personnel; officer, enlisted, and civil service must be above reproach. Equally as important, our junior personnel must be provided with exemplary leadership and an environment free of intimidation or coercion where communication can flow freely. I require your continued support and cooperation with maintaining professional relationships. All staff members will be held accountable for their own conduct.

  
J. A. THRALLS