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Personnel-General

Scenarios for Relationships Between Soldiers of Different Ranks

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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History. This publication is an expedited revision. The portions affected by this expedited revision are listed in the summary of change.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to the Regular Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States and the U.S. Army Reserve, unless otherwise stated. Procedures in this pamphlet are not modified during mobilization.

Proponent and exception authority. The proponent of this pamphlet is the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–1. The proponent has the authority to approve exceptions or waivers to this publication that are consistent with controlling law and regulations. The proponent may delegate this approval authority, in writing, to a division chief within the proponent agency or its direct reporting unit or field operating agency in the grade of colonel or the civilian equivalent. Activities may request a waiver to this publication by providing justification that includes a full analysis of the expected benefits and must include formal review by the activity's senior legal officer. All waiver requests will be endorsed by the commander or senior leader of the requesting activity and forwarded through their higher headquarters to the policy proponent. Refer to AR 25–30 for specific requirements.

Suggested improvements. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–1 (DAPE–MPC), usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.mbx.command-policy@army.mil.

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Contents (Listed by chapter and page number)

Chapter 1

Introduction, *page 1*

Chapter 2

Examples of Proper and Improper Relationships, *page 2*

Appendixes

A. *References*, *page 10*

B. *Prohibited Relationships*, *page 11*

Table List

Table B–1: *Prohibited relationships under AR 600–20*, *page 11*

Glossary of Terms

Summary of Change

Chapter 1

Introduction

1–1. Purpose

The Army procedures on relationships between Soldiers of different ranks reflects the need of the Military Services to have standard procedures. Soldiers deserve a clear set of guidelines for which interpersonal relationships are acceptable and which are not acceptable. This pamphlet is intended to assist Soldiers, from our most senior leaders to our most junior Soldiers, in understanding the Army procedures on relationships between Soldiers of different ranks.

1–2. References, forms, and explanation of abbreviations

See appendix A. The abbreviations, brevity codes, and acronyms (ABCAs) used in this electronic publication are defined when you hover over them. All ABCAs are listed in the ABCA database located at <https://armypubs.army.mil/abca/>.

1–3. Associated publications

Policy associated with this pamphlet is found in AR 600–20.

1–4. Records management (recordkeeping) requirements

The records management requirement for all record numbers, associated forms, and reports required by this publication are addressed in the Records Retention Schedule–Army (RRS–A). Detailed information for all related record numbers, forms, and reports are located in Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)/RRS–A at <https://www.arims.army.mil>. If any record numbers, forms, and reports are not current, addressed, and/or published correctly in ARIMS/RRS–A, see DA Pam 25–403 for guidance.

1–5. Background

a. Good order and discipline is imperative to the success of military organizations. It is the bedrock upon which unit cohesion is built. Unit cohesion is the result of Soldiers believing that their unit treats them fairly and that the order and discipline is indeed good. Soldiers of all ranks must feel they belong to the “Family.” The Army wants to build the bond between Soldiers, which will enable them to fight, win, and survive on the battlefield. Building the “Family” requires treating one another with dignity and respect. Positive personal relationships are marks of good, solid interaction between Soldiers of different ranks. The Army needs professional, caring interactions because they build vertical bonds which tie leaders and followers. The leader must be counted on to use good judgment, experience, and discretion to draw the line between relationships that are “destructive” and those that are “constructive.”

b. Unit cohesion is hampered anytime relationships between the unit’s members compromise the chain of command. If Soldiers believe that the chain of command is partial, unfair, uses rank for personal gain, or is exploitive or coercive in nature, discipline breaks down and cohesion is destroyed. Damage to the unit occurs when the chain of command is compromised and even when Soldiers simply believe it has been compromised. Real or imagined, the unit and the Army pay the price when relationships between its Soldiers are, or are perceived to be, unprofessional. Soldiers of all ranks meet and associate with each other in many settings, both on and off duty. These meetings and associations foster the trust and confidence necessary for mission accomplishment. Soldiers associating with one another are governed in part by “rank” relationships, which are a basic requirement for maintaining good order and discipline. How these relationships impact authority, discipline, and morale is central to evaluating Soldier relationships and determining if they are in compliance with the Army’s policy regarding relationships between Soldiers of different ranks (see AR 600–20).

Chapter 2

Examples of Proper and Improper Relationships

2-1. General

The chapter illustrates the issues and standards involved in Army regulatory policy contained in AR 600-20. The table in appendix B provides guidance on prohibited relationships in AR 600-20, and is intended to help Soldiers and commanders (CDRs) determine what is appropriate and inappropriate according to Army policy.

2-2. Commander and staff officer

a. Situation. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Thomas, an unmarried battalion CDR, identifies Second Lieutenant (2LT) Adams, an unmarried junior Soldier on his staff, as an outstanding officer with much potential. He counsels her individually on her career progression, assigns her separate significant tasks, and advises her rater that he considers her to be particularly talented. At battalion social events, he always singles her out for discussions to the exclusion of other officers. He frequently invites her to attend staff meetings at brigade and division levels with him, although he does not do so for any other lieutenant. Junior male and female officers within the battalion hint at a sexual relationship (although that was, in fact, not true). In general, junior officer morale is low because of the perceived unequal treatment.

b. Explanation. This relationship clearly causes a perception of partiality or favoritism, adversely affecting morale as prohibited by AR 600-20. CDRs at all levels must be particularly careful in their relationships with subordinates, both male and female. This is especially true in relationships with members in the same chain of command or supervision. In this instance, LTC Thomas exercises poor judgment by establishing such a relationship with 2LT Adams. He should be counseled and directed to take corrective action.

c. Alternative situation. What assessment would be made if LTC Thomas establishes such a relationship with two of six officers? Suppose he offers special mentoring opportunities to all, but only two maintain a commitment? LTC Thomas, by offering assistance to all, is not at fault if only two junior officers continue to participate in a close environment. However, as a CDR, LTC Thomas still has the responsibility of monitoring the command climate and taking appropriate steps to ensure that Soldiers in the command do not perceive partiality or favoritism based on any actions.

2-3. Staff officer and staff officer

a. Situation. Colonel (COL) Murphy, an installation headquarters staff officer, has been a widower for 3 years. At a hail and farewell, he meets Captain (CPT) Salvadore, an unmarried officer in the headquarters. She does not work under his supervision. They begin dating. After 3 months, they both have the same weekend off duty. They reserve separate cottages at the beach. Unfortunately, due to another officer's sudden illness, CPT Salvadore finds out, at the last minute, that she is the weekend duty officer. COL Murphy calls his friend, the secretary of the general staff (SGS), and prevails upon his friendship to find another officer to replace CPT Salvadore as duty officer. COL Murphy and CPT Salvadore are able to spend the weekend relaxing and having serious discussions about their future.

b. Explanation. This is preferential treatment arising from the relationship between COL Murphy and CPT Salvadore. Such preference is forbidden. While their dating is not an issue, taking advantage of his position to obtain CPT Salvadore's release from duty is an example of wrongful activity by COL Murphy. He should be counseled as a minimum action. AR 600-20 prohibits the improper use of rank or position for personal gain. The friendship between COL Murphy and the SGS is also an example of an improper relationship. The SGS gave preferential treatment in replacing CPT Salvadore as duty officer based on his friendship with COL Murphy, and should be counseled as a minimum action.

c. Alternative situation. What happens if COL Murphy calls the SGS to ask another officer whose child is a close friend of COL Murphy's daughter to replace CPT Salvadore as duty officer?

d. Explanation. Taking advantage of his position in this manner is equally improper.

2-4. Noncommissioned officer and junior enlisted Soldier

a. Situation. Sergeant (SGT) Brown is promoted ahead of his unit contemporaries based on his outstanding performance of duty and demonstrated leadership. Since he is married and living off post, his promotion does not result in his moving into noncommissioned officer (NCO) billets. He is already filling a

fire team leader position in his squad, so he is not moved to a new position and his existing supervisory relationship with his fire team remains unchanged. In fact, SGT Brown sees little change in his status or responsibilities as a result of his promotion. He and his spouse continue to socialize with his unit friends, outside of his fire team, who are still privates first class (PFCs) and specialists (SPCs). SGT Brown and his spouse frequently invite them to weekend parties at their home so they can get away from the troop billets and have a good time. When CPT Fox, the company CDR, learns that SGT Brown is continuing to socialize with his subordinates, he calls SGT Brown in for a counseling session. He warns SGT Brown that such relationships can undermine unit discipline. CPT Fox further stresses the need to avoid actual or perceived favoritism, partiality, preferential treatment, and exploitation.

b. Explanation. Social relationships among enlisted Soldiers of different ranks are not inherently wrong. However, in this case, SGT Brown continues to act as an equal in rank to some of the Soldiers in the unit with whom he had formed friendships as a SPC. The CDR firmly stresses to SGT Brown that his new rank carries with it different responsibilities and authority. He is encouraged to view his relationships with his friends in light of any actual or perceived advantage to them. If his familiarity with his friends is perceived as favoritism, it could undermine his authority as an NCO and even erode discipline in his unit. SGT Brown should know the power of positive personal relationships to foster respect and cohesion. If his peers, who are now junior in rank, acknowledge his leadership as much as the seniors who promoted him, he is fostering and encouraging teamwork and bonding. SGT Brown, the chain of command, and his former peer group would benefit from discussing how to handle the change his new rank makes in their relationships. An open discussion will contribute to increased understanding, thereby creating the climate of proper relationships between Soldiers of different ranks.

2-5. Platoon sergeant and enlisted Soldier

a. Situation. Sergeant first class (SFC) Reed, an unmarried platoon SGT of the 1st Platoon, A Company, is dating PFC Adams, an unmarried single Soldier in B Company. Both are in the same battalion. Their relationship is common knowledge in both companies, since they eat their lunches together and spend much of their time together. Although both characterize their relationship as serious, they have not discussed marriage. Both company CDRs are aware of the relationship and do not believe it adversely affects their units.

b. Explanation. The dating relationship is an explicit violation of AR 600-20. CDRs have a wide range of responses available including counseling, reprimand, order to cease, reassignment, or adverse action. CDRs must carefully consider all of the facts and circumstances in reaching a disposition that is warranted, appropriate, and fair. Generally, the CDR should take the minimum action necessary to ensure that the needs of good order and discipline are satisfied. SFC Reed and PFC Adams should be counseled, at a minimum, by their respective unit CDRs concerning their relationship. SFC Reed must be vigilant that she takes no action that could cause, be perceived as causing, or even remotely suggest special treatment for PFC Adams.

2-6. Enlisted Soldier and noncommissioned officer supervisor

a. Situation. SPC Gibson, an unmarried clerk, is taking evening classes in computers and word processing. He is aware of a good job opening in the headquarters. He wants the job and needs a firm recommendation. His current supervisor is acquainted with the officer who would make the selection. One night after work, SPC Gibson asks his supervisor if she would like to go someplace for a drink. During the next week they meet a few times after work, and she agrees to write a letter recommending him for the job. He is overheard bragging to a friend about using his good looks to get the job. His CDR, who overheard the conversation, calls him in for counseling. He admits he has fostered a personal relationship to secure the recommendation.

b. Explanation. Impropriety can result from the actions of a subordinate in a social relationship. When the social relationship is used for personal, work-related gain, the relationship is improper. In this case, both Soldiers should be counseled as a minimum action.

2-7. Enlisted Soldier and noncommissioned officer supervisor (social gathering)

a. Situation. SGT Williams invites all of her squad members over to her house on the weekend for an unofficial get-together and pot luck dinner for teambuilding purposes. Squad members are encouraged to bring their own beer or wine. Is this allowed under AR 600-20?

b. Explanation. Yes, it is. AR 600–20 allows informal social gatherings between officers and enlisted Soldiers for the purposes of teambuilding as long as it involves the entire unit or team. As long as everyone in the squad is invited to the gathering, there is no violation in this scenario.

c. Alternative Situation. At the end of the potluck dinner, most of the squad members have left to go home, and SPC Jones is among one of the last team members there. As some of the team members are leaving, they overhear SGT Williams tell SPC Jones that he has had too much to drink, and that he should spend the night there so that he does not have to drive.

d. Explanation. This situation would be cause for counseling of both Soldiers, as a minimum action. This situation causes the perception among the squad that there could be an improper relationship between SGT Williams and SPC Jones, even if nothing occurs. As the squad leader, SGT Williams is responsible for ensuring her team member gets home safely. She should either ask the other team leaders to take him home, or call a taxi.

2–8. Drill sergeant and initial entry training trainees

a. Situation. SFC Frost, a drill SGT, invites several trainees to his house over the weekend to watch football on television. While there, the trainees drink beer and watch television. As SFC Frost is in the process of painting his house, he asks if they would help. They all do so. Upon returning to the barracks that night, the trainees joked about their new friend, SFC Frost. One of the trainees said, “We paid a small price for easy treatment for the rest of the basic training period—we just painted his house. Of course, we had no real choice.”

b. Explanation. Any training situation requires special consideration and, normally, the command issues local regulations or policy letters. AR 600–20 prohibits relationships between trainees and permanent party personnel (including cadre) except those relationships required by the training mission. In addition, virtually every U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) installation with training requirements has regulations prohibiting anything but duty interaction between trainees and permanent staff (see TRADOC Regulation 350–6). In this situation, SFC Frost violates the regulation when he invites the trainees to his house. He compounds the error by asking them to paint his house, an act that clearly takes improper advantage of both his rank and position. He further violates policy by providing beers; AR 600–20 prohibits any consumption of alcohol between trainers and trainees. Adverse action (including Uniform Code of Military Justice options) against SFC Frost may be appropriate. While counseling may be the most appropriate initial response to an inappropriate relationship, CDRs must determine the appropriate response based on the particular circumstances in each case. AR 600–20 lists a wide range of potential responses to inappropriate relationships.

2–9. Officer and trainee (Family relationships)

a. Situation. COL Smith is CDR of Training Brigade A. Her son, Private (PVT) Smith, is in Company B of this brigade. Does the current policy have any impact on their relationship while PVT Smith is in training?

b. Explanation. AR 600–20 prohibits any relationship between permanent party personnel and initial entry training trainees not required by the training mission. Although this could be interpreted so as to prohibit any contact between COL Smith and her son while her son is in basic training, the intent of the policy is not to disrupt existing Family relationships. At the same time, officer-enlisted Family members are expected to maintain the traditional respect and decorum attending the official military relationship between them while either is on duty or in public.

2–10. First sergeant and enlisted Soldier (Army National Guard and Army Reserve)

a. Situation. First Sergeant (1SG) Hamilton and Staff Sergeant (SSG) Barber are members of the same U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) troop program unit. In their civilian employment they work for the same company and are good friends. Their company CDR has received several complaints that 1SG Hamilton is giving SSG Barber preferential treatment. Investigation work satisfies the CDR that there is truth to the allegation.

b. Explanation. The company CDR should counsel the 1SG to ensure immediate correction, and decide whether administrative action is necessary. Although SSG Barber is not the senior NCO, he is a military leader and should also be counseled/educated on the proper relationship between Soldiers of different ranks. It is very difficult, and perhaps even awkward, for reservists who work side-by-side 5 days a week in a civilian job to reverse roles and adhere to a more rigid military regimen while in uniform or on

duty. Army National Guard (ARNG) and USAR Soldiers must maintain the balance between the civilian and military environment and must always be sensitive to what is expected of them.

2-11. Officer and enlisted Soldier (dating)

a. Situation. Chief Warrant Officer Two (CW2) Baker and SSG Young, both unmarried Soldiers, meet on social media, and start dating. On their second date, each finds out that the other is in the military and stationed at Fort B. CW2 Baker is in the division headquarters while SSG Young is in the corps headquarters. Neither is in a position to influence the career or duty assignments of the other. What are their options?

b. Explanation. The dating relationship is a violation of AR 600-20. CDRs have a wide range of responses available, including counseling, reprimand, order to cease, reassignment, or adverse action. CDRs must carefully consider all of the facts and circumstances in reaching a disposition that is warranted, appropriate, and fair. Generally, the CDR should take the minimum action necessary to ensure that the needs of good order and discipline are satisfied.

c. Alternative situation. What if CW2 Baker was actually CDR Smith, on active duty with the Navy? Would that change anything?

d. Explanation. No. A prohibited relationship between an Army officer and an Army enlisted Soldier would still be prohibited if between a Navy officer and Army enlisted Soldier. This prohibition applies to relationships between Army personnel and personnel of other military services.

2-12. Officer and enlisted (social)

a. Situation. What impact does the policy on officer-enlisted relationships found in AR 600-20 have on attending events at the installation community club, such as “right-arm nights”? Will an enlisted Soldier get into trouble for talking to someone at the club whom they later learn is an officer?

b. Explanation. Common sense should guide every application of the policy on relationships between Soldiers of different ranks. Not all contact or association between officers and enlisted persons violates the policy on prohibited officer enlisted relationships. For example, right-arm nights, in which a CDR might take their senior enlisted member to the community club to socialize over drinks would not be a violation, since this traditional activity reasonably comes within the realm of unit-based social functions and team building. Similarly, leadership professional development meetings attended together by officer and enlisted personnel at a community club would be an appropriate unit function. In contrast, Soldiers who socialize with other Soldiers of any rank at the community club outside the context of unit-based functions or general community activities may be found in violation of the policy depending on the nature of the relationship.

2-13. Officer and enlisted (community activity)

a. Situation. First Lieutenant (1LT) Smith and SSG Jones live in the same neighborhood off post. They both belong to the neighborhood housing association, which makes decisions about common area maintenance and other related issues. 1LT Smith and SSG Jones work closely together on the association, and have become fairly good friends. Are there problems with this arrangement?

b. Explanation. AR 600-20 allows associations between officers and enlisted Soldiers that occur in the context of community organizations. The association between 1LT Smith and SSG Jones, if restricted to activities related to the neighborhood association, would not be prohibited. These activities could include both planning meetings and group social activities (for example, block party or picnic) that relate to the neighborhood. The same type of analysis would apply to relationships related to other community activities, for example, Little League coach and assistant coach, Girl Scout troop leader and assistant leader. However, both parties must observe proper military customs and courtesies.

c. Alternative situation. What if 1LT Smith and SSG Jones are in the same rating chain?

d. Explanation. The relationship is fine as long as professionalism is maintained; however, the CDR should look closely at all the facts and circumstances to determine whether any action is appropriate. The relationship between 1LT Smith and SSG Jones may or may not be perceived by other Soldiers in the organization as unfair. AR 600-20 prohibits relationships between soldiers of different ranks which—

(1) Compromise, or appear to compromise, the integrity of supervisory authority or the chain of command.

(2) Cause actual or perceived partiality or unfairness.

(3) Involve, or appear to involve, the improper use of rank or position for personal gain.

- (4) Are, or are perceived to be, exploitative or coercive in nature.
- (5) Create an actual or clearly predictable adverse impact on discipline, authority, morale, or the ability of the command to accomplish its mission.

2–14. Officer and enlisted Soldier (athletic activities)

a. Situation. CPT Sprint and PFC Racer are members of the installation Army Ten-Miler team. During the trip to Washington, DC, for the race, may the team members go out together to a restaurant?

b. Explanation. Associations between officer and enlisted that occur in the context of athletic teams and events are permitted. CPT Sprint and PFC Racer going to a restaurant together is reasonably related to the team's participation in the Army Ten-Miler. Attending a post-event party for team members would also be permitted.

2–15. Staff officer and enlisted Soldier (athletic activities)

a. Situation. Major (MAJ) Robinson, executive officer of the 1st Battalion, organizes a brigade softball team to play in a local league. She seeks and obtains the brigade CDR's approval to form the team, since they are using the brigade's "Blue Devils" nickname as a team name. No other brigade support or sponsorship is requested, as league games were played evenings and weekends to avoid conflict with duty hours. PFC Miller from B Company, 2nd Battalion is known all over post as an outstanding softball pitcher. His playing with the Blue Devils makes the team a solid contender in any league. PFC Miller participates eagerly on the team, and he knows he can carry the Blue Devils to a winning season. Besides, he knows MAJ Robinson holds an influential position in the brigade if he ever needs a favor. When B Company is tasked, on short notice, to support USAR and ARNG training, MAJ Robinson contacts the 2nd Battalion executive officer and has PFC Miller pulled off the troop list to stay in the rear detachment. Soldiers in B Company complain to the post inspector general who promptly informs the commanding general. The commanding general then determines the appropriate investigative process.

b. Explanation. Joint participation by officer and enlisted personnel in a local softball league is authorized under AR 600–20. However, in this instance, MAJ Robinson exercises poor judgment by using her position and rank to influence personnel actions for a subordinate. While it is not a chain of command relationship, it clearly causes a perception of partiality adversely affecting morale. MAJ Robinson should be counseled, at a minimum.

2–16. Officer and enlisted (religious)

a. Situation. MAJ Jackson and SPC Judd are assigned to different units on post, but belong to the same church. MAJ Jackson hosts a weekly Bible study group at his house, which SPC Judd attends. In addition, the church hosts monthly potluck dinners, and has other occasional social activities for parishioners. May SPC Judd and MAJ Jackson participate in these activities together?

b. Explanation. Yes. Associations between officer and enlisted that occur in the context of religious activities are permitted. However, both parties must observe proper military customs and courtesies. MAJ Jackson should be advised to move the Bible study group to a neutral location.

2–17. Battalion commander and command sergeant major (unit function)

a. Situation. The battalion CDR and her command sergeant major (CSM) play golf together one Sunday a month. Is this allowed under the policy found in AR 600–20?

b. Explanation. Yes, this relationship is acceptable under Army policy. While intimate relationships between officer and enlisted personnel are prohibited, team-building associations are exempt from this prohibition. The relationship between a CDR and their CSM is a unique relationship that is key to the proper functioning of the battalion. An occasional team-building activity involving only the CDR and their CSM, or a CDR and their 1SG, is permissible, even if the activity also has social overtones. However, a duty relationship must be maintained during such associations—no treatment on terms of military equality is permitted. Also, relationships between Soldiers of different ranks that cause actual or perceived partiality or unfairness are prohibited. Thus, shared off-duty activities that occur on a frequent or recurring basis and that involve one favored subordinate or the same favored group of subordinates at the expense of their peers can be indicative of partiality or unfairness. An example of prohibited conduct might be a 1SG who plays golf on a regular basis with one platoon SGT, but does not include the other platoon SGTs, nor does the 1SG invite the other platoon SGTs to accompany them in any similar activity.

2-18. Officer and enlisted (Family Support Group)

a. Situation. B Company has a very active Family Support Group (FSG). The FSG includes the spouses of both enlisted and officer personnel. Does the policy on improper superior-subordinate relationships place any significant limitations on the FSG and its activities?

b. Explanation. Associations between officer and enlisted that occur in the context of a unit-based FSG are permitted. Thus, attendance by officers and enlisted at FSG meetings, and social gatherings would not be prohibited.

2-19. Officer and enlisted (business)

a. Situation. An officer's spouse has a home-based business. Can the spouse operate it with the spouse of an enlisted Soldier?

b. Explanation. The spouse's business is not subject to Army policy, provided that it is solely the spouse's business; that is, that the officer has no connection with the business. Regarding whether the spouse may have enlisted Soldiers or spouses of enlisted Soldiers as business partners or customers, the officer must always be sensitive to the perception by enlisted members of their unit that the business associations of their Family members, as well as themselves, may give rise to actual or perceived preferential treatment. The officer must also be aware of any perception by unit members that they are expected to make a purchase from the spouse. The officer should consult DoD 5500.07-R and their ethics counselor for detailed guidance on applicable restrictions.

2-20. Officer and enlisted (married, business)

a. Situation. An officer and an enlisted Soldier have been married for 2 years. They own an off-post business that is managed for them by a third party (civilian). Is this a violation of the prohibition against ongoing business relationships between officers and enlisted Servicemembers?

b. Explanation. No. Army policy was not intended to prohibit business transactions between spouses.

2-21. Officer and enlisted (gambling)

a. Situation. The installation golf course hosts a weekly golf "scramble." As part of this activity, participants pay a \$10 entry fee, and the winning scramble team keeps the money. The participants are randomly assigned to foursomes. As a result, officers are often in the same foursome with enlisted Soldiers. Is the "scramble" under its current form allowed to continue? Is this unlawful gambling or socializing between officers and enlisted Servicemembers?

b. Explanation. Activities of this type present complex legal issues and should be the subject of consultation with local legal advisors. Army policy allows associations between an officer and enlisted Soldier that occur in the context of athletic and community events. Since the golf scramble is an organized community activity, sponsored by the installation golf course, officer and enlisted participation is allowed. However, Soldiers should always consult local laws and pertinent DoD regulations (DoD 5500.07-R) when determining whether an activity constitutes "gambling." Note that the Standards of Conduct regulation prohibits certain gambling by DoD employees while on duty or on Federally-owned or leased property. Also, the answer to this scenario could be very different if the weekly scramble is not hosted by the installation or by an authorized private organization, but is an informal arrangement in which both officers and enlisted personnel participate.

2-22. Officer and enlisted (married, gambling)

a. Situation. CPT Jones and her spouse, SGT Jones, were married prior to joining the Army. Can they buy a lottery ticket together; go to Atlantic City or Las Vegas and gamble together; or even participate together in the local church's bingo games?

b. Explanation. The policy prohibits gambling between officers and enlisted personnel, and could be interpreted to prohibit gambling with one's spouse. However, the intent of the policy is not to disrupt typical Family activities. In this case, since CPT Jones and SGT Jones are married, the cited activities are permissible. CPT Jones and SGT Jones must, of course, maintain proper decorum while in uniform and while in public.

2-23. Officer and enlisted (Army National Guard and Army Reserve)

a. Situation. CPT Smith and SSG Clark, both Army Reserve Soldiers, are in the same troop program unit. They are not in the same rating chain and have no official relationship as far as duties or positions

are concerned. They have spoken on occasion during drill. They recognize each other at the mall, strike up a conversation, and subsequently begin dating on a regular basis. You are the battalion CDR. Someone tells you they saw the two at a restaurant. Is this a violation of policy?

b. Explanation. No. Although the two individuals first met each other through the unit, their relationship exists primarily due to a civilian acquaintanceship. They are therefore covered by the Reserve exception in AR 600–20. The prohibition against dating does not apply to them.

c. Situation. Four months later, as their civilian relationship has grown, CPT Smith requests that SSG Clark be transferred to his section because his SFC NCO in charge left the unit. CPT Smith will be SSG Clark's officer in charge. Although there are other SFCs in the unit, CPT Smith contends that SSG Clark is better qualified. He also asserts that by working in the SFC position, SSG Clark will enhance his chances for promotion. One of the unit's existing SFCs wants the position and complains to you, the battalion CDR. What action do you take?

d. Explanation. You disapprove the transfer because it would be improper and violate the policy. It would raise an appearance of impropriety by likely compromising the integrity of the supervisory authority, would cause actual or perceived partiality or unfairness, and would create a clearly predictable adverse impact on discipline, authority, and morale in the section. CPT Smith should be counseled on the requirements of both the new policy, and the Standards of Conduct regulation.

2–24. Officer and enlisted (change in status)

a. Situation. SFC Jones has been dating SGT Myers for a year. SGT Myers is attending Officer Candidate School (OCS) and will be commissioned in May. What are their options?

b. Explanation. SFC Jones and SGT Myers must either terminate the relationship or marry within 1 calendar year of SGT Myers' date of commission. If they fail to marry or terminate their relationship by this date, both Soldiers are in direct violation of Army policy in AR 600–20 and are subject to counseling or adverse action.

c. Alternative situation. SFC Jones and SGT Myers decide they would like to get married, but SFC Jones is deployed at the time of SGT Myers' commissioning, making it difficult for them to marry within the 1-year time limit. What are their options?

d. Explanation. SFC Jones and 2LT Myers must seek an exception to policy to adjust their timeline, accounting for SFC Jones' deployment, in order to resolve their relationship in marriage or termination.

2–25. Officer and enlisted (Reserve change in status)

a. Situation. CPT Taylor, an unmarried active duty Soldier, is dating SSG Valdez, an unmarried Army Reserve Soldier, when SSG Valdez gets mobilized to active duty. What are their options?

b. Explanation. CPT Taylor and SSG Valdez must either terminate the relationship or marry within 1 calendar year of SSG Valdez's change in status date. If they fail to marry or terminate their relationship, both Soldiers are in direct violation of Army policy in AR 600–20 and are subject to counseling or adverse action.

2–26. Officer and enlisted (Active Guard Reserve)

a. Situation. A CPT in the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) program initiates a personal dating relationship with an Regular Army PFC. The CPT does not supervise the PFC. Is this an improper relationship?

b. Explanation. Yes, the relationship is a violation of Army policy. Reserve Component members, such as AGR or military technicians, who are on active duty (other than annual training) are subject to the policy.

2–27. Officer and enlisted (promotion into noncompliance)

a. Situation. SSG Rogers and SGT Thomas have been dating for some time. SGT Thomas is selected for OCS. May SSG Rogers and SGT Thomas continue their dating relationship?

b. Explanation. Generally, dating relationships between officers and enlisted are prohibited by AR 600–20. Prior to the date of commissioning, SSG Rogers and SGT Thomas must terminate their dating relationship. Alternatively, if SSG Rogers and SGT Thomas marry before commissioning, their relationship may continue after commissioning. The policy prohibiting social relationships between officer and enlisted personnel will not affect any married couple where one or both of the parties wishes to subsequently advance their military career. So, for example, AR 600–20 would also allow a civilian spouse of an enlisted Soldier to become an officer, or a civilian spouse of an officer to enlist.

2–28. Staff officer and Army Civilian

a. Situation. COL Lindsay is unmarried, and supervises a large staff section. Her staff section has a mix of military and civilian personnel. During her tenure as section chief, COL Lindsay meets and establishes an intimate, personal relationship with Ms. Martin, an unmarried civilian who works in the staff section. COL Lindsay is the senior rater of Ms. Martin's immediate supervisor. COL Lindsay has never attempted to use her authority over Ms. Martin's supervisor for her benefit. However, members of the staff section have seen COL Lindsay and Ms. Martin walking or talking intimately while on break during the workday. One of the staff section members complains to COL Lindsay's supervisor about the relationship.

b. Explanation. COL Lindsay's relationship with Ms. Martin is not a violation of AR 600–20, because the relationship is not between Soldiers of different ranks. However, the problems that AR 600–20 is intended to prevent can also arise in this type of supervisor-subordinate relationship. There is a significant risk that other members of COL Lindsay's staff will believe Ms. Martin receives preferential treatment because of her relationship with COL Lindsay. This perception, even if unfounded, can reasonably be expected to have a detrimental effect on the morale and efficiency of the staff section. As a leader, COL Lindsay needs to be sensitive to these issues and avoid them. COL Lindsay's supervisor should counsel COL Lindsay and inform her that, although AR 600–20 does not apply to this situation, the intent and other regulations do apply. COL Lindsay should be advised to maintain a professional relationship during duty hours with all office staff personnel.

c. Alternative situation. What if COL Lindsay were Ms. McDonald, a civilian supervisor?

d. Explanation. The staff section chief being a Civilian instead of a Soldier does not change their responsibility to use good judgment. It is just as important that Ms. McDonald avoid conduct that can reasonably be expected to damage the morale and efficiency of the section. The critical issue in these situations is whether the conduct in question results in preferential treatment or can reasonably be expected to create the appearance of preferential treatment. AR 690–752 provides additional guidance concerning civilian issues.

Appendix A

References

Unless otherwise indicated, DA publications are available on the Army Publishing Directorate website at: <https://armypubs.army.mil/>.

Section I

Required Publications

AR 600–20

Army Command Policy (Cited in para 1–3.)

AR 690–752

Disciplinary and Adverse Actions (Cited in para 2–28*d*.)

DA Pam 25–403

Guide to Recordkeeping in the Army (Cited in para 1–4.)

DoD 5500.07–R

Joint Ethics Regulation (JER) (Cited in *para 2–19b*.) (Available at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/directives/>.)

Section II

Prescribed Forms

This section contains no entries.

Appendix B

Prohibited Relationships

B-1. Relationships overview

Positive personal relationships are marks of good, solid interaction between Soldiers of different ranks. The Army needs professional, caring interactions because they build vertical bonds which tie leaders and followers.

B-2. Some relationships are prohibited

The Army policy on relationships between Soldiers of different ranks reflects the need of the Military Services to have a standard policy. Soldiers deserve a clear set of guidelines for which interpersonal relationships are acceptable and which are not acceptable. Under AR 600-20, there are several relationships that are not permitted. These relationships are listed in table B-1.

Table B-1
Prohibited relationships under AR 600-20

Prohibited relationship	Exemptions
<p>Ongoing business relationships between officers and enlisted personnel, or NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord/tenant relationships or one-time transactions such as the sale of an automobile or house. • Business relationships between NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers that exist at the time this policy becomes effective and that were authorized under previously existing rules and regulations, are exempt provided the individuals are not in the same unit or chain of command and the relationship does not meet the criteria listed in AR 600-20. • In the case of ARNG or USAR personnel, this prohibition does not apply to relationships that exist due to their civilian occupation or employment.
<p>Dating, shared living accommodations other than those directed by operational requirements, and intimate or sexual relationships between officers and enlisted personnel, or NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriages between an officer and an enlisted member or an NCO and a junior enlisted Soldier. However, when evidence of fraternization between an officer and enlisted member or an NCO and a junior enlisted Soldier prior to their marriage exists, their marriage does not preclude appropriate command action based on the prior fraternization. • Situations in which a relationship that complies with this policy would move into noncompliance due to a change in status of one of the members (for instance, a case where two junior enlisted members are dating and one is subsequently commissioned or selected to be a warrant officer, commissioned officer, or NCO). In relationships where one of the enlisted members has entered into a program intended to result in a change in their status from enlisted to officer or junior enlisted Soldier to NCO, the couple must terminate the relationship permanently or marry within 1 year of the date of the appointment or the change in status occurs. • Personal relationships between members of the ARNG or USAR, when the relationship primarily exists due to civilian acquaintanceships, unless the individuals are on active duty (other than annual training), on full-time National Guard duty (other than annual training), or serving as a dual status military technician. • Personal relationships between members of the Regular Army and members of the ARNG or USAR when the relationship primarily exists due to civilian association and the Reserve Component member is not on active duty (other than annual training), on full-time National Guard duty (other than annual training), or serving as a dual status military technician. • Prohibited relationships involving dual status military technicians, which were not prohibited under previously existing rules and regulations.
<p>Gambling between officers and enlisted personnel, or NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
<p>Inappropriate relations between recruiters and prospects, applicants, and/or recruits and between trainers providing entry-level training and trainees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.

Glossary of Terms

Custom

A frequent or usual method of procedure or mode of conduct or behavior. Arises out of long-established practice which by common usage has attained force of law in the military or other community. May not be contrary to existing law or regulation. A custom that has not been adopted by statute or regulation ceases to exist when its observance has been generally abandoned.

Relationships between Soldiers of different ranks

Any relationships between Soldiers of different ranks, some of which may be improper. CDRs must be able to determine those relationships that involve or give the appearance of partiality, preferential treatment, or the improper use of rank or position for personal gain. Such relationships are prejudicial to good order, discipline, and morale.

SUMMARY of CHANGE

DA PAM 600–35
Scenarios for Relationships Between Soldiers of Different Ranks

This expedited revision, dated 14 June 2022—

- Changes the title of the publication to Scenarios for Relationships Between Soldiers of Different Ranks (cover).
- Updates the email address for suggested improvements (title page).
- Updates the purpose statement and the references statement (paras 1–1 and 1–2).
- Updates records management (recordkeeping) requirements (para 1–4).
- Updates the relationship scenarios (paras 2–16 and 2–17).

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