

## Hiring Supervisor Subordinates

Bob is an accountant in the UConn Health Finance Department and reports directly to a department supervisor, Steve. Jack, the Finance Director, owns a small private income tax preparation business. Jack's client base has grown over time and he wants to hire temporary help to get through this year's busy tax season. Steve knows that Bob has been looking to supplement his income and suggests that Jack contact him. Bob agrees to think about Jack's offer.

Should Bob accept an offer of temporary employment in Jack's outside business. What are the potential problems with this arrangement?

*The quick answer is **no**, Bob should not accept this offer. Under the State Code of Ethics, supervisors and subordinates **anywhere in the chain of command**, may not employ one another to work in outside businesses, even if those businesses are completely separate from their UConn Health jobs.*

*Here's the problem. Hiring someone in the chain of command may lead to interference with a supervisor's and/or subordinate's independent judgment regarding their state responsibilities. For instance, in this situation:*

- *Since Jack is the Department Director, Bob may feel some obligation to accept the offer even if he is not interested.*
- *Jack may be tempted to have Steve schedule Bob's state duties in a way that would facilitate his completing work for Jack's outside business.*
- *Bob may feel he is entitled to be treated differently than his co-workers if he is working in Jack's outside business.*
- *Jack's evaluation of Bob's performance in his state role may be clouded by Bob's competence in preparing tax returns as part of Jack's outside business.*

*So, when it comes to offers of outside employment between supervisors and subordinates, just say "no."*

For more information, please refer to the Office of State Ethics (OSE) [Public Officials and State Employees Guide to the State Code of Ethics](#) or to OSE's [Advisory Opinion 2008-5](#) .

For questions or to seek guidance regarding a specific situation, please contact Ginny Pack, UConn Health Ethics Liaison at 860-679-1280 or [pack@uchc.edu](mailto:pack@uchc.edu). You may also contact OSE directly at 860-263-2400 or [ethics.code@ct.gov](mailto:ethics.code@ct.gov) .