



Question of the Week

February 11, 2026

Question

Should we ban romantic relationships in our workplace?

ANSWER

You could try, but the heart wants what it wants. Bans of this sort are difficult to enforce and can make employees feel like you're interfering in their personal lives, potentially diminishing trust and driving these relationships "underground." (And of course, California has its own opinion, saying employers can't prohibit employee dating outright.)

If you do spot a workplace romance, it may be best to simply remind employees about your harassment policy and general expectations for workplace conduct. We do, however, recommend prohibiting (or at least discouraging) relationships between managers and their direct reports to prevent perceptions of favoritism, which *could* lead to legal risk, but will almost certainly lead to grumbling and discontent on the team.

If you decide to put guardrails around employee dating, be thoughtful when crafting your policy. To avoid both lawyers and confusion, use language that specifically refers to employee dating or romantic relationships and is clear about what is or is not prohibited.

You can find a sample employee dating policy on the [platform](#).

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.