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Miami-Dade County
Commission on Ethics
and Public Trust

Memo

To: File

From: Karl Ross, ethics investigator

Date: May 22, 2012

Re: K12-082 Ronald K. Gorland

Close-out: On or about May 14, COE received a tip that Miami Springs City Manager Ronald K. Gorland may have acted improperly by authorizing a promotion and pay increase for a family member in possible violation of state nepotism law. In response to this information, COE contacted Mr. Gorland on May 15 and requested that he clarify his relationship to the city employee in question, Tammy Romero. Mr. Gorland advised that he had, in fact, approved a promotion for Ms. Romero from Purchasing Specialist to the newly created position of Professional Services Supervisor, and that the promotion entailed a pay raise from \$44,401 to \$55,300 – or roughly \$11,000. He said he felt the promotion was justified based on Ms. Romero's job performance and that it would serve the city's best interest to have her assume this newly created position.

Mr. Gorland further advised that Ms. Romero is not a blood relative, though she is a second cousin. He said that her mother, Carol, was adopted by his father's sister. While this would make Ms. Romero's mother a cousin to Mr. Gorland, the same would not be true for Ms. Romero, who is approximately 25 years his junior, he said. He said that he had very little contact with Ms. Romero during her childhood and that he had no involvement with her getting hired by the city of Miami Springs in December 2005. He said that Ms. Romero's group would report to the city's finance director, not to him.

Given that state nepotism law does not apply to distant cousins, it was determined in consultation with the Ethics Advocate that the investigation should be closed.