Chief Executive Succession Plan

# Purpose:

This plan outlines the steps needed to ensure continuous coverage of the duties critical to the ongoing operation of in the event of an extended absence of the executive director, whether planned or unplanned. The board of directors is committed to assuring continuity of services during this critical time and confidence that clear lines of authority and procedures are in place.

# Definitions - Types of Absence

Temporary Absence – A temporary absence is when the Executive Director is likely to return to the position once the precipitating event has been resolved. Examples could include a sabbatical or pre-planned medical leave. An unplanned temporary absence is one that occurs without warning, such as an accident or illness.

Permanent Absence – A permanent absence is when the Board has determined that the Executive Director will not be returning to the position. Examples include retirement, transition to a new job or the board has chosen to terminate the employment of the Executive Director. An unplanned permanent absence is one that occurs without warning, such as severe illness or death or a swift termination of the Executive Director’s employment.

# Board Authority

In the event of any type of sustained absence, the Board of Directors, through its Chair, will appoint an Acting Executive Director, who shall have the full authority to carry out the business of the organization in the same manner as the Executive Director. The Acting Executive Director may be:

* + A full-time staff member who is part of the Management Team
  + A key board member or volunteer with the skills and experience to do the job effectively
  + A paid consultant with the knowledge and background to do the job effectively, and can serve as an Interim Executive Director

The Executive Committee, or similar committee or task force, will work closely with the Acting Executive Director to ensure a smooth transition and provide the needed supports to help the Acting Executive Director be as successful as possible.

# Communications Plan

As soon as possible, the Executive Committee and Acting Executive Director should devise a communication plan to share news of the transition with these audiences:

* + Staff
  + Key donors and funders
  + Related organizations
  + Civic Leaders
  + The Community at Large

# Permanent Absence

Once it is determined that the absence is permanent, the Board and Acting Executive Director should then commence the process of hiring the permanent Executive Director. The entire board should be engaged in a discussion about the skill sets needed and the process to be used for finding a new Executive Director. A key group of board members will be tasked to manage the search and bring viable candidates to the full board for selection.

# New Executive Director

Once a new Executive Director is hired, the board will conduct the following activities:

* + Provide the new Executive Director with an orientation which will include an in-depth review by the Executive Committee and all other Committee Chairs of history, update on current challenges and discussion on the vision and focus of all committee work.
  + The Executive Director and the Executive Committee of the Board will meet to jointly establish short- and long-term goals for the new Executive Director and those goals will be shared with the board.
  + The Board will create a plan for introductory meetings for key internal constituents such as donors, staff, and program partners.
  + Members of the Executive Committee will partner with the new Executive Director and arrange for introductory meetings with key stakeholders.
  + An in-depth review of all financial reports and accounting documents will be organized by the Finance Committee.
  + The Governance Committee will review all governance documents with the new Executive Director.
  + The Board will meet with the Executive Director a review the strategic plan and set goals for the updating of the plan.

**Approved by the Board of Directors**   
***Date:***