



## 516 ARTS Executive Director Succession Planning

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### Purpose

A succession plan provides for an orderly and seamless transition that minimizes disruption to the organization and allows the board and staff to focus on moving forward in a productive way. To ensure the continuous coverage of executive duties critical to the ongoing operations of 516 Arts and its services to patrons and stakeholders, the Board of Directors is adopting the following guidelines to facilitate the transition of the Executive Director (ED).

### Overview

The board chair will act as, or appoint, the main point of contact for this plan. Additional information pertaining to ED succession planning is available through the website BoardSource.com.

There are a variety of circumstances that require an ED succession plan some of which provide time to think through the next steps in a careful, methodical way, and others that occur under circumstances that provide no warning. There are two primary scenarios in which the ED is unavailable to serve:

1. Planned departure or long-term planning
2. Emergency succession planning

### Succession Planning Best Practices

To ensure an organization keeps its equilibrium during a time of change the following best practices are recommended. These points allow the institutional focus to stay centered on the mission/organization instead of an individual, can help maintain transparency with the board, staff, and other stakeholders. Commitment to evaluation and reflection instead of a quick turnaround can help determine the best course of action including what leadership needs are now, and in the future.

1. Shift from reliance on people to reliance on systems.
2. Manage transitions intentionally with defined mutual expectations.
3. Identify current challenges and those that lie ahead for the organization and the executive. The strategic plan and CEO performance evaluations are foundational to the process.
4. Consider an interim appointment to allow the organization to pause and reflect.
5. Draft a timeline for all of the organization's planned leadership transitions.



### Emergency Succession Plan

To ensure that the mission of 516 Arts continues uninterrupted in the event that the ED is no longer available to perform their duties in an emergency situation. The following steps will be taken:

1. The board chair will be informed of the absence as soon as reasonably possible.
2. The chair will convene a meeting of the executive committee within 48 hours to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan, or to make modifications as the committee deems appropriate.
3. An Acting ED will be appointed to fulfill the responsibilities of the ED the acting ED shall have the full authority for decision, making an independent action as the regular ED. The chair, or designee, will determine whether a member of the executive team is appropriate and available to serve in the capacity of Acting ED for the duration of the absence. If so, the chair will recommend, and the executive committee will approve an internal Acting ED. If the member of the executive team is not selected to serve in this capacity, the chair may elect to hire an external interim, ED to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. The executive committee may offer additional compensation to the acting ED based on the financial situation of the organization at the time of the absence. This may be offered in one of the following ways: a temporary salary increase or a bonus amount following the Acting ED period. The board chair and executive committee will be responsible for monitoring the work of the Acting ED while remaining sensitive to the special support needs during this temporary leadership role.

### Long-Term Succession Plan

Leadership transition is a process that begins before the outgoing leader departs and presents an opportunity to move forward with a new understanding of the issue the organization must address. In the event that the current ED provides notice of resignation to the board, the following steps will be taken:

1. The main point of contact for this plan will conduct an organizational assessment with the full board and staff to develop an understanding of the needs and priorities, the organization must address when selecting a new ED. This self-assessment, which may best be conducted by a consultant, would include:
  - a. Internal and external SWOT analysis, including interviews with key stakeholders.
  - b. Consulting the strategic plan
  - c. Review and assessment of the Executive Director position description
2. The main point of contact for this plan will appoint a Leadership Transition Committee to manage the recruitment selection and transition of the new ED. The committee shall be comprised of at least three members, current directors and other non-board members as deemed appropriate by the main point of contact. The full board shall approve the chair's recommendation.
3. Responsibilities of the Leadership Transition Committee include:
  - a. Determine the full level of involvement of the current ED in the process.
  - b. Engage a consultant to assist in the search process if necessary.
  - c. Develop a communication strategy to announce the leadership transition to staff, partners, and key external supporters. This should include regular updates to the board chair and staff on key developments in the process.
  - d. Determine the compensation package of the incoming ED.
  - e. Determine the performance evaluation process of the incoming ED.
  - f. Review applicants, conduct interviews, and recommend candidates to the full board.
  - g. Conduct the onboarding of the incoming ED, including consideration of an executive coach for the incoming ED.