

# EMERGENCY SUCCESSION PLAN

Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_ *Draft Date: November 16, 2012*

1. The Board of Directors of \_(organization name)\_ has assembled this Emergency Succession Plan in order to protect the organization's capacity to perform key functions, sustain important relationships, and fulfill its commitments during a leadership disruption or transition. This is not a legal document but a set of guidelines to assist the board and may be modified at any time by a vote of the board.
  
2. Priority functions of the Executive Director/CEO position at \_(organization name)\_. Among the duties listed in the position description, the following are the key functions of the Executive Director/CEO to be covered by an acting director: *(list)*
  - Ensuring key services are being delivered and daily operations are continuing:
    - Due dates for grant and funding submissions, other requirements from state and federal are being met
    - Meeting overall quality of services requirements
    - Key communications with staff, board, funders, partners, and the community.
    - Intervening on critical communications with funders and partners
    - Signature authority for key documents (Requires updating bank cards and informing funders)
    - Short turnaround/emergency decision making
    - Financial management oversight
    - Staff development and discipline
    - Hiring and firing decisions of staff
  - Maintaining external relationships and representing the museum at meetings:
    - Community partners
    - Foundation funders
    - Local/State Government
    - Other funders or donors
  - Coordinating/Communicating/Supporting the Board
  - Make decisions and/or recommendations to the board about budgets and allocation of resources

(The Executive Director/CEO Job Description is attached to this document.)

**3. Succession plan in event of a temporary, unplanned absence -- SHORT-TERM  
(Assumes the staff leader WILL be returning)**

**a. Definitions**

- A temporary absence is one in which it is expected that the Executive Director will return to her/his position once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- An unplanned absence is one that arises unexpectedly, in contrast to a planned leave, such as a vacation or a sabbatical.
- A short-term absence is typically 45 days or less.

**b. Who may appoint the Acting Executive Director/CEO**

- The Board of Directors authorizes the Executive Committee to implement the terms of this emergency plan in the event of the unplanned absence of the Executive Director/CEO.
- In the event of an unplanned absence of the Executive Director/CEO, any available senior staff or administrative staff member shall immediately inform the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the absence.
- As soon as is feasible, the Chair shall convene a meeting, in-person or by phone, of the Executive Committee to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan or to make modifications the Committee deems appropriate.

**c. Current appointee to the position of Acting Executive Director/CEO**

                     *(typically the person who covers during vacations)*

**d. Back-up for the position of Acting Executive Director/CEO**

Should the standing appointee, noted in (c.) above, be unable to serve as Acting Executive Director/CEO, the first back-up appointee will be:

                     *(another seasoned staff member)*

In the event the standing appointee, noted in (c.) above, is new to the position and inexperienced with                      (organization name), the Executive Committee may decide to appoint the back-up appointee to the acting executive position. The Executive Committee may also consider the option of splitting executive duties among the designated appointees or appointing a staff member hired since this plan was last updated.

**e. Cross-training plan for appointees**

The Executive Director/CEO shall develop a plan for training the potential appointees in each of the priority functions of the Executive Director/CEO which

are listed above (section 2). The training plan will be attached to this document when the plan is completed.

**f. Authority and restrictions of the appointee**

The person appointed as Acting Executive Director/CEO shall have the same and full authority for decision-making and independent action as the regular Executive Director and is expected to work closely and communicate openly with the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee has defined the following topics or decisions that the Acting Executive Director should bring to the board:

- Regular Reporting
  - Financial reports
  - Program reports
  - Executive Director report
  - Reports on Performance Measures, as they are developed/refined
  - Progress against Strategic Plan
- Unusual issues not addressed by current policies or practice.
- Information or a decision that impacts a large segment of the organization or has a potentially large financial impact.
- Immediate notice of anything that could embarrass us or appear in the press. Overall, a “No surprises” approach
- As required by a grant or funder

**g. Compensation**

If the Acting Executive Director/CEO is asked to serve in that position for more than 30 days, they shall receive a temporary salary increase for the full time in that role - to the entry-level salary of the executive director position or to 5% above his/her current salary, whichever is greater.

**h. Board committee responsible for oversight and support to the Acting Executive Director**

As with the current Executive Director/CEO, the Executive Committee of the Board will have responsibility for monitoring the work of the Acting Executive Director/CEO. The Executive Committee will also be alert to the special support needs of the new executive in this temporary leadership role.

**i. Communications plan**

As soon as possible after the Acting Executive Director/CEO has begun covering an unplanned absence, Board members and the Acting Executive Director shall

communicate the temporary leadership structure to the key stakeholders listed in the Emergency Communication List, including key vendors and professional advisors – CPA, HR Attorney, IT consultant, Insurance, Foundation contacts, Facility maintenance, Community Leaders, etc. maintained by [REDACTED].

**4. Succession plan in event of a TEMPORARY, unplanned absence -- LONG-TERM. (Assumes the staff leader WILL be returning)**

**a. Definition**

- A long term absence is one that is expected to last more than 45 days.

**b. Procedures**

- The procedures and conditions to be followed shall be the same as for a short-term absence with one addition:

- The Executive Committee will give immediate consideration, in consultation with the Acting Executive Director/CEO, to temporarily filling either the Executive Director role or the position left vacant by the Acting Executive Director. This is because it may not be reasonable to expect the Acting Executive Director to carry the duties of both positions for more than 30 days. The position description of a temporary staff member would focus on covering the priority areas in which the Acting Executive Director/CEO and Board need assistance.

**5. Succession plan in event of a PERMANENT unplanned absence. (Assumes the staff leader WILL NOT be returning)**

**a. Definition**

- A permanent absence is one in which it is firmly determined that the Executive Director will not be returning to the position.

**b. Procedures**

- The procedures and conditions shall be the same as for a long-term temporary absence with the following additions:

- The Executive Committee shall appoint a Transition and Search Committee
- The Transition and Search Committee, in consultation with staff and board leadership, shall establish a transition plan, including the potential hire of an interim executive director to allow other staff leaders to maintain their focus on organizational operations.

- Following appropriate preparation, as defined by the committee, the Transition and Search Committee will launch the search for a new permanent executive director.

**6. Succession plan in event of a PERMANENT departure, such as retirement of the staff leader. *(Though this may not be an emergency situation, it is included to create a more complete plan)***

**a. Definition**

- A planned, permanent departure is one in which the Executive Director has given advance notice of their departure, including a date through which they will work.

**b. Procedures**

- The procedures and conditions shall be the same as for a Permanent, Unplanned (5 above) with the following additions:

- The Board shall request at least (6 months?) written notice from the Executive Director/CEO of her/his planned departure so the hiring timeline shall allow for a 2-4 week overlap between the new Executive Director and the departing Executive Director.
- The Transition and Search Committee, in consultation with staff and board leadership, shall establish a transition plan, including the potential hire of an interim executive director if the timeline does not allow adequate time for the search process or there are specific issues that need to be addressed prior to recruiting a new Executive Director.

**7. Approvals and maintenance of record**

**a. Succession plan approval**

This succession plan will be approved by the Executive Committee and forwarded to the full Board of Directors for its vote and approval.

**b. Review**

This document shall be reviewed by the organization's human resources administrator and/or legal counsel, as desired.

**c. Signatories**

The Board President, the Executive Director, and the appointees listed in 3 c. and d. shall sign this plan.

**d. Maintenance of record**

Copies of this plan shall be maintained by the Board President, the Executive Director/CEO, and all appointees listed in 3 c. and d,

**e. Policy Review and Update**

This Emergency Succession Plan document will be included in the regular review process for board policies. It should be revisited no less than once every two (2) years.