

Executive Director Succession Plan



COMMUNITY CARE OF WEST NIAGARA

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VERSION & REVIEW HISTORY

VERSION	APPROVED BY	REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	AUTHOR
#1	CCWN Board	Sept 25, 2024	New Policy – Policy # TBD	CCWN HR Committee
#2	CCWN Board	November 26 2025	Policy review and Policy # assigned: Governance Policy # 402	

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1. RATIONALE

Provide the purpose of the Executive Director Succession Plan and the Plan's objectives in the event of a planned or unplanned absence:

The purpose of the Executive Director Succession Plan is to ensure effective business continuity in the event of a planned or unplanned short or long-term absence of the Executive Director.

The objective is for the Board of CCWN to have an organized approach identified in the event of a short or long-term ED replacement is required, with a goal to have minimal business disruption.

2. DEFINITIONS

A. TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
PLANNED DEPARTURE	expected / anticipated in advance
PLANNED ABSENCE	expected / anticipated in advance
UNPLANNED DEPARTURE	sudden / unanticipated
UNPLANNED ABSENCE	sudden / unanticipated
SHORT-TERM ABSENCE	expected to last 3 months or less
LONG-TERM ABSENCE	expected to last more than 3 months
TEMPORARY ABSENCE	expected to return
PERMANENT DEPARTURE	will not return to the position
SIC	"Second in command" (could be existing personnel, seconded Board member, or another Board designated appointee)

B. ABSENCE / DEPARTURE TYPE

	PLANNED		UNPLANNED	
	TEMPORARY	PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	PERMANENT
SHORT-TERM DEPARTURE Less than or equal to 3 months	Vacation, Parental Leave, Health-Related, Sabbatical	Resignation Dismissal	Temporary Disability	Resignation Dismissal
LONG-TERM DEPARTURE Greater than 3 months	Sabbatical, Lengthy Leave (Bereavement, Family / Medical)	Retirement Dismissal	Illness, Disability, Confinement, Lengthy Leave	Resignation, Dismissal Incapacitation, Death

3. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Discuss the authorizing parties and who have been charged with the implementation of the plan terms, in the event of a planned or unplanned absence.

The Executive Committee, in consultation with the HR Committee, will be charged with implementation of the Succession Plan.

4. PRIORITY FUNCTIONS

Essential ED responsibilities to be addressed in the Staffing Strategies for short and long-term absences are:

Position Overview

Key Responsibilities

- Supports operations and administration of the Board by advising and informing members and interfacing between the Board and staff in accordance with Governance Policies
- Meets with the Board Chair to review Board agenda, material issues, opportunities and challenges to ensure provision of relevant and timely information resulting in no surprises to the Board
- Oversees and ensures the efficient and effective day-to-day operation of the organization
- Approves expenditures within the authority delegated by the Board
- Works with the Board to secure adequate operating funds
- Provides prompt, thorough and accurate information to keep the Board appropriately informed of the organization's financial position
- Establishes a positive, healthy and safe working environment, for both paid staff and volunteers, in accordance with all appropriate legislation and regulations in all operations
- Oversees the operations of the organization and manages its compliance with Board policy, legal and regulatory requirements to deliver a high quality of programs and services
- Ensures the implementation of the Fund Raising strategy to meet organization's goals

5. PROCEDURES – UNPLANNED ABSENCE OR DEPARTURE

Provide the terms of the procedures to be implemented, along with the authorization details.

The Executive Committee, in consultation with the HR Committee, to commence procedures. The Executive Committee appoints a Second in command (SIC) to assume the responsibilities outlined above for the short term.

6. PROCEDURES FOR SHORT-TERM TEMPORARY ABSENCES

A. STAFFING STRATEGY

The Executive Committee, in consultation with the HR Committee, to commence procedures. The Executive Committee appoints a Second in command (SIC) who is (ideally) an internal member of the staff complement to assume the responsibilities outlined above for the short term.

Identify potential SIC prior to requiring their involvement and review “appointee” annually when reviewing/updating plan

B. ROLE OF ACTING / INTERIM ED

SIC will continue in their own role, with added responsibility for short term oversight of Operations including:

- Communicates with the Board through the Board Chair on pertinent business matters and updates
- Manages and coordinates the day-to-day operations of the organization’s office infrastructure, ensuring professionalism and alignment with policies and plans
- Facilitates team meetings and discussions
- Follows up with team members regarding any urgent operational concerns
- Handles escalated matters by employees for decision making or feedback
- Up-channels any organizational reputational risks to Board Chair (Negative PR risks) for discussion and resolution

C. COMMUNICATION

If PLANNED short-term absence, the Executive Director:

- Advises Board Chair of timing of short-term absence and recommends SIC for consideration
- Informs SIC of timing and expectations of short-term ED coverage
- Updates the employee team of SIC appointment
- Adjusts ED’s out of office messaging

If UNPLANNED short-term absence, the Board Chair (or designate):

- Informs SIC of timing and expectations of short-term ED coverage
- Updates the CCWN employees of SIC appointment
- Adjusts ED’s out of office messaging

7. PROCEDURES FOR LONG-TERM TEMPORARY ABSENCES

A. STAFFING STRATEGY

Identify potential SIC prior to requiring their involvement and review “appointee” annually when reviewing/updating plan

Temporary reassignment of duties to allow for SIC to assume broader responsibilities, including both internal facing operations and external responsibilities within Community

SIC ensures smooth continuation of Internal operations

Temporary reporting relationships Include: Manager of Community Engagement, Outreach and Support Coordinator, Administrative Coordinator, Client Services Coordinator, Community Donations Coordinator, Feed Niagara Manager, temporary and contract staff

SIC ensures smooth continuation related to External/Community operations

B. ROLE OF ACTING / INTERIM ED

Key Responsibilities:

Internally:

- Defines and directs the strategy, objectives, policies, programs and budgets for the organization, which are consistent with short- and long-term strategic goals
- Ensures above are clearly communicated and strategically aligned with the requirements of the Board and the organization as a whole
- Monitors financial performance and advises the Board in the development of capital and operational budgets, ensuring alignment with the strategic priorities of the CCWN
- Manages and coordinates the day-to-day operations of the organization’s office infrastructure, ensuring professionalism and alignment with policies and plans
- Fosters consistent culture throughout the organization
- Identifies new opportunities that will be relevant to CCWN and provides significant value

Externally:

- Establishes strong visibility and involvement with the local community to ensure alignment with mission, vision and values
- Represents CCWN on committees, at community events, etc. where appropriate

C. COMMUNICATION

Identify potential SIC prior to requiring their involvement and review “appointee” annually when reviewing/updating plan

If PLANNED long term absence, the Executive Director:

- Advises Board Chair of timing of long-term absence and recommends SIC for consideration
- Informs SIC of timing and expectations of short-term ED coverage
- Updates the employee team of SIC appointment
- Adjusts ED’s out of office messaging

If UNPLANNED long-term absence, the Board Chair (or designate):

- Informs SIC of timing and expectations of long-term ED coverage
- Updates the CCWN employees of SIC appointment
- Adjusts ED’s out of office messaging

D. COMPANY-WIDE STAFFING IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS

- With additional responsibilities taken on by the SIC, specific SIC responsibilities may also be delegated to other members of the CCWN team. This will distribute the added workload to accommodate the immediate needs of the transition
- This will be reviewed/assessed at the time of the absence, in consultation with the Board Chair

8. PROCEDURES FOR PERMANENT DEPARTURES

A. RESIGNATION WITH NOTICE

Executive Director advises Board Chair in writing

Board Chair convenes Executive Committee and then advises full Board regarding resignation

ED to prepares communication to share with CCWN Team, to be approved by Board Chair

HR Committee convenes to initiate ED Recruitment Process including internal assessment of candidates as well as external search

HR Committee recommends short list of ideal candidates to the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee interviews short list and subsequently presents a preferred incumbent to recommend to the full Board for approval

SUDDEN DISMISSAL OR DEATH

If Sudden Dismissal of the Executive Director (for Cause) is the only viable course of action:

- The Board Chair convenes an Executive meeting; immediately followed by a closed session of the full Board to obtain a majority vote of non-confidence
- The Board Chair calls an Executive Committee to meet with Executive Director and convey Board decision to dismiss (and possibly explore voluntary resignation)

Obtaining proper legal counsel and following CCWN policies/bylaws are paramount

In the case of Sudden Death of the Executive Director:

The Board Chair advises full Board regarding death of Executive Director in the most practical and expeditious manner

Board Chair convenes all staff (preferably in person) advising them regarding death of Executive Director

The following time-sensitive activities need to be undertaken by Board Chair (or designate):

- Advises volunteers, community partners, key stakeholders, and funders
- Approves public messaging, social media posts to advise broader community
- Informs SIC of timing and expectations of short-term ED coverage
- Updates CCWN employees of SIC appointment
- Adjusts ED's out of office messaging

Similar to 8A:

HR Committee convenes to initiate ED Recruitment Process including internal assessment of candidates as well as external search

HR Committee recommends short list of ideal candidates to the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee interviews short list and subsequently presents a preferred incumbent to recommend to the full Board for approval

B. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Reputational, Legal and Financial Risk Factors:

If the nature or circumstances regarding the Executive Director's departure holds potential risk (i.e. reputational, legal, financial) the Board Chair prepares external communication that will be approved by the full Board, prior to being released publicly.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

C. ASSESSING THE SITUATION

Questions for consideration related to Communication by the Board regarding the ED's departure:

- Circumstances related to departure from role:
 - Confidential or public
 - Voluntary or involuntary (legal considerations?)
 - Reputational risk / negative PR impacting CCWN's image
 - Governance risk
 - Financial risk

D. BOARD ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Ensure that factors in 8A and B are considered in Communication Strategy, prior to any messaging being released

9. APPROVALS AND MAINTENANCE OF RECORD

A. SUCCESSION PLAN APPROVAL

Describe the approval process, the timeline for review and amendments, and the parties responsible:

Development of the Executive Director Succession Plan was championed by the HR Committee in FY23/24 and was presented to the CCWN Board of Directors for approval on September 25th 2024.

The Succession Plan shall be reviewed annually by the HR Committee, once the new committees have been installed (usually Jan/Feb). Amendments/Updates will be recommended to the Board of Directors by the June Board meeting (i.e. to capture staff changes, scope and structural changes, etc.)

B. SIGNATORIES

Designate who will sign the plan and who will have signature authorization for cheques and contracts:

The plan will be signed by the Board Chair and the Board Secretary. Cheques and contracts will be signed by the approved officers (i.e. President, Vice-President, Treasurer).

C. MAINTENANCE OF RECORD

The Executive Director Succession Plan document (electronic and hard copy) is maintained in house at CCWN's primary location in Beamsville with other CCWN confidential documents and made available to all current CCWN Board Members

D. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

List who will be responsible for the finance review, and provide procedures for the financial access approval:

The Treasurer is responsible for the finance review and approvals