

ED Succession Plan

Succession Plan for the Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc.

A change in executive leadership, whether it be planned or unplanned, temporary or permanent, is as inevitable as the passing of time. This Succession Plan sets forth the Board of Director's policies and procedures, incorporates best practices and ethical guidelines, for facilitating and managing the transition process for _____, current Executive Director (ED).

This board-approved plan document is in accordance with the following three possible transition circumstances:

- Temporary, Unplanned Absence: Short-Term
- Temporary, Unplanned Absence: Long-Term
- Permanent

Job descriptions for the positions referred to in the document will be attached as soon as revisions are final.

Amendment to the Succession Plan is subject to approval by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee.

ED Succession Plan

Temporary, Unplanned Absences: Short-Term

Definition

A temporary absence is one of less than three months in which it is expected that the ED will return to his/her 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.

Process

In the event of an unplanned absence of the ED, the Deputy Director of Strategic Operations (DDSO) is to immediately inform the Board President and the Deputy Director, Regional Offices and Advocacy (DDROA) of the absence, if they have not been previously informed. If the Board President is not available, then the Vice-President is to be notified and to assume all responsibilities of the President as set forth in this plan until such time the President can properly assume these functions. The Board President, working with the DDSO, will notify Board and staff members of LASNNY in the manner deemed most appropriate. The Executive Assistant shall assist in these efforts as directed.

As soon as it is feasible, the President should convene a meeting of the Executive Committee to affirm the transfer of responsibilities and the procedures prescribed in this plan or to make modifications as the Committee deems appropriate.

Authority

The DDSO, as per the position's job description, is to immediately assume the *administrative* responsibilities of the ED and be directly accountable to the Board of Director. During this period will remain under the DDSO title.

Should, at or during absence, the DDSO position be vacant or otherwise be unable to temporarily fulfill the ED's responsibilities, the responsibilities shall be assumed by the DDROA.

Given the temporary nature of the DDSO's assumption of the ED's responsibilities, the position is that of "place holder". It is expected that he or she will not independently act on matters of substantial consequence without consultation with the Executive Management Team and/or Executive Committee as deemed appropriate.

In addition to the DDSO and DDROA, the Executive Management Team consists of the Fiscal Director, Director of HR, Facilities & IT, Executive Assistant and Director of Development. To ensure proper communication and coordination, the Team is to meet at least weekly. The DDSO will provide leadership to the Team and, at his or her discretion, may assign duties that that the ED or he or she as DDSO may normally perform to Team members on an ad hoc basis or for the duration of the temporary absence. If these duties are assigned for the duration, the Board shall be informed in writing of these assignments.

Compensation

ED Succession Plan

The DDSO may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, receive a lump sum incentive payment at the end of the temporary period in recognition of the additional responsibilities assumed and performance. This is to be determined by the Board of Directors and preferably upon the ED's recommendation.

Board Oversight

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall closely monitor and report to the Board accordingly, the organization's progress during this period and the work of DDSO and Executive management Team. It shall be available to meet as often as needed. The Board and all other committees of the Board will at least maintain their regular meeting schedule.

Legal Counsel

The Board President shall consult legal counsel as appropriate and the DDSO shall do so as well with approval of the Board President.

Communications Plan

Aside from affirming the transfer of authority to the DDSO, the Executive Committee shall develop in collaboration with the DDSO a communications plan for informing external stakeholders, funders, and the public of the temporary leadership structure.

Completion

The schedule or start date as to when the ED returns, partially or fully, to lead LASNNY is to be mutually agreed upon by the ED and the Board President in consultation with the Executive Committee.

- ❖ additional professional or support staff.



Temporary, Unplanned Absence: Long-Term

Definition

A long-term absence is one that is expected to last more than three months.

The procedures and conditions to be followed are the same as for a short-term absence except for the following:

- ❖ The Board of Directors may choose to retain other than the DDSO an "Interim ED" for this temporary period. This position is to be occupied from a qualified person trained in interim executive leadership that is currently not a member of the Board or an employee.
- ❖ If the DDSO is to continue the responsibilities of ED for the extended period, then he or she shall assume the title of "Acting ED" and shall be compensated in wages accordingly as determined by the Board of Directors and preferably in consultation with the ED.
- ❖ The Board of Directors upon recommendation from the Executive Committee will give immediate consideration to allocating in the budget funds for the Acting DDSO to temporarily hire or promote an interim for either the position left vacant by the DDSO and/or the hiring of



Permanent Change

Definition

A permanent change is when it is determined that the ED will not be returning to the position.

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

- ❖ The Executive Committee shall provide leadership in conducting a transition and search process for a new permanent ED. The Executive Committee shall recommend a candidate including compensation terms to the Board of Directors.
- ❖ A national search will be conducted however internal candidates will be invited to apply.
- ❖ The Board may consider retaining an outside search firm or consulting assistance depending on the circumstances of the transition and the board's capacity to plan and manage the transition and search.
- ❖ If a Board member is interested in being a candidate for the ED position, he or she shall be expected to adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct by resigning their board position at the earliest possible time of interest, expressed or otherwise. If that person is not selected as the ED, he or she shall not have automatic rights to return to his or

her seat on the Board but would be subject to the appropriate bylaw provisions regarding the filling of vacant seats.

- ❖ The Executive Assistant shall serve as the confidential secretary for Executive Committee and the Board of Directors for the purposes of this process.
- ❖ The Executive Committee or Board may retain outside legal counsel on transition related matters (i.e. ED contract) or other matters if needed.

Question whether an Interim ED will be eligible to apply for the position.

Plan is silent

EC can decide at the time.