

COMMUNITY LIVING DURHAM NORTH

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Policy No: A-8 (Governance & Administration) Effective Date: November 28, 2011
Last Revision/Review:

Rationale:

Over time there will inevitably be changes in key leadership positions and CLDN must plan ahead in order to ensure operational stability and accountability, as well as clear and open communication about changes that are pending.

Policy Statement:

Succession planning is not just about replacing executive directors. It is about identifying CLDN employees who consistently exceed performance requirements in their current roles and who may be capable of, and interested in, assuming a more responsible position within the agency. To this end, senior management will implement Human Resource practices to ensure that star performers are identified and mentored.

It is also important that the departure of individual incumbents from certain key positions does not create a critical knowledge gap. To this end, senior management will ensure that managers and directors in specialized roles identify, as they emerge, any regular functions that they are performing in isolation. These functions are to be documented, and over time introduced to at least one “understudy” within the leadership team. Amongst the agency’s senior leadership, this will mean that all staff directors have a measure of direct contact with the Board and its committees, and are familiar with the strategic and governance issues that are critical to the Board.

Having said all of this, the role of Executive Director is critical and it is the responsibility of the Board to maintain continuity of operations through any transition period when the position is vacant, and to plan for the succession of a new Executive Director.

Succession Planning for the Executive Director Position (Planned):

In the typical case of a resignation, ninety (90) days written notice is required and the departing ED may be prepared to provide more - there will be time for an orderly transition. Upon receiving notice, the Board will strike an “ad hoc” *Transition Team* to oversee the departure and succession. This team will include Board representation (typically, the President, Vice President and Treasurer). It would include at least one staff director, perhaps all three directors, and possibly the outgoing ED.

The Transition Team will develop a comprehensive work plan with specific timelines in order to accomplish the following:

- The development of a communication plan to ensure that key steps in the transition process are shared with stakeholders in an open and timely fashion (to this end, senior

staff will maintain a list of stakeholders that extends beyond employees, families and supported people, to include Ministry contacts, mayors, MPP's, other agencies, etc.);

- The conduct of a brief assessment of the agency's current activities, strategic directions, strengths and weaknesses that might serve to inform the transition team concerning the characteristics and attributes necessary in the successful candidate;
- A thorough review of the core competencies developed by the provincial HR Committee for the ED position, and of similar tools available through our own HR department;
- A determination, in consultation with the full Board, of the qualifications required and the compensation package to be offered.

The team will then need to look at its key options, which will not necessarily be mutually exclusive:

- Consider the readiness of any or all existing staff who may have been previously identified as potential candidates (a manager or director who is on this list will not have been included on the transition team);
- Consider outsourcing the work of recruitment to a "head hunter" agency, which would be expected not to make the final decision but to present the transition team with three to six candidates;
- Perform the recruitment effort itself, with the involvement of our HR Department; i.e. draft the advertisement, choose the media and forums in which to post it, etc.

The Transition Team will conduct the first round of interviews and narrow the field to no more than three candidates. The final round of interviews will involve the whole board, either as participants or observers. All interviews will employ procedures and tools (e.g. scoring matrices, experiential interview questions, etc.) that are already established and utilized within the agency, or necessary modifications thereof.

The final decision will be taken by the full board and the actual offer of employment will be made by the President. This offer shall include salary, benefits, starting date, etc. Once a new Executive Director is selected, the Board may choose to dissolve the Transition Team and handle the balance of the transition process directly, or it may choose to keep the team in place and job share the work that remains:

- In consultation with the new ED and the outgoing incumbent, determine, if appropriate, a suitable period of overlap for orientation purposes.
- Secure from the outgoing ED a report on risk factors or agency activities and priorities that require immediate attention.

- Sign, with the new hire, an employment contract, an Executive Authority and Limitations Agreement, and any other documents deemed necessary to define the relationship between the Board and the new Executive Director.
- See to the drafting of a letter of welcome, an introductory meeting between the Board and the new ED, staff meetings, a letter from the President to stakeholders, a media announcement, etc.

Succession Planning for the Executive Director Position (Unplanned):

The termination of the Executive Director or his sudden inability to continue in the job, owing to illness or disability, creates a more pressing problem and the Board must plan its response to this eventuality. Its first step (or that of its designates) will be to meet with CLDN's staff directors. As a collective, they are fully capable of acting as a Crisis Management Team; nevertheless, one person would need to be designated as Acting Executive Director and given the requisite authority and accountability (either in whole or in part, as determined by the Board). Specifically, the Board would need to select an Acting ED from amongst its staff directors, determine that person's willingness to serve as Acting ED, and negotiate the terms and conditions of the appointment.

If, for reasons that cannot be foreseen, no senior director chooses to accept the appointment, or does not wish to take on the role for a period of several months, thus enabling a planned recruitment effort, as described above, the Board would look to other sources and engage an Interim Executive Director. That person might be:

- A pre-identified, existing staff member, from within CLDN's managerial ranks, or
- A proven leader employed by a collegial organization, or
- An external consultant / administrative professional.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
for the Board of Directors