

LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc.
Executive Director/President/Chief Executive Officer

SUCCESSION PLAN

**Guideline for the Appointment of an Acting Executive Director in the Event of an
Unplanned Absence of the Incumbent**

1. Rationale

The Executive Director position in a nonprofit organization is a central element in the organization's success. Therefore, ensuring that the functions of the Executive Director are well-understood and even shared among the executive team and senior staff is important to ensure organizational stability and leadership continuity in the event of unplanned and unexpected change. This kind of risk management is equally helpful in facilitating a smooth leadership transition when it is predictable and planned.

The purpose of this plan is to ensure the continuous coverage of duties critical to the ongoing successful operations of LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc., hereafter known as "LCAA". The Board of Directors is adopting policies and procedures for the temporary appointment of an **Acting Executive Director** in the event of an unplanned and extended absence of the Executive Director. The Board Chair, or Board Vice Chair in the absence of the Board Chair, may determine the appropriate time to initiate the implementation of this plan.

While the Board of Directors acknowledges that such an absence is highly improbable and certainly undesirable, they believe that due diligence in exercising executive-level management functions requires that it has a succession plan in place. It is expected that this plan will ensure continuity in the administration of the organization's day-to-day programs and operations, management of external relationships and supervision of staff and finances.

2. Priority functions of the Executive Director position at LCAA

The full Executive Director job description is attached (See Attachment 1). Of the duties listed in the job description, the following are considered to be examples of the key functions of the Executive Director, and therefore, have a corresponding temporary staffing strategy. Functions to be covered by an Acting Executive Director are attached. (See Attachment 2: Succession Plan Detail: Executive Director)

The positions assigned in the Temporary Staffing Strategy are based on LCAA organizational structure as of October 2022. In the event this plan is implemented and assigned positions are vacant or no longer available, the Board Chair may select other senior staff to support each of the key Executive Director functions. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that positions have appropriate cross-training to successfully implement the temporary staffing strategy.

3. Business as Usual

This succession plan and the staffing structure at LCAA are intended to minimize disruption in quality service and maintain business as usual to the extent possible. In the absence of the Executive Director, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors, business as usual includes maintenance of the following (See Attachment 2):

- A. Delivery of services
- B. Accounting, billing, payroll, purchasing and payables
- C. Fundraising
- D. Liaison with the Board of Directors
- E. Facilities and information technology oversight
- F. Supervision and oversight of management and staff

While this timeline may vary based on circumstances, the suggested steps for implementation are:

- Executive Management Team informs Board Chair immediately of unplanned absence.
- The Board Chair informs the Board of appointment of **Macy Self**, Associate Director to the post of Acting Executive Director.
- The Board Chair (and potentially other officers) consults with the Acting Executive Director on circumstances of the absence, organizational situation and related factors.
- After the Board Chair and Acting Executive Director consult, stakeholders will be notified following the plan.

4. Succession Plan Implementation

The Board of Directors authorizes the Board Chair to implement the terms of this succession plan in the event of a planned or unplanned temporary, short-term absence of the Executive Director.

- It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to inform the Board of Directors of a planned temporary or short-term absence, and to plan accordingly.
- As soon as feasible, following notification of an unplanned temporary or short-term absence, the Board Chair may convene an Executive Committee meeting to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan, or to modify them if needed.

5. Succession Plan in event of a temporary, unplanned absence (SHORT-TERM)

A. Definitions

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

B. Who may appoint the Acting Executive Director?

1. The Board of Directors authorizes the Board Chair to implement the terms of this succession plan in the event of the unplanned absence of the Executive Director.
2. In the event of an unplanned absence of the Executive Director, **Macy Self**, Associate Director, may immediately inform the Board Chair of the absence.
3. As soon as is feasible, the Board Chair may convene a meeting of the Executive Management Team to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan or to make modifications the team deems appropriate.

C. First backup for the position of Acting Executive Director

The Board Chair may designate **Macy Self, Associate Director**, to the position of Acting Executive Director. His/her position description may specify that s/he may serve as the backup and Acting Executive Director in the absence of the Executive Director unless otherwise decided by the Board. S/he will have a Succession Plan with designated appointees if s/he becomes Acting Executive Director or if s/he is otherwise unable to serve his/her own functions as **Associate Director**.

D. Cross-training plan for appointees

The Executive Director may develop a plan for training the potential appointees in the priority functions of the Executive Director which are listed in section 2 above. The training plan will be attached to this document when the plan is completed. The Director of Operations may have the responsibility of handling the logistics of the plan's implementation.

E. Authority and restrictions of the appointee

The person appointed as Acting Executive Director may have the same authority for day-to-day decision making and independent action as the Executive Director. Decisions that may be made in consultation with the Board or other appropriate committee include senior management staff hiring and terminations, financial issues, taking on a new project, and taking public policy positions on behalf of the organization.

F. Compensation

The Board may consider a salary adjustment for the Acting Executive Director.

G. Board Chair responsibility for oversight and support to the Acting Executive Director
As with the Executive Director, the Board Chair and Board of Directors will have the responsibility for monitoring the work of the Acting Executive Director. The Acting Executive Director will provide regular updates and meet with the Board. The Board will also be alert to the special support needs of the Acting Executive Director serving in this temporary leadership role and act to address them.

H. Communications plan

Within eight (8) hours after an Acting Executive Director is appointed, the Board Chair and the Acting Executive Director may meet to implement an external communications plan to announce the organization's temporary leadership structure including the kind of information that will be shared and with whom (e.g. major donors, civic leaders, government officials). (See Attachment 2)

Within 24 hours to 48 hours after an Acting Executive Director is appointed, the Board Chair and Acting Executive Director may implement the communications plan to announce the organization's temporary leadership structure to the management team, the Board of Directors, and the Advisory Board.

Notifications will take place in sequence on the following timetable:

- Within 24 hours, the Acting Executive Director notifies the Management Team.
- Within 24 hours, the Acting Executive Director will notify the staff.
- Within 72 hours, the Acting Executive Director will notify the closest vendors, the banks, and the auditor.
- Within seven days, the Acting Executive Director will notify the local and state governmental funding agencies, officials, and foundations.

For a full overview of the communications plan, see Attachment 2: Succession Plan Detail: Executive Director

6. Succession Plan in event of a temporary, unplanned absence (LONG-TERM)

A. Definition

1. A temporary absence is one in which it is expected that the Executive Director will return to his/her position once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
2. An unplanned absence is one that arises unexpectedly, in contrast to a planned leave, such as a vacation or a sabbatical.
3. A long-term absence is one that is expected to last more than 3 months.

B. Procedures

The procedures and conditions to be followed may be the same as for a short-term absence with one addition: The Board will give immediate consideration, in consultation with the executive management team, to temporarily backfilling the position left vacant by the Acting Executive Director. This is in recognition of the fact that, for a term of more than three months, it may not be reasonable to expect the Acting Executive Director to carry out the duties of both positions. The position description of a temporary director would focus on covering the priority areas in which the Acting Executive Director needs assistance.

7. Succession Plan in event of a PERMANENT unplanned absence

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 may be the same as for a long-term temporary absence with one addition: The Board Chair may appoint a Transition and Search Committee of nine members in accordance with the terms of LCAA By-Laws and Succession Policy and follow the procedures set forth in LCAA By-Laws and Succession Policy.

8. Approvals and maintenance of records

A. Succession Plan approval

This succession plan will be approved by the full Board of Directors and reviewed biennial at a Board meeting to make any needed changes in the standing appointees. The Board may review and amend the plan at other times if a standing appointee is no longer available to serve in an Acting Executive Director capacity. The Board may reevaluate the plan when new designees are appointed.

B. Signatories

This plan may be signed by the Board Chair, the Executive Director, the Human Resource Director, and the standing appointees designated in this plan.

C. Maintenance of record

Copies of this plan may be maintained by the Board Secretary, Executive Director, Human Resource Director, and the standing appointees designated in this plan.

Plan has been reviewed and approved by LCAA Board of Directors on this 8 day of November, **2022**

David Hawkins, Board Chair

Rebecca Reynolds, Executive Director

Dawn McDaniel, Human Resource Director

Macy Self, Acting Executive Director
