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PlanRVA – Succession Management Plan

Revised 2025

Governance & Decision Rights

Plan authority. The Commission (Governing Board) authorizes the Commission Chair to implement the Executive Director (ED) succession procedures in the event of a planned or unplanned absence. The Executive Director is authorized to implement this plan for all other positions, consistent with Personnel Policy. The Executive Committee serves as the Personnel Committee and advises the Chair/ED on circumstances not explicitly covered.

Amendments. The ED may update this section as organizational needs evolve. Any ED succession provisions must be reviewed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Commission before adoption.

Financial oversight during ED absence. The Audit, Facilities & Finance Committee will review the financials and confer with the Executive Committee to make any necessary adjustments.

Definitions

Planned absence: Known in advance (e.g., vacation, sabbatical, approved leave).
Unplanned absence: Arises unexpectedly (e.g., illness, emergency).
Temporary absence: The incumbent is expected to return.
Short-term absence: ≤ 30 days.
Medium-term absence: 31–90 days.
Long-term absence: > 90 days.
Permanent absence: It is determined that the incumbent will not return.
Interim appointee: An Individual appointed to fulfill duties temporarily until the incumbent returns or a permanent replacement is hired.

Triggers & Notification Protocol

In an unplanned ED absence, the ED (or representative) notifies the Commission Chair; together they determine the communication timeline (including RRTPO Chair as appropriate).

For unplanned or long-term ED absences, the Commission Chair convenes the Executive Committee as soon as feasible to affirm or adjust procedures in this plan.

Strategy by Duration
Short-term (≤ 30 days): Activate a Temporary Staffing Strategy—reassign duties among existing staff to cover essential responsibilities.
Medium-term (31–90 days): Determine whether the Temporary Staffing Strategy remains sufficient; consider interim role assignments and/or contracted support for critical gaps.

Long-term (>90 days) or Permanent: Evaluate interim coverage and initiate recruitment for a permanent replacement (internal candidates are considered in all cases).

Executive Director Succession - Eligible Interim Appointment Pathways
The Executive Committee may recommend to the Commission one of the following:

- An existing senior staff member (with the option to split duties if needed).
- The Commission Chair (who would take temporary leave from the Commission).
- An Executive Committee member or other current Commissioner (who would take temporary leave).
- An external interim ED under contract or an employment agreement.

If an Interim ED is hired/appointed, the Commission Chair and Executive Committee will negotiate a contract or employment agreement with a defined scope, term, authority, deliverables, and compensation.

Reporting, Authority & Decision Limits (Interim ED)
An Interim ED reports to the Commission Chair. If the Chair serves as Interim ED, the Vice Chair becomes Chair. An Interim ED has full day-to-day authority equivalent to the ED for operations and administration.

Decisions requiring consultation with the Chair and/or Executive Committee:

- Hiring and terminations.
- Significant financial commitments or deviations from the approved budget/work program.
- Taking on new projects beyond the Work Program.
- Public policy positions on behalf of the organization.

Compensation
Internal interim appointees are eligible for an interim pay adjustment and/or an end-of-service bonus based on assignment length and resources.

If the Interim ED role is filled externally or by a Commissioner appointee, terms of the engagement will be established via contract or employment agreement.

Communications Plan
Within 48 hours of appointment of the Interim ED, the Commission Chair and Interim ED will finalize a communications plan detailing audiences, messages, timelines, and messengers.

Below is a sample list of target audiences & owners of the related communication:

All PlanRVA Staff — Commission Chair
Local government administrators — Commission Chair
State/federal funders — Interim ED (cc: Chair)
Regional partners/affiliates (RRTPO, CVTA, EMACV) — Interim ED (cc: Chair)
State/regional/national associations (VAPDC, VAMPO, SERDI, NADO, AMPO) — Interim ED (cc: Chair)

Within 5 business days, PlanRVA staff will issue a press release or direct notifications, as appropriate.

Evaluation of Interim ED

An initial performance review will occur at 30–45 days, then every 90 days until the permanent ED is in place, at which time the ED will be subject to the annual performance review process determined by the Executive Committee.

Temporary Staffing Strategy

The following role coverage matrix is drawn from the current structure and assignments. It is activated for short-term (≤ 30 days) absences and adapted as needed for longer durations. As staffing assignments change within the organization, the Executive Director may update these recommendations with concurrence from the Executive Committee. As the proposed role coverage matrix identifies recommendations for temporary staffing, changes are not subject to Commission approval and will be evaluated on an annual basis.

Executive Director – Essential Function	**Temporary Coverage**
Oversee operations and staff	CFAO acts on behalf of the ED.
Coordinate planning & programming across REME, Community Development, Transportation	REME Planning Director coordinates Program Directors; reports to CFAO during ED absence.
RRTPO leadership	Director of Transportation serves as Interim RRTPO Director; eligible for appointment as Interim RRTPO Secretary.
Technical staff support & data strategy	Director of Data & Technology (reports to CFAO during ED absence).
Community engagement & board support	Sr Community Engagement Manager and Executive and Board Operations Manager report to CFAO.
Strategic oversight & priorities	REME Planning Director advises CFAO.
Representation to external bodies	Program Directors as assigned.
Commission administration & support	CFAO with Executive and Board Operations Manager.

Recruitment & Selection of Permanent Replacements

Internal candidates are always considered regardless of whether postings are internal-only or open to external applicants. Candidate evaluation is based on demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities, as evidenced by relevant experience and training.

Cross-Training & Knowledge Management

All Director-level positions are responsible for identifying critical functions in their respective area of supervision and ensuring cross-training coverage and documentation.

Written procedures will be developed and maintained for every critical function of the organization (e.g., payroll, grant reimbursements, IT continuity, procurement, records) and reviewed regularly for consistency with best practices, organizational goals and current and anticipated future needs.

The ED and CFAO will maintain a record of key organizational accounts, vendors, contracts, and access details. Access to these is limited to ED, CFAO, and designated roles determined by the ED for continuity and auditability.

Records, Signatories & Access

This SMP is available to Commissioners, Director-level staff, and the auditor, per document retention policy.

At all times, Commission Chair, Treasurer, and the CFAO, in addition to the ED, hold signature authority for checks and contracts.

The Executive Director maintains continuity of IT managed services, security, and licensing assignments, with identified cross-trained backups coordinated by the Director of Data and Technology.

Approvals & Version Control

The initial approval of PlanRVA's Succession Management Plan occurred on April 13, 2022.

The current version of PlanRVA's Succession Management Plan simplifies the scope and content of the Plan to include actions necessary to address a vacancy in the ED Role. Other sections of the original SMP have been extracted for inclusion in PlanRVA's operational procedures to better maintain accountability and separation of responsibility between the governing body and executive leadership.