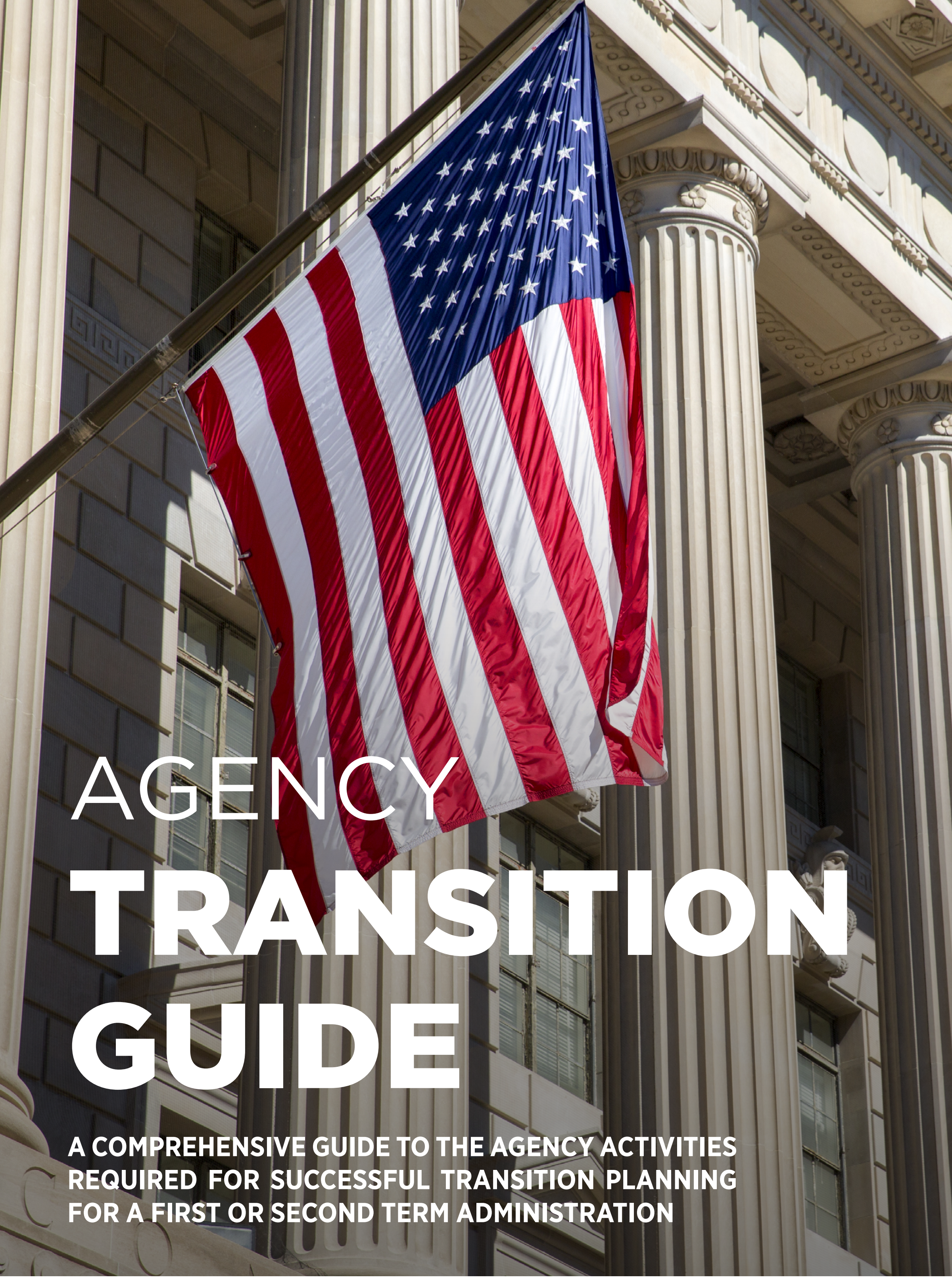

AGENCY TRANSITION GUIDE

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE AGENCY ACTIVITIES REQUIRED FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION PLANNING FOR A FIRST OR SECOND TERM ADMINISTRATION

CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION®

PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

BCG BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

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Agency
TRANSITION GUIDE

November 2023
Third Edition

Table of Contents

"While candidates and parties may be adversarial, presidential transitions are not. A cooperative and supportive tone is critical for the continuity of government operations."

Lee Lofthus, Assistant Attorney General for Administration (2006-22)

Department of Justice

INTRODUCTION

Managing Agency Transitions

This guide provides lessons learned from past presidential transitions at federal departments and agencies and outlines a series of best practices and key decision points to help senior career executives lead successful transition planning efforts.

Produced by the Partnership for Public Service's Center for Presidential Transition® and the Boston Consulting Group, this guide focuses on four core management principles involved in managing transitions and preparing for a first- or second-term administration. They are:

- **Organizing for success:** building a cross-functional transition team, writing a charter with clear roles and responsibilities, and engaging key constituencies involved in the transition.
- **Planning for change:** establishing effective program management to include development and execution of a work plan for the pre-election, post-election and post-inauguration phases, and preparing briefing materials for incoming leaders on agency operations and policies, budgets, personnel and crucial pending decisions.
- **Building relationships and taking care of people:** best practices to support the president-elect's agency teams, integrate new political appointees and facilitate the departure of the outgoing administration's team.
- **Establishing effective agency communications:** promoting an organizational culture of engaged and energized career employees through timely and credible communications.

Agency transition teams will face a cascading series of challenges before and after the presidential election, and in the early months after the inauguration. If there is a new administration, members of the president-elect's transition team, for example, will arrive at agencies sometime after the election to be briefed on operations and policies followed by appointees after Inauguration Day. The Biden administration appointed a historic number of more than 1,100 nonconfirmed political appointees who were ready to serve on Day One.[1] After the inauguration in 2017, President Donald Trump sent a wave of temporary personnel known as beachhead team members into the agencies, as well as some permanent appointees who did not require Senate confirmation. The beachhead team members were later followed by Senate-confirmed political appointees. If the incumbent administration wins a second term, there likely will be significant turnover in the leadership ranks across government. From Election Day through the first six months of the second terms of Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, an average of 46 percent of Cabinet secretaries, deputy secretaries and undersecretaries left their jobs.[2] On average, 11 percent of the individuals holding these positions across the government left prior to Inauguration Day and 35 percent left during the first six months of the second term.[3] All of the incoming personnel for these and other politically appointed jobs must be acclimated to the agency and its operations, in effect requiring an ongoing series of separate transitions for the agency team.

If the election produces a change in administration, transition team members who arrive after the election and the political appointees who arrive after the inauguration will be intensely focused on how to deliver the new president's campaign promises and priorities. A federal agency transition team will be in the best position to lay out the challenges that await the new presidential team, and to explain how to exercise the levers of power within the agency to develop an execution strategy. At the same time, federal agencies will need to manage relations with existing political appointees prior to the inauguration by balancing the outgoing administration's prerogatives with the need to safeguard the incoming team's freedom of action. The agency team also will have to assist in the departure of the outgoing appointees, keep career employees involved and well-informed about the process, and help set a tone which permits the important work of the agency to continue with as little disruption as possible.

In addition to these various responsibilities, each presidential transition brings unique issues of its own. Engaging in transition preparation under a first-term president who is running for re-election, for example, is quite different than a transition for a second-term president who is leaving office. Unexpected situations also can arise. During George W. Bush's transition in 2000-01, for example, the disputed election outcome delayed his team's access to federal agencies. Immediately following the 2016 election, President-elect Trump changed the leadership of his transition team. This delayed its outreach to fed-

1 Partnership for Public Service and The Boston Consulting Group, "The Presidential Transition Guide," November 2023. Available at presidentialtransition.org/transition-resources/presidential-transition-guide/
2 Ibid
3 Ibid

eral agencies and slowed the nomination of political appointees. In 2020, Joe Biden's transition team faced a three-week delay in the ascertainment of Biden as the winner. In addition to causing general confusion and uncertainty across the government, the delay hindered access to information and coordination with federal agencies.[4]

While the focus of this guide is on the presidential transition, most federal agencies will experience a change in political leadership at least once during an administration given the fact few Senate-confirmed appointees serve for a four-year term. For example, across the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations, an average of 80% of senior-level appointees served less than four years.[5] Career executives will find that the principles that support a successful presidential transition also apply to principal leadership transitions independent of the election cycle.

Managing change in the public sector is especially challenging given the high stakes and risks of failure that include wasting taxpayer dollars or undermining mission effectiveness. The focus must be on managing change to maximize the chance for success and minimize risk. By focusing on the core functions of change management in this guide, agencies can substantially increase their odds of success and deliver lasting impact.

Information in this guide was derived from several sources, including from participants involved in transition-related activities sponsored by the Partnership for Public Service and BCG, and from interviews with those involved in past presidential transitions. These activities include:

- The Agency Transition Roundtable, composed of career executives from more than 40 federal agencies, was convened by the Partnership for each presidential transition cycle since 2016 (from March 2016 to August 2017, June 2020 to April 2021 and again in 2023) to share best practices in transition planning and execution across the government.
- The Transition Service Providers Council, a group of career executives from agencies that provide logistics and other federal support to the transition teams and other agencies, held meetings organized by the Partnership from August 2015 to January 2017 to discuss how best to meet the needs of the agency teams.
- Partnership staff members conducted dozens of interviews with federal agency transition leaders and teams (career officials) and with Biden, Trump and Hillary Clinton transition members to learn about their experiences and insights to inform future transition planning efforts.

4 Partnership for Public Service, "The 2020-21 Presidential Transition," Jan. 20, 2022. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3FoTxsz
5 Partnership for Public Service analysis

THE PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION GUIDE

The Partnership and BCG in 2023 released a third edition of the Presidential Transition Guide, which covers the major activities of a transition for presidential candidates and their top campaign and transition staff, as well as administrations seeking a second term and other audiences. Topics include:

- Staffing the White House and the Executive Office of the President, developing a functional decision-making structure and preparing to assume governing responsibility.
- Making more than 4,000 presidential appointments, roughly 1,200 of which require Senate confirmation.
- Getting up-to-speed on more than 100 federal agencies and organizing and training leadership teams for each.
- Developing policy and personnel plans for a second-term administration.
- Building a full policy platform for the new administration and planning executive actions, a management agenda, a budget proposal and potential legislation to implement those policies.
- Preparing a 100-to-200-day plan for executing the policies laid out by the president during the campaign and getting the new administration off to a quick start.
- Developing a strategy for communicating with the American people, Congress, the media, political appointees, the federal workforce and other stakeholders.

THE CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

The Partnership for Public Service's Center for Presidential Transition® serves as the premier nonpartisan source of information and resources to help presidential candidates and their teams lay the groundwork for a new administration or for a president's second term. The Center provides critical assistance on how to organize and execute a transition; helps agency career executives prepare for new political leadership; offers guidance to political appointees on the unique aspects of government leadership; and engages with Congress to promote transition reforms. In addition, the Center offers insights to help incumbent presidents prepare for a second term and advice on the steps needed for a smooth transfer of power a new president is elected.

The Center's online platform, presidentialtransition.org, contains an extensive collection of material from previous presidential transitions, including tools and templates for transition participants, data sets, presentations, reports, blog posts, interactive and multimedia content, news stories and links to resources developed by other organizations. We hope this permanent one-stop shop for all things transition will serve to educate, inform and equip all those who play a role in the presidential transition to make each one as smooth and safe as possible.

“Our transition plan was designed to ensure a smooth transfer of power from one leader to another. We drafted a charter for our transition process that identified what the staffing would be, our reporting expectations and our component representatives. Besides timelines and milestones, the charter was structured so we could get buy-in across the department.”

Vince Micone, Senior Counselor for Management, and Presidential Transition Officer (2016-17)

Department of Homeland Security

CHAPTER 1

Organizing

BUILDING YOUR TEAM AND ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

Preparing for a first- or second-term presidential administration requires agencies to build well-organized, high-performing internal transition teams that can provide timely and relevant information to incoming senior leaders about agency policies, operations, budgets and personnel. Federal agency transition teams, led by a senior career official as the transition director, must engage the entire organization—including across agencies and subcomponents—and be committed to transparency and accountability.

There is no single optimal operating model for a transition team. Every transition team must adapt to the unique needs of its agency, including senior leadership. Several principles and best practices should guide the design and operation of an agency transition team:

- The size of the team should be based on the scale of the transition at the agency—for example, a change in administration versus a change in a Cabinet secretary— and the complexity and size of the agency.
- Team members should have expertise in policy, ethics requirements, statutory responsibilities, human resources, finance and budget, IT, communications and specific mission areas as required.
- The team needs the authority to fulfill its responsibilities and to be engaged with all relevant agency stakeholders.

This last principle—empowering transition teams to influence the outcomes for which they are being held responsible—requires strong support from senior leadership. The transition team must have sufficient visibility into the various units of the organization and full cooperation from all parties. It will help if the team membership includes respected leaders, which will signal that it is to be taken seriously and is well-equipped with knowledge and insight into the agency and its workforce. Absent these and other signs of authority, the transition team is at risk of being marginalized.

A key part of organizing for success is early engagement with stakeholders within the agency as well as those entities across the government that provide essential resources, information and services such as the Agency Transition Directors Council.

Federal agency transition teams operate in the shadow of a competitive election and within an organization where some senior political appointees will leave regardless of the outcome. The team must prepare simultaneously to serve the needs of a first- or second-term administration while also addressing the curiosities and, at times, anxieties of career colleagues. Balancing these demands starts with building a well-rounded transition team with the expertise and discipline to execute in a pressurized environment.

BUILDING THE TEAM

A well-organized federal agency transition team can deliver value that goes beyond the essential administrative tasks by providing critical information for incoming leaders, agency and its workforce, and ensuring essential tasks are well executed. A high level of performance by the transition team is especially important, centering on the ability of agencies to carry out their important public missions seamlessly during a period of uncertainty surrounding elections and possible change. And as the incoming leadership team's primary interlocutors, the agency transition team's performance will help shape their early perceptions of the career workforce. To achieve these goals, it is essential for the transition to have a clear governance structure with explicit roles, processes and decision rights.

Selecting the agency transition director

By law, the head of each agency must select a senior career official to lead transition planning no later than May of the presidential election year.[6] This official is known as the agency transition director. The agency transition director—the career leader of the transition—will be responsible for planning and executing the transition effort. This position carries both practical and symbolic importance. Agency transition directors should be senior career civil servants who are widely respected by both career and political staff. Ideally, these individuals will be experienced in presidential or principal agency transitions. Agency transition directors will need to establish clear roles and responsibilities, assume authority and be accountable for the process. The agency transition director is specifically responsible for:

- Building the agency transition leadership team.

6 U.S.C. 102 note; Presidential Transition Act of 1963 [hereinafter cited as PTA], §4(f)(1).

- Determining goals, setting timelines and driving progress.
- Coordinating the agency's engagement with internal and external stakeholders on transition-related activities.
- Serving as the face of the agency transition team to both internal and external audiences.

During the 2016-17 election cycle, approximately half of the transition directors serving as members of the Agency Transition Directors Council came from their agencies' office of the assistant secretary for administration and management or the equivalent, including Cabinet departments such as Defense, Education, Homeland Security, Justice and Treasury. Other agency transition teams, such as at the Environmental Protection Agency, were led by senior career policy officials. The Department of Transportation took a unique approach by empowering senior executives from the budget, IT and human capital offices to collectively lead the department's transition effort. In the 2020-21 election cycle, many agency transition directors had considerable experience from previous transitions and were deliberate in thinking of how best to support a first- or second-term administration.[7] For example, approximately half of the members of the Agency Transition Directors Council led agency transition planning efforts in 2016.[8]

In small agencies, the agency transition director often leads transition efforts in addition to other formal roles. In these cases, information about the transition director's role and responsibilities should be communicated across the agency, including the defined time-period that activities will be carried out and what activities will be performed.

The role of political appointees

The role of political appointees may vary based on the circumstances surrounding the presidential election. A term-limited president ensures that a transition will occur, while an election in which an incumbent president is running makes a change in administration uncertain. In either case, managing the current and potentially outgoing political appointees can be one of the most complicated parts of the pre-Election Day transition phase for career executives on the agency transition team.

Typically, the agency head will designate a high-ranking political appointee to oversee the transition director's efforts. While the appointee's degree of involvement will vary from agency to agency, this individual will act as a liaison between agency leadership and transition activities. In many agencies, this individual will not be heavily involved in the transition team's planning and day-to-day operations but will be influential in setting expectations for transition preparations. A successful relationship between this appointee and transition director will be built on mutual respect, open communication and a shared commitment to the agency's mission.

7 Partnership for Public Service, "The 2020-21 Presidential Transition," Jan. 20, 2022. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3FoTxsz

8 Partnership for Public Service analysis.

During the 2016-17 transition, for instance, political appointees played a significant role in leading the transition at the departments of Agriculture and Defense. At USDA, Sally Cluthe, an appointee well-respected by senior political and career leaders inside the department, actively supported Kevin Shea, the career transition director and administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Cluthe's experience from the 2008-09 transition, knowledge of the department and commitment to the mission made her an asset to the USDA transition team. At the Department of Justice during the 2020-21 transition, experienced agency transition director Lee Lofthus and his team briefed senior political appointees, including the Deputy Attorney General, early in the spring of 2020 on key elements of agency transition activities and requirements. Lofthus—who led transition planning at the department since 2008 while also serving as the assistant attorney general for administration—stressed the importance of getting buy-in from top leadership early on, and the value of having their trust to lead departmental transition planning: "[In 2020] DOJ leadership essentially said, 'Do what you need to do, and if you need anything from us, let us know.' With their support, our transition group took the ball and ran with it."

At the Department of Defense, agency transition director Tom Muir explained that regular meetings between the department's political leadership and transition team built on well-established practices from previous transition cycles to coordinate transition efforts across DOD agencies, offices, combatant commands and military services. This coordination became even more important given unexpected changes in DOD's senior leadership shortly after the 2020 election.[9] The potential for political tensions reinforced the importance of drawing on past precedents and expertise and investing time to foster a productive relationship between the agency transition director and lead appointee, as well as between the agency transition director and leaders of the incoming presidential transition team.

Regardless of the structure, outgoing political appointees can add enormous value to the team, but the impact of the election is an important factor to consider when determining what role they should play. If the incumbent administration is seeking re-election, for example, appointees will likely be more reluctant to take a visible role in transition planning. And if there is a change of administration after the election, many appointees will need to concentrate on matters such as finding new jobs, and that can affect their ability to focus on the transition. Given the possibility of changes in political leadership at any time during a transition, the experience of the career workforce is critical. Beverly Babers, the 2016 transition director for the Department of the Treasury, said that based on her experience, it is very important for the career staff to lead the effort from beginning to end to ensure continuity and neutrality.

While civil servants rightfully take pride in their nonpartisan service, that will not be enough for members of the agency transition team to successfully complete its work, particularly when the incumbent president is running for a second term. Transition planning can be a sensitive subject for any incumbent administration, and it is vital for the agency transition director to possess a cer-

9 Starr, Barbara, "Trump administration removes senior defense officials and installs loyalists, triggering alarm at Pentagon," Nov. 13,2020. Retrieved from https://cnn.it/45Co9S4

tain political acumen and ability to operate with discretion to minimize possible tensions with political appointees. Regardless of how engaged they become, political appointees may expect to be kept informed of progress, consulted on politically sensitive issues and given opportunities to frame the narrative of the agency's work during the previous four to eight years.

Rounding out the core team

The agency transition director will need to select five to 10 core team members who will dedicate the most time to the transition. Directors should build their core teams with three main factors in mind: programmatic expertise, essential skills and representation from across the agency. The design of a cross-functional team will speed up decision-making and enable broader and more responsive engagement across the agency.

MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL EXPERTISE

The core team supporting the transition director should include representatives from significant management or functional areas, such as budget, IT and information security, ethics, general counsel and human capital. Information about the agency's business processes will feature prominently in the briefing materials that will be prepared for new leaders. Therefore, experts in these areas should be involved from the beginning.

Long-term investments such as technology transformations transcend administrations and require expert involvement for continuity. Representatives from an agency's general counsel office can address ambiguities that will inevitably arise on topics such as access to documents and lines of succession for acting officials. For example, DOJ has traditionally included representatives from the Office of the General Counsel to document the department-specific appointing authorities, recognizing that agency succession plans must be in place for non-career positions by Sept. 15 of an election year.

Similarly, Shelley Finlayson, acting director, chief of staff and program counsel at the Office of Government Ethics, highlighted the value of including a designated agency ethics official on an agency's core transition team: "Agencies need the right team pulled together internally to know what risks, questions and challenges they're facing. There are many cross-functional aspects of this process, [including] assessing from an ethics perspective whether they're prepared to head into this period."

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

In addition to programmatic expertise, transition team personnel should have certain skills and personal qualities. Members will need to be able to work within strict timelines and be comfortable in an atmosphere of uncertainty. There is no way to know for sure how a first- or second-term administration will use the agency transition team's products, or what information will be sought outside of the prepared briefing materials. Strong interpersonal and communication skills are a given. Since much of the work of a presidential transition will involve producing key deliverables in a timely fashion, strong project managers are essential for success.

FRONT OFFICE DESIGN

High-performing transition teams can go beyond building their own team by helping new senior leaders organize their front offices and create smooth decision-making processes. This is not about personnel selection or policy choices, but identifying the critical and sometimes special roles that are needed within the front office team. Roles include the chief of staff, deputy, White House liaison, chief scheduler, speechwriters, legislative affairs specialists and special assistants charged with advancing signature initiatives, engaging external stakeholders or enabling more creative thinking. Advising senior leaders on front office design may be as simple as highlighting past reforms, or it could involve new options for how to design the agency front office to better advance the incoming team's priorities. It also could include outlining current or previous decision-making processes that are critical to getting things done.

Even if team members haven't been involved in previous presidential transitions, almost every senior leader will need to apply their skills to prepare and deliver briefings to new appointees and respond to their requests. In addition, the transition team should include at least one designated writer to manage the creation and editing of briefing materials as well as a graphic designer to make products visually compelling. Another model is to have agency components responsible for drafting materials in their areas of expertise, using a common template across the department, and having a single reviewer who revises language to provide a similar voice and style across documents.

BROAD AGENCY REPRESENTATION

Other considerations for inclusion on the core team are representatives from large components and subcomponents, if applicable. By law, agency heads will designate transition directors for major components and subcomponents.[10] Including these individuals in agency preparations will help to present a complete picture of the agency to the incoming leadership team.

A well-rounded team is also critical in another regard. Some agency transition teams will familiarize themselves with candidate promises that are pertinent to their agencies to understand potential areas of interest that the winning team may wish to know more about once they meet after the election. Others will want to call out ongoing initiatives that should be prioritized for early action. Recommendations will carry greater weight coming from a career team that is representative of the entire agency.

If not part of the core team, representatives from components should be included through the creation of an internal agency transition council. The departments of Justice and Health and Human Services in 2016 both created transition councils, which included 30 to 40 high-ranking career officials from components across those departments who met regularly to discuss transition planning. These councils provided valuable forums for the transition directors to gather information, test ideas and transmit messages across the agency. Katie Malague, who worked on past transitions and served as a core member of Treasury's career transition team in 2016, said of the internal transition council: "Of all I've seen in agency transitions, this may be the most important com-

10 PTA, § 4(f)(1).

ponent." Directors should keep in mind that the core team's composition is important not only for its ability to execute the transition, but also for the message that it sends about their agencies' priorities.

Vince Micone, the Department of Homeland Security's presidential transition officer in 2016-17, understood the need for inclusiveness. A civilian, Micone deliberately selected a Coast Guard officer as his deputy to signal the transition team's commitment to incorporating the department's civilian and military missions into transition planning and included an intelligence officer on the team to cover an important departmental base.

There are two graphics on the next page. The first outlines a sample structure of an agency transition team, and the second outlines the essential skills that members of the core transition team should possess. Career staff who can devote a significant amount of time to the transition, if not work on it full-time, should coordinate all aspects of the transition. The inclusion of human resources and general counsel are critical, while budget and IT may perhaps be less so if a full-time coordinator arranges regular outreach to those offices.

DESIGNING THE OPERATING MODEL

Once the core transition team is in place, the next step is to develop a system to govern how the team will operate. It is important for that system to keep the transition leadership focused on the central mission of preparing for a first- or second-term administration, and to establish a solid working relationship between the career staff and incoming political leaders. A key step in the process involves codifying the transition team's practices, goals and role vis-à-vis other key stakeholders.

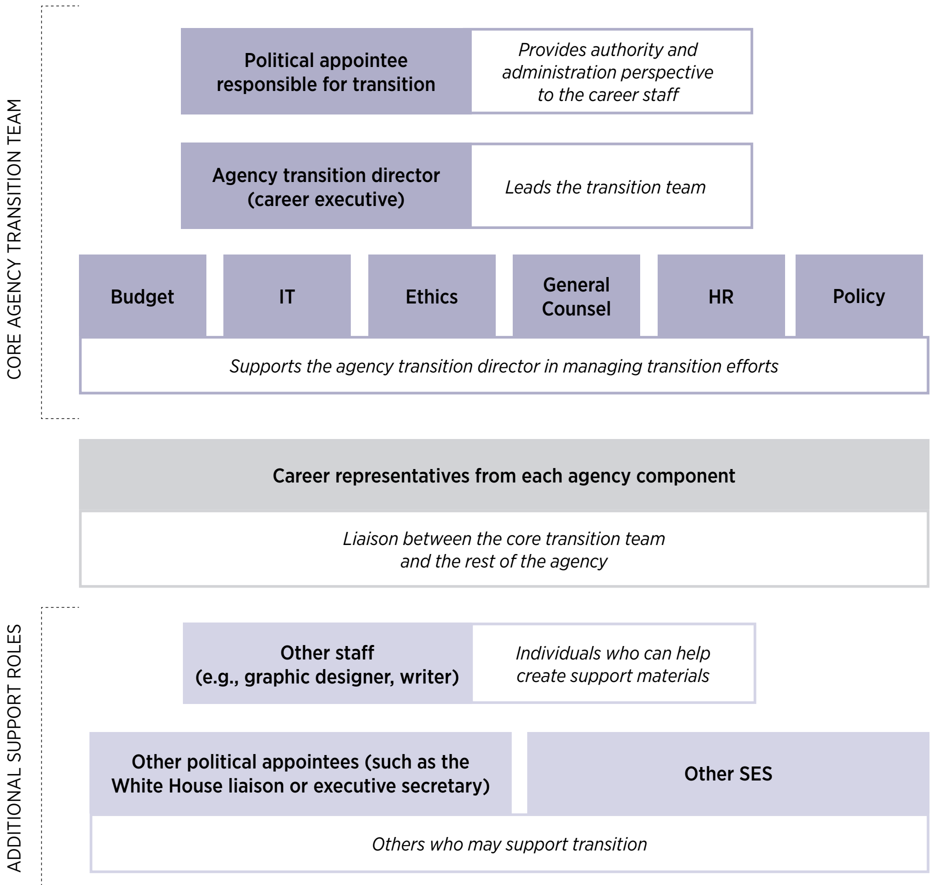
Program-management approach

The Edward "Ted" Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015 formalized a way for agencies to manage the transition by designating an agency transition director and assembling a supporting team. Concentrating the management of presidential transitions into the hands of an agency transition director may be relatively new in the federal government, but it has precedent in the business world. Companies and other organizations have learned that large-scale change efforts work best when run by a program management office. In many respects, the highest performing transition teams adopt the characteristics and functions of the program management office model.

At a minimum, the transition team, acting as a program management office, serves as a coordinating body during a time of change. At its best, an activist PMO can make the difference between success and failure of a large change effort. Like a corporate PMO, the transition team should act like and be seen as a strategic change agent, responsible for managing a varied, complex set of initiatives while integrating new personnel into the institution. And like the optimal PMO, the transition team can add critical value through management of the transition operation with responsibility for:

- Setting and aligning priorities and initiatives.

Sample agency transition team structure



Source: Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group analysis

Skills for agency transition team members

ATTRIBUTES	**Detail-oriented**
	Meets deadlines
	Effective communicator
	Strong project manager
	Customer service skills
	Writing and graphic design (at least one of each)

- Ensuring delivery on priority initiatives and tasks.
- Promoting cooperation across the agency.
- Facilitating resolution of issues as they arise.
- Providing agency and program-wide view of progress.
- Keeping senior leaders and the workforce informed.
- Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.

The agency transition team should capture the scope of its activity and the other critical elements underpinning the team's process in a transition charter.

Composing a charter

The agency transition director and the core leadership should draft the transition team charter early in the process. The charter should address significant aspects of the transition team's work. Most transition team charters have the following elements, which can be captured using the following template:

- Team members and defined roles.
- Team purpose and objectives.
- Timelines and key milestones.
- Key stakeholders.
- Scope of team responsibilities.
- Team deliverables.

An effective charter is more than a collection of deadlines. At the Department of Homeland Security, the 2016 transition team used the charter to align team members around internal expectations and to rally support across the department for the team's mission. Coast Guard Capt. Bion Stewart, the DHS deputy transition director, said besides the timelines and milestones, the charter was "structured so we could set expectations for collaboration across the department." He said it was important that the team had "high visibility from leadership" and that there was "accountability at the component and department levels." The DHS transition team's 2016 charter can be seen in full in Appendix 1.1.

Operating cadence

At a minimum, agency transition directors should work to ensure that at least a handful of career staff will work full-time on the transition during the early stages, especially when it is known that there will be a transfer of power to a new administration. Additional team members who will devote as much time as needed should step up their activity as the election approaches and as new appointees arrive.

Agency transition teams should keep in mind that the tempo will vary throughout the process; each phase brings with it different activities and hence a different operating cadence. Key activities include coordination of briefing materials, developing the structure of engagement with new leaders after the election, and transition-related events to prepare and engage career staff.

Initially, the core transition team will meet for the first time in June or July, and then convene on a regular basis through the summer. During the 2016-17 transition, many teams that chose to create transition councils representing agency components convened those councils monthly. The length and duration of transition team meetings will accelerate in the fall as the election draws closer. By October of a presidential election year, many transition teams will touch base daily, even if only for a brief time, and will continue to do so through the inauguration. In addition to regular meetings to execute and assess transition plans, the core team may spend time in consultations with political appointees at information-gathering sessions, providing informational all-hands transition briefings and taking part in other types of transition-related engagements. The pace and visibility of these activities will likely depend on whether the incumbent administration is running for a second term.

Once the focus shifts to onboarding new appointees after the inauguration, agency transition teams might consider meeting at least once a week with the agency's security personnel to ensure that the process of credentialing new appointees proceeds smoothly, and conferring with human resources to make sure all necessary paperwork is in hand.

STAKEHOLDERS IN AGENCY TRANSITION

The agency transition team will need to interact with and respond to a wide range of stakeholders. These stakeholders play different roles, offer different resources and will require different responses. Broadly, they are the outgoing and incoming administrations if there is a transfer of power, the incumbent administration in the event of re-election, and the career workforce.

Incumbent administration

The incumbent administration will guide agency transition preparations. Inside each agency, an administration official will select the senior career executive who will lead the agency's transition preparations. Agency transition teams will need to engage with political appointees on transition planning and the development of materials that are required by law and develop processes to assist appointees who choose to leave the government.

The two primary officials who will drive the administration's government-wide transition effort are the deputy director for management at the Office of Management and Budget and the federal transition coordinator at the General Services Administration. These two officials will support agency transition efforts through the Agency Transition Directors Council.

Mary Gibert, the federal transition coordinator in 2020-21, described her overall approach as, "We want to provide the services required by law, make improvements based on lessons learned from the past, and anticipate the needs of an incoming administration."

TAKING A GOVERNMENT-WIDE PERSPECTIVE

In 2020-21, transition directors from 21 agencies convened through the Agency Transition Directors Council to identify what agencies should do to prepare for the transition. These agencies and more also attended the Partnership for Public Service's Center for Presidential Transition Agency Transition Roundtable to work through how to implement the council's guidance and to develop a common approach to addressing transition-related challenges. Many of these challenges, from utilizing IT platforms to developing procedures for sharing information after the election, will likely arise in future transitions. Transition directors should take full advantage of these forums to network with their peers and develop workable solutions to common problems.

White House Transition Coordinating Council

The White House Transition Coordinating Council, created by the Edward "Ted" Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, is chaired a senior employee in the Executive Office of the President, designated by the president. Other members of the council include the GSA federal transition coordinator, a transition representative of each eligible candidate (serving in an advisory capacity) and other senior executive branch officials selected by the president.[11] The federal transition coordinator and the deputy director for management at the Office of Management and Budget are responsible for taking guidance from this body and providing it as appropriate to agencies.[12]

Agency Transition Directors Council

The presidential transition improvement law also established an Agency Transition Directors Council to facilitate the agency transition process.[13] This council is charged with sharing transition guidance from the incumbent ad- ministration to agency transition teams and coordinating transition efforts across agencies. The agency council meets regularly starting in May of a presidential election year and is co-chaired by the federal transition coordinator at GSA and the deputy director for management at OMB. Members include senior representatives from each agency described in section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as well as individuals from the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Government Ethics, the National Archives and Records Administration and any other agencies deemed necessary by the president.[14] As a result of the Presidential Transition Enhancement of 2019, agency leads on the council must be career staff.[15] The senior career agency representatives are the transition leads within their respective agencies and are responsible for directing their agency transition efforts. OMB and GSA will engage agencies that are not part of the council to share recommendations developed in that forum.

11 PTA, § 4(d)
12 GSA Transition Overview, 2016 Presidential Transition, Aug. 2, 2016. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2xuiza9
13 PTA § 4(e)
14 Section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code
15 PTA § 4(e)(3)

Incoming administration

Prior to the election, there will be almost no contact between the presidential transition teams and the agency transition teams. Each eligible candidate will be able to send a representative to Agency Transition Directors Council meetings to participate in an advisory capacity, but full access to agencies after the election will be negotiated as part of a memorandum of understanding between GSA and the president-elect's transition representative. [16] Any requests for information by the presidential transition teams before the election must be funneled through the federal transition coordinator. After the election, the barrier between presidential and agency transition teams will come down, but interactions still must be managed to ensure continuity and minimize disruptions that may occur due to uncoordinated interactions.

In the case of a delay in identifying the winner of the election, the Presidential Transition Improvement Act of 2022 provides for fair and equal access to transition services and information for eligible candidates five days after the date of the election, and until there is a clear winner. Agencies will develop briefing materials (by Nov. 1), consistent with previous transition cycles, with critical information for the challenger of an incumbent president or for the team(s) of a candidate(s) seeking to replace a president leaving office. Agencies should expect that GSA's federal transition coordinator will provide guidance to agencies if the outcome of the election is in doubt.

If the election produces a change of administration, the president-elect's transition team has a variety of options. The first option, known as the agency review or landing teams, will arrive shortly after the election, gather information and leave prior to the inauguration. A possible second wave, known in some transitions as beachhead teams, may arrive after the inauguration and serve as temporary political appointees for up to 120 days under temporary transition hiring authorities.[17] The beachhead team concept was developed by Mitt Romney's transition team in 2012 and put into practice by President-elect Trump, who deployed 536 beachhead officials into federal agencies as of day one of the new administration in January 2017.[18] Many of these beachhead team members remained in place for several months. The third group will consist of permanent political appointees. The Biden administration did not adopt the beachhead concept of sending temporary appointees into agencies. Instead, Biden appointed a historic number of more than 1,100 political appointees who did not require Senate confirmation and who were ready to serve right after the inauguration. Ultimately, the decision about how to proceed on staffing the departments and agencies rests with a new administration, but the agency transition teams will need to prepare for all contingencies.

Representatives of the president-elect will seek information that is necessary to help the new administration create a policy plan for the first 100 to 200 days. These teams will be interested in receiving an overview of hot-button is-

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16 PTA § 4(e)
17 Office of Personnel Management, "Temporary Transition Schedule C Authority and Temporary Transition Senior Executive Service Appointing Authorities, Jan. 9, 2017. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2UozDHm
18 Vice President-elect Mike Pence, "Transition Accomplishments Summary," Jan. 19, 2017. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2vn8cUP

sues facing the agency, pressing decisions that need to be made early in the new administration and opportunities to begin implementing the president's agenda.

If a new administration seeks to employ the beachhead team approach, individuals will serve as temporary appointees after the inauguration until Senate-confirmed officials are in place. They will lay the groundwork for the new administration's priorities. Depending on how long it takes for more senior nominees to be appointed and if necessary, confirmed, beachhead team members may serve for months and will have varying levels of authority to make policy decisions. The agency transition team will want to support the beachhead team members, some of whom may eventually become permanent appointees.

The permanent political appointees, including those requiring and those not needing Senate confirmation, will have to be onboarded and provided with the knowledge of the agency's operations and resources that they need to lead.

Career workforce

The presidential election season and the possible change in administration can be an anxious time for federal employees. The agency transition team has a responsibility to keep career employees informed about transition planning and to provide reassurance about the agency's readiness for the transition. Transition teams may employ several different methods to spread the message. During the 2016-17 transition, for example, the Department of Education hosted forums to brief senior executives on transition planning. The department also held town hall meetings in which employees could ask questions.

Keeping employees informed may also have other benefits. If additional assistance is needed, employees who feel engaged in the process are more likely to contribute when that need arises.

Non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations have valuable resources to support agency transition teams. During the 2016-17 and 2020-21 transition cycles, for instance, the Partnership for Public Service, together with the Boston Consulting Group, convened federal agencies to share best practices and collectively address transition-related challenges through monthly meetings of the Agency Transition Roundtable. The Partnership and BCG also provided customized strategic support to individual agencies, and a network of good government organizations, referred to as the Transition Management Network, offered resources to agencies and presidential transition teams.[19] Qualified third parties will also be available to offer support to agencies during future presidential transitions.

Transition service providers

Transition service providers are agencies that provide direct support services to the presidential transition teams. This support mainly takes the form of

19 Transition Management Network organizations included: ACT-IAC, Brookings Institution, IBM Center for the Business of Government, Leadership Council for Women in National Security, the MITRE Corporation, National Association of Public Administration, Professional Services Council, Results for America, Senior Executives Association, the Tech Talent Project, Truman National Security Project, UVA's Miller Center, and the White House Transition Project.

critical logistical services, such as the provision of office space and the performance of background checks. These agencies also provide government-wide guidance on issues such as the proper handling of records, descriptions of civil service positions and ethics rules. Service providers include the OMB, GSA, OPM, NARA, the FBI, OGE and DOJ.

TRANSITIONS TAKE DIFFERENT FORMS

The transfer of presidential power occurs every four or eight years, but transitions of varying degrees take place far more frequently across government. Two more common forms include second-term and principal and deputy transitions.

Second-term transitions

For much of the American public, presidential transitions occur only when an incumbent president exits and a new president takes office. Career public servants, however, know better. A president re-elected to a second term often oversees a shift in policies and priorities, as well as a significant turnover of political leadership, as outlined earlier. The scale of the transition undoubtedly will be smaller than the handoff to a new administration. Nonetheless, the change can be so notable that commentators and historians have frequently distinguished between the first and second terms when referring to a single administration.

A transition, therefore, is a near-certainty regardless of the election outcome. When an incumbent president is running for re-election, the White House and agency leaders are still obligated by law to plan and coordinate activities to ensure continuity of government and a smooth and efficient transfer of power to a successor if one should occur. This includes convening the White House Transition Coordinating Council and the Agency Transition Directors Council, ensuring that succession plans are in place for each senior noncareer position in agencies, and having agencies name career executives as transition directors to lead teams that will provide a new president with the information and cooperation needed to be ready to govern.[20] Agency transition teams must prepare just as they would at the end of an eight-year presidency, including developing comprehensive briefing materials and preparing to offer full assistance to presidential transition agency review teams and new political appointees.

When the incumbent president is re- elected, the transition offers an opportunity for agencies to re-evaluate, reprioritize and reset their agendas for a second term based on the promises of the president's campaign. It also allows for the possibility of new leadership at various levels of the organization. By using the best practices for change management outlined in this guide, agency transition teams can pre- pare for a transition of any size and scope.

Organizing for principal and deputy transitions

The transition team, by necessity, will be scaled and scoped for presidential tranThe transition team, by necessity, will be scaled and scoped for presiden-

20 PTA §§ 4(e) and (f).

tial transitions differently than it will be for the turnover of principals or deputies during a president's term in office. Transition teams for principals and deputies will be smaller, but essentially will have the same responsibilities—the incoming leadership will still require basic administrative support and, more importantly, will seek to advance a new set of priorities. Therefore, the transition team will need several capable people to lead coordination, align activities, facilitate resolution, assess programs, inform leadership and ensure delivery of priority information to the new leaders. The transition team can usually fulfill these responsibilities with a three- or four-person team embedded in the management function of the agency—if there is a clear connection to the principal's front office, and there are dedicated personnel in supporting offices such as human resources, security and information technology on which the core team can rely.

CONCLUSION

The key to a successful transition involves building a high-performing agency transition team and developing a plan of action. It also involves working closely with the outgoing political leaders, the president-elect's agency review teams and appointees, and other important stakeholders to ensure a smooth handoff of power, or with existing and newly appointed political leaders if the incumbent is re-elected.

Organizing

Helpful Tips

- [ ] Ensure that career executives on the core agency transition team are in leadership positions in all aspects of transition planning.
- [ ] Build a cross-functional agency transition team that accounts for policy, ethics requirements, statutory responsibilities, human resources, finance and budget, IT, communications, and specific mission areas.
- [ ] Draft a transition team charter that captures significant aspects of the team's work, such as:
    - Team members and defined roles.
    - Team purpose and objectives.
    - Timelines and key milestones.
    - Key stakeholders.
    - Scope of team responsibilities.
    - Team deliverables.
- [ ] Tap into expertise and resources from components and subcomponents across the agency. This might include talking with agency officials who have previously served on a presidential transition team. They can provide firsthand insights about the information and resource needs of incoming transition team representatives.
- [ ] Connect with external stakeholders capable of providing assistance.
- [ ] Include a writer and graphic designer on the core team who can combine your agency's inputs into informative, compelling and accessible products.

APPENDIX 1.1

Department of Homeland Security Presidential Transition Office Charter, May 2016

Source: Department of Homeland Security

I. OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Public Law 114-136, the Presidential Transitions Improvement Act of 2015, and other applicable laws, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Presidential Transition Office (PTO) is hereby established. The PTO is charged with coordinating and/or supporting Departmental activities associated with the transition from the President's administration to the newly-elected President's administration. The PTO operates under the authority of the Secretary and reports to the Under Secretary for Management. The PTO is staffed by DHS career civil servants and military personnel, and represents the Department in all White House and interagency engagements related to the Presidential transition. The primary objective of the PTO is to ensure continuity of operations and facilitate a seamless transition from the current administration to the next administration. This effort will include eliciting, coordinating, coalescing, and disseminating information to and from all DHS Components, including both Operational and Support Components, which includes Headquarters (HQ) Offices. The PTO will also engage in these same functions with the current Administration, Presidential candidate agency review teams, the President-elect's incoming transition team, and the new Administration. This effort requires Component Heads, both operational and support, and their designees, to respond to all PTO requests and comply with all PTO guidance to ensure information exchanges and associated transition activities are executed effectively and efficiently. The commitment of all senior leaders leveraging, through the Unity of Effort, the best efforts of the entire Department to this effort is absolutely essential.

II. ASSUMPTIONS AND FRAMING GUIDANCE

- Adopt best practices from 2008/2009: The 2016/2017 Presidential transition will adopt best practices from the 2008/2009 Presidential transition as well as lessons learned from the preparations made for the 2012 Presidential transition.
- Transparency and candor: A successful transition requires transparency and candor. DHS Components will produce transition materials that not only highlight the Department's successes, but also identify gaps, and as appropriate, opportunities for improvement.
- Collaboration is essential: The PTO will reinforce collaboration throughout the transition process, both internally with DHS Components, as well as externally with the interagency, candidate teams, President-elect's transition team, and the new Administration.

III. PROGRAM PLAN

The Presidential transition program includes the following priority actions:

- Prepare the Department for continuity of operations through the Presidential administration transition;
- Ensure response readiness in the event of a national incident;
- Confirm the order of succession in key leadership positions;
- Ensure key directives and delegations are complete and accurate;
- Identify internal processes for on-boarding and off-boarding senior officials;
- Prepare briefing materials;
- Plan and conduct training exercises;
- Support candidate transition teams and the President-elect transition team;
- Establish strategic communications with the White House, Office of Management and Budget, General Services Administration, Office of Personnel Management, and interagency transition teams; and
- Assist the Office of Legislative Affairs as required to provide information about transition efforts and support the Senate confirmation process.

Major Timelines and Milestones

By April 2016

- Core DHS Presidential Transition Team appointed
- Senior Component Accountable Official and Component Action Officer appointed
- DHS Presidential Transition Office spaces configured

By May 2016

- Develop and task briefing paper template
- DHS Transition Committee meets (ongoing)
- White House Transition Coordinating Council convenes (ongoing)
- President's Management Council convenes with Agency Transition Directors Council (ongoing)

By June 2016

- Identify and implement on-boarding and off-boarding internal processes (ongoing)
- Identify and plan transition and continuity training for designated career successors and incoming officials (ongoing)

By July 2016

- Party Nomination Conventions
- Candidates appoint agency review teams
- Identify and train designated career successors

By September 2016

- White House compiles list of Presidentially Appointed Positions (Plum Book)

By October 2016

- Finalize transition materials
- Updated delegations, directives, and instructions issued

By November 2016

- Presidential election
- Presidential Transition Team named and agency arrival
- Briefing and support of Presidential Transition Team (ongoing)

By January 2017

- Appointment of officials and Senate confirmation begins

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Under Secretary for Management: Has overall responsibility for the Department's Presidential transition program and represents the Department on the President's Management Council.
- DHS Presidential Transition Officer: Provides the strategic direction and oversight over all PTO activities. Represents DHS for matters related to the Presidential transition and serves on the Agency Transition Directors Council. Implements senior leadership guidance. Ensures information provided to candidate and President-elect transition teams complies with all applicable information sharing and privacy laws and policies.
- Deputy Transition Officer: Leads PTO team activities and initiatives. Serves as the military liaison and transition team action officer to support the Office of Legislative Affairs. Coordinates major issues briefing materials.
- Chief of Staff: Leads HQ coordination efforts. Serves as the liaison to intelligence and counter-terrorism staffs. Coordinates Component briefing materials.
- Director of Operations: Leads Office of Management efforts and coordinates overall tasks and activities.

- Executive Assistant and Program Manager: Manages program logistics and provides administrative support for all tasks and activities.
- Transition Senior Component Accountable Official (SCAO): Career SES/Flag Officer responsible for providing strategic direction, leadership, and oversight for all DHS HQ.
- Office, Directorate, and Component transition activities. Represents the Component at internal and external forums. Is accountable for final component briefing materials.
- Component Action Officer: GS14/15 career employee or O5/O6 officer assigned to support the Transition SCAO. Ensures coordination and delivery of tasked items, facilitates component engagement with PTO as necessary, and may provide direct staff support to the PTO when requested.
- Management Directorate (MGMT) Line of Business (LOB) Senior Accountable Official (SAO): The MGMT LOB SAO is an SES or GS-15 official who will be responsible for the strategic direction and oversight for all LOB transition activities, represent LOBs at internal and external forums, be accountable for final LOB materials, and serve as lead official for internal LOB transition activities.
- All DHS Components support and participate in the Presidential Transition in a number of critical roles, including but not limited to:
    - Assign Transition SCAO and Component Action Officer as directed by the PTO;
    - Participate on the DHS Transition Committee;
    - Contribute subject matter expertise on various topics as required;
    - Provide analytical inputs including performance metrics, data and/or other quantitative and qualitative data or assessments to inform briefing materials;
    - Draft Component briefing materials as directed by the PTO;
    - Review and update all delegations, directives, and instructions as required;
    - Identify designated career successors for key leadership positions;
    - Execute off-boarding and on-boarding procedures in accordance with Department processes, including proper management of personnel documents in accordance with applicable laws and policies;
    - Coordinate, develop, and participate in transition training events as required; and
    - Lead, assist and participate in carrying out strategic communications with key stakeholders as required.

V. OBJECTIVES

The PTO will achieve the following objectives in the performance of its duties:

- Establish a comprehensive succession plan, including appropriate delegation authorities to ensure a seamless transition of leadership throughout the transition;
- Conduct targeted, effective training to support continuity of operations;
- Facilitate cooperation, collaboration, and the transparent exchange of information;
- Provide high quality, thorough, concise, and effective briefing materials to DHS leadership, candidate teams, the President-Elect’s Transition Team, and new Administration;
- Establish standardized, uniform processes throughout the transition consistent with unity of effort concepts and practices;
- Ensure outgoing personnel are appropriately recognized for their service and commitment to the security of our Nation; and
- Be fully prepared to welcome the incoming Administration and provide the support necessary for a successful transition including supporting the Office of Legislative Affairs in confirmation of Presidentially-appointed and Senate-confirmed nominees.

"Start early. Engage colleagues across your agency. Plan for an incoming audience with different levels of experience and develop creative ways to tell your story. Bottom line: Produce materials that entice your audience to start a conversation."

Charles Margiotta, Deputy Lead, Presidential Transition Team (2016)

Federal Bureau of Investigation

CHAPTER 2

Planning

PREPARING WORK PLANS AND BRIEFING MATERIALS

The core responsibility for a federal agency's transition team is to develop and implement an effective plan for managing the transition—one that will facilitate a smooth handoff of power to a new administration or to assist the new political appointees of a second-term administration.

A well-managed plan requires rigorous program management to ensure the team is aligned around goals, timelines, decisions and outcomes. Planning should center around summarizing the information the president-elect's transition team or the incumbent's new political leadership will need to understand the operations of the agency and gain early momentum on their agenda. This will include topics such as critical policy, legal and ethics issues, agency risks, personnel, the budget, regulations, technology challenges and congressional oversight such as recent Government Accountability Office findings and inspector general reports, and looming deadlines, especially in the first 30 days of the presidential term.

PLANNING YOUR WORK

Overall, an agency's approach to transition planning should allow for course corrections warranted by changes in circumstances, requirements, resources, information, or priorities. The agency transition team should also address the following issues common to every complex change management effort:

- **Setting clear transition priorities**: The size and scale of leading a presidential transition can challenge even the most experienced project managers. It is difficult to communicate the work of a large, complex organization like a federal agency in a concise set of deliverables. Agency transition teams must avoid taking on too much beyond their mandate by articulating clear goals that focus on the most important tasks, developing realistic plans to reach those goals and remaining focused on those plans throughout the transition.

- **Developing a transition work plan**: Developing a work plan: The agency transition team must develop a tight work plan early in the process that covers goals, milestones, decision points and deliverables, including the creation of briefing materials for the president- elect's transition team by the Nov. 1 deadline as required by law.[21]
- **Ensuring availability of resources:** At least some members of agency transition teams will likely split their time between transition planning and their regular portfolios. With a core team of less than 15, this dual-hat arrangement requires an honest assessment of the work involved, especially the time that will be required shortly before and after the election. Transition teams should do everything possible to secure at least a few core team members who can work full-time on transition. Team and role charters are powerful tools for ensuring effective talent management.
- **Meeting the needs of customers:** Preparing briefing materials is a process driven by the needs of the incoming administration. Transition teams, therefore, need to prepare materials from the perspective of what will best serve the needs of their customers: representatives of a president-elect's team preparing to take office for a first- or second- term. Whether they arrive after the election or after the inauguration, members of the incoming administration will want to know about issues that require immediate attention and how to begin executing on the new president's agenda during the first 100 to 200 days.
- **Composing a common template for briefing materials:** Standardizing the format for products will simplify the agency transition team's process and make materials more useful for customers. Organizational overviews, issue papers and cross-cutting topics such as clearance processes and other fundamental information that explains how the agency works should all have a common template that conveys this information clearly and concisely.
- **Determining requirements for in-person vs. remote communications:** The COVID-19 pandemic forced a rapid shift in how agencies conducted meetings and transmitted briefing materials during the 2020-21 transition. An agency can draw on the lessons and improvements from this cycle to determine the best way to format, present and preserve briefing materials. Additionally, agency teams should prepare to navigate differences between the agency and transition teams' approaches to virtual, hybrid and in-person communications.

21 Edward "Ted" Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-136 (2016).

Key transition plan elements

Single point of accountability	• One person **owns** the plan and is responsible/accountable for its implementation
Appropriate level of detail for executive review	• Milestones reflect **major steps**—typically aggregations of many smaller activities • Employ level of detail and plain language that executives who are unfamiliar with initiatives can understand and engage with
Capture key risks and interdependencies	• Plans contain milestones for tasks that mitigate critical risks • Milestones reflect **critical interdependencies** with other groups or external partners
Forward-looking	• The plan provides an **early warning system** to enable course corrections • Risks to achieving impacts should typically become visible in time to course-correct
Regular milestones	• Milestones **occur regularly**, typically monthly or bi-monthly, to prevent projects from going off track or being invisible to senior leaders
Capture financial impacts and key indicators	• Financial impacts must be captured and aligned to key initiatives • Key operating indicators/metrics are used effectively to measure success and risk

Source: Boston Consulting Group analysis

- **Tracking and reporting of agency transition work streams:** Tracking requires monitoring deadlines and measuring performance against goals. It also involves identifying gaps and early indicators of risk, such as delays in security clearances, or misalignment of budget, personnel or resources. Reporting goes together with tracking, creating visibility into progress and taking steps when needed to stay on track.
- **Resolving issues promptly:** This can involve actively managing cross-team activities or quickly identifying issues and getting the team on the same page, especially when problems threaten progress and leadership will need to engage quickly.

In addition to these core components, useful transition plans and monitoring tools will generally encompass the key elements in the following graphic.

Phases, timelines and milestones for presidential transitions

The work of a presidential transition unfolds in three phases over approximately eight months: pre-election, post-election and post-inauguration. For agencies, the pre-election phase officially begins six months before the presidential election, when agency transition directors must be named and the

Pre-election transition milestones

ACTIVITY	WHEN	SOURCE
Transition councils established	By early May (six months before Election Day)	P.L. 114-136
Agency transition directors designated	By early May (six months before Election Day)	P.L. 114-136
Eligible candidates offered GSA transition services and facilities	By Sept. 1 (one of the first three business days following the last major party nominating convention)	P.L. 111-283
Agencies put in place succession plans for each senior noncareer position	By Sept. 15	P.L. 116-121
Agency briefing materials finalized	By Nov. 1	P.L. 114-136

Source: Partnership for Public Service analysis

Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration increase the frequency of the meetings of the Agency Transition Directors Council. Many agencies, however, will begin initial planning a year before the inauguration, with "official" activity beginning in May. Agencies should base their planning around several major milestones and activities that will occur in each phase.

PRE-ELECTION

During the pre-election phase, there are several key milestones mandated by law. Those milestones are described in the table on page 33.

POST-ELECTION

The post-election period has far fewer legally mandated milestones. Prior to Oct. 1, the federal transition coordinator will negotiate a memorandum of understanding governing post-election access to agencies with each candidate's transition chair. When there is an incumbent seeking re-election, the memorandum will be negotiated solely with the challenger's transition chair. The memorandum will state the timing and conditions by which transition team members can contact agency employees, enter facilities and request documents. If a new president is elected, the MOU negotiated between the incumbent administration and the transition chair prior to the election will be signed and go into effect after the election, agency transition directors will receive guidance and the president-elect's agency review team members may begin to enter agencies. The 2020 transition memorandum of understanding signed by White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows and Ted Kaufman, the chair of Joe Biden's transition team, can be found in Appendix 2.1.

Although it is difficult to predict exactly when representatives of a president-elect's team will arrive, large agencies can expect personnel shortly after the election while smaller agencies can expect to wait a few weeks longer.

Nearly all large and midsize agencies will receive transition representatives—often referred to as landing teams—by Thanksgiving and can expect to remain engaged through the middle of December, when final deliverables will be completed for the president-elect.

POST-INAUGURATION

After the inauguration, the orientation of new political appointees will begin. Agency transition directors will be instrumental in making preparations to swear in and onboard new appointees on day one, a role that will become even more important as presidential transition teams begin preparing earlier with each successive cycle. For example, in January 2021 Lee Lofthus, the Department of Justice's agency transition director, and his team helped swear in approximately 20 new appointees on the first day of the Biden administration. In addition, funds will be available to provide orientations for prospective presidential appointees, even if the incumbent president wins re-election.[22]

A timeline of major transition-related activities, including major party conventions and legally mandated agency transition deadlines can be found on page 32.

22 General Services Administration and Office of Personnel Management, "FY2021 Congressional Justification," Feb. 10, 2020. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3at3x2L

STRATEGIC PLANNING

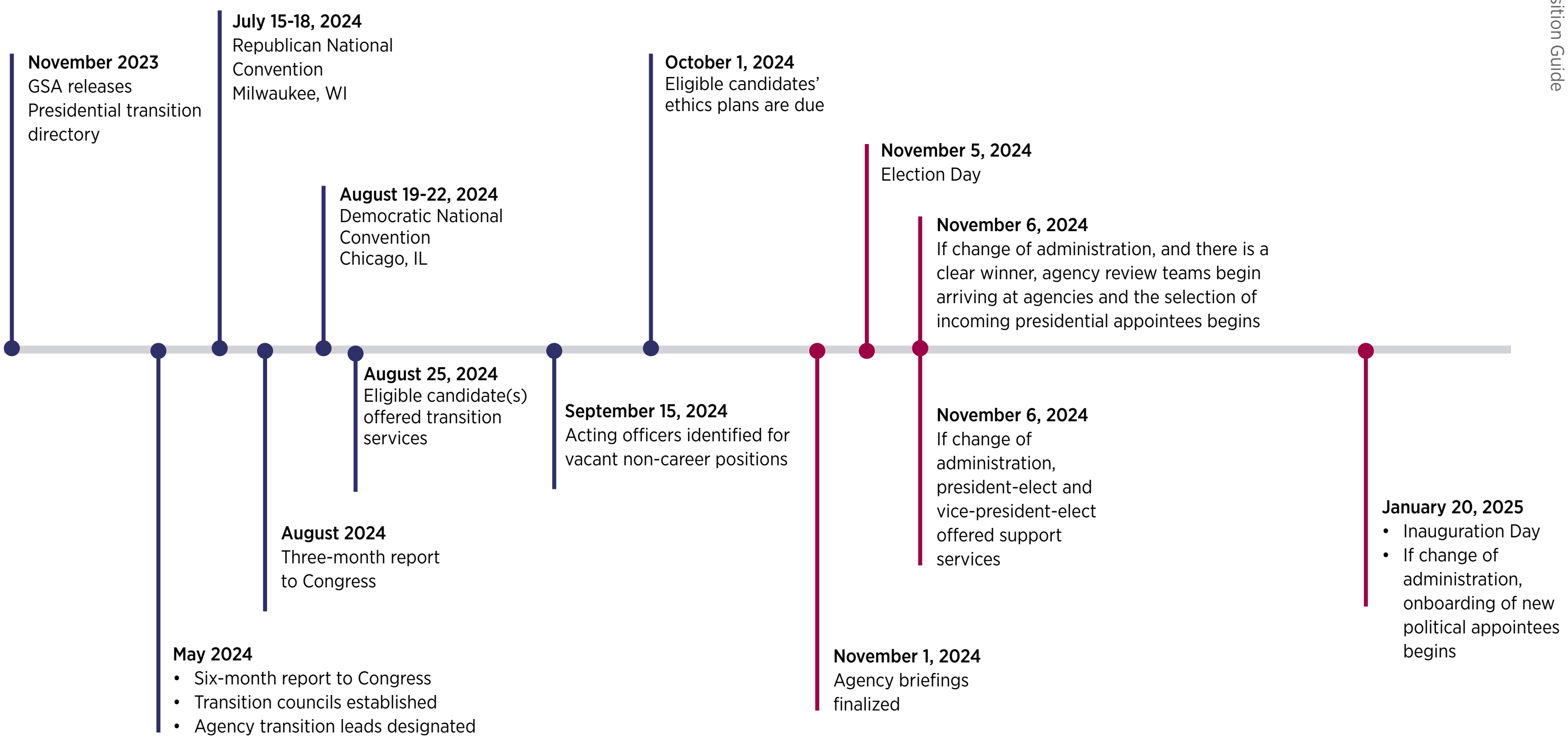
The process of preparing for a transition, particularly as it relates to assessing and communicating information on the entire agency and priority issues, can also serve as a foundation for the development of a new strategic plan by the incoming administration. Additionally, it can help fulfill some of the requirements for developing a strategic plan as called for in the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010. The strategic plan, for example, requires every department and agency to submit a new plan with goals and performance measures within a year of a new president taking office.

The Department of the Treasury approached the transition and strategic planning as two complementary processes during the 2016-17 cycle. Treasury aligned strategic planning milestones with transition events to inform the incoming leadership of the department's current state and to project future outcomes on a wide range of issues. It also positioned the strategic plan as a vehicle to articulate and communicate the department's priorities to the workforce.

In the fall of 2016, the strategic planning team conducted a scan of Treasury's internal and external operating environment by interviewing more than 75 career leaders across its components, analyzing public and internal documents, and engaging with outside experts in academic and research institutions.

The team used the resulting assessment in Treasury's annual strategic review to identify potential new priority areas for the incoming leadership's consideration. During transition, the department also used this information to help guide the transition team's efforts to better understand the organization. And as new administration officials were brought on board, the career staff leveraged the strategic planning efforts to frame priority issues and seek guidance. The work ultimately provided a starting point for the new administration's reform efforts.

Presidential transition process: major activities timeline 2023-25



Source: 2024 Presidential Transition Directory. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/45VKwC3

Key tasks to accomplish by phase

The chart below outlines transition-specific tasks for agency transition teams to consider when developing their work plans, along with suggested timeframes for action.

Note: The chart below is intended to highlight some specific activities to consider when planning. It is not exhaustive and does not include a complete range of post-election and post-inauguration activities.

ACTION	PHASE	START	FINISH
Identify agency transition director	Pre-election	May	First ATDC meeting
Review transition documents from previous transition	Pre-election	May	June
Build core agency transition team	Pre-election	June	June
Stand up transition council	Pre-election	June	June
Create internal communications plan for transition to inform the career workforce	Pre-election	June	July
Introduce the transition process to agency staff and describe how the agency is preparing	Pre-election	June	August
Develop template for briefing materials	Pre-election	July	August
Prepare briefing materials for the incoming transition team and administration	Pre-election	July	Nov. 1
Put in place succession plans for each senior noncareer position in the agency	Pre-election	August	Sept. 15
Identify and prepare appropriate agency personnel for agency review team briefings	Pre-election	September	October
Develop briefing guides and agendas for initial agency review team engagements	Pre-election	September	Election Day
Provide training for career officials acting in critical noncareer positions	Pre-election	September	Election Day
Make logistical preparations for agency review teams (organize building passes, workspace, computers, printers etc.)	Pre-election	September	Election Day
Set guidelines for agency staff on effective collaboration and interaction with agency review teams	Pre-election	October	Election Day
Finalize agency briefing materials	Pre-election	October	Nov. 1
Outline and schedule desired briefings with the agency review team	Post-election	Election Day + 1*	First meeting
Meet with and provide transition teams with all relevant information for agency review deliverables	Post-election	Election Day + 1*	Dec. 15
Select agencies participate in tabletop exercises to prepare for crisis situations	Post-election	January	Inauguration Day
Onboard incoming political appointees	Post-inauguration	Inauguration Day	August Recess
Capture transition documents to save/share	Post-inauguration	February	August Recess

*In the event that there is no apparent winner five days after Election Day, 2022 amendments to the Presidential Transition Act require that transition assistance be provided to the eligible candidates. In this case, initial contact with representatives from the candidate transition team(s) may be longer than what is typical post-election.

Source: Partnership for Public Service analysis

Preparing a work plan

Once the core transition team is in place by the spring of the election year, agencies should develop a work plan to accomplish the goals contained in the team's charter and the critical tasks for each phase.

PRE-ELECTION

The bulk of the agency transition team's work plan will consist of pre-election activities. The agency transition team should have its core members and structure in place as early as possible, and preferably in time for the first Agency Transition Directors Council meeting in May. The team's most important responsibility during the pre-election phase is to create briefing materials for the incoming administration by Nov. 1.

A few items to capture in briefing materials include organizational overviews, major programs and policies, and cross-cut- ting topics. A good way to begin is to study the materials created by the agency transition team in 2020 with an eye toward repurposing content where appropriate and adapting the templates that were used. Another critical activity for the agency transition team is to work with political leaders to inform the entire workforce about how the agency is preparing for the presidential transition.

By summer, the agency transition team should plan to expand its scope to the wider agency. The team should plan training sessions for career executives who will serve in acting roles. Succession plans for senior noncareer positions need to be completed by Sept. 15. This is a requirement under P.L. 116-121.

With the arrival of fall, the pace for all parties involved in transition will quicken. Agency transition teams should use the fall months to lay the groundwork for the possible arrival of the president-elect's agency review teams, plan the first post-election meetings and step-up coordination with the rest of the agency. The principal deliverables are the briefing materials, which need to be completed by Nov. 1, and are explained in more detail later in this chapter.

PREPARING FOR REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S TEAM

During the fall months of an election year, agency transition teams should prepare for the arrival of the president-elect's team in case a new president is elected. This preparation should anticipate how an incoming team might operate, including their briefing and information needs, and whether transition activities will take place in-person, virtually or in a hybrid mode. Agencies can take several steps to prepare:

- Set aside a workspace for the team's sole use.
- Supply phones, conference call lines, printers, shredders and other tools for the in-person and virtual work environment, and provide IT services and support, such as access to the internet and a SharePoint site.
- Arrange for building access during and after business hours by issuing building passes and setting aside parking spaces.
- Develop a welcome guide for team members that contains practical information they need to know to work in the building, such as information about the building's facilities, directions and other tips.

- Designate logistical support ahead of time. Meeting schedulers and SharePoint managers can facilitate communication and help address hurdles.
- Consider the additional security needs for remote officials. Certain activities, like fingerprinting or equipment distribution, have physical components that still must be completed during a virtual transition. Classified briefings may also require additional planning for remote individuals to access secure locations or communication lines.

The Department of Labor's 2020 welcome guide can be found in Appendix 2.2.

Asma Mirza, the OMB special assistant who helped manage the Agency Transition Directors Council during the 2016-17 transition, suggested that agencies consider tapping an "ambassador" as a liaison for the incoming team. Distinct from the agency transition director who needs to manage the process, the ambassador would be someone who can assist with day-to-day issues such as logistical concerns.

Depending on the size of the agency and the needs of the transition team, additional support can help an agency anticipate and respond to transition personnel and operational needs. In 2020, the Department of the Treasury took the lead in scheduling all meetings with the president-elect's transition team representatives, designating Treasury personnel dedicated to coordinating briefings. This approach enabled the agency to use one meeting platform and deliver a smooth, consistent briefing experience to the agency review team. At the Environmental Protection Agency, the person who managed the agency's SharePoint site during the 2016-17 transition worked with the agency's 2020-21 transition team to restore, update, and revise the platform's structure and briefing materials. Transition team leads sought input from career executives across the agency to discuss what materials should be kept, updated or removed. The combination of knowledge about document management systems and access to an existing body of work meant EPA officials could provide the president-elect's team with the most up-to-date documents in a timely way.

Beyond logistics, agency transition teams may find it beneficial to create a schedule for the first week the incoming team is on site so they can anticipate early activities and briefings. Alternatively, it is possible the agency review team will come in with its own game plan and set out a timetable for obtaining information.

To wrap the pre-election phase, the agency transition team should develop and distribute guidance to agency employees on rules and best practices for interacting with an incoming team after the election.

POST-ELECTION

Agency transition teams should plan for incoming team representatives to arrive anytime between the day after the election and Thanksgiving. Smaller agencies may not receive a landing team until after the holidays.

During the George W. Bush and Barack Obama transitions, agency review team members arrived soon after the election. Hillary Clinton's transition team in 2016-17 planned to send representatives to agencies two days after the election. During the Trump transition, however, most agencies did not receive landing teams until closer to Thanksgiving, and some agencies did not have contact with officials from the new administration until just before or even after the inauguration. In 2020, contact between the Biden transition team and agencies was delayed until ascertainment on Nov. 23. Federal transition coordinator Mary Gibert was prepared to connect agency transition directors with the president-elect's team within hours after ascertainment had been given. Gibert's quick actions enabled communication between the agencies and the incoming administration to begin as soon as possible.[23]

Regardless of when an incoming team arrives, federal agency transition teams should plan to use the first joint meeting to discuss the support that they can provide, present options for available briefings and agree with the agency review team on the path forward. The first meeting between the agency and transition team could be viewed as an orientation during which an overview of the agency, its history and major programs, and ethical considerations would be critical. Agency transition teams must remember that these transition representatives are not and may never become federal employees. Agency transition teams have a responsibility to protect non-public information and may consider non-disclosure agreements or other tools provided by federal law and the MOU to ensure that non-public information is handled appropriately, as has been the case previously.

Once inside, the length of stay and level of engagement from a president-elect's team will vary based on the president-elect's priorities. The Obama transition team required their agency teams to submit final reports between Dec. 8 and Dec. 19, 2008, so most concluded their work after about four weeks. Similarly, Mitt Romney's transition team in 2012 planned to require landing teams to submit their reports by Dec. 15.[24] Despite the delay in ascertainment, the Biden agency review teams completed their deliverables within a similar timeframe. The Trump transition's agency review process was less structured. As a general rule, most agencies can expect to be on call for transition teams for approximately four to five weeks during the post-election phase and should plan accordingly.

Additionally, an agency team must navigate several other challenges related to a remote and hybrid working environment such as the security of electronic communications, managing the logistics of in-person briefings for personnel outside of the Washington, D.C. area, and building a rapport with fewer opportunities for in-person interaction. Agencies that invest in modern business processes – such as online fillable forms and secure document management systems – find it easier to onboard appointees or share information with new leaders. For example, prior to 2020, the Office of Government Ethics had created Integrity.gov—a web-based electronic filing system that allows for the electronic completion and review of political appointee financial disclosures. Having this system already in place meant OGE could keep core business functions running smoothly despite moving to virtual operations during the 2020-21 transition.

23 Partnership for Public Service, "The 2020-21 Presidential Transition," Jan. 20, 2022. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3FoTxsz

24 Michael O. Leavitt, Christopher Liddell, Daniel Kroese and Clark Campbell, "Romney Readiness Project 2012: Retrospective & Lessons Learned," R2P, Inc., 2013, 80.

Key 2024-25 transition milestones

	MILESTONE	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
PHASE I Pre-election (planning)	Identify transition chair, executive director and other top leadership	Spring
	Establish strategic priorities and work plan	June
	Develop budget and fundraising plan	June
	Set time targets for presidential appointments and identify priority positions	June/July
	Coordinate with GSA to plan for office space, IT, financial resources	June/July
	Create standardized agency review report format	July
	Catalog key campaign promises and identify policy priorities	July-October
	Submit security clearances for key transition personnel who will require access to classified briefings	August/ September
	Vet and finalize shortlists for top priority presidential appointments	August-October
	Identify and recruit agency review teams	September/ October
	Engage with the Senate on priority positions	October
PHASE II Post-election (transition)	Launch agency review teams	Early November
	Select key White House personnel and nominees for top 50 Senate-confirmed positions	Pre-Thanksgiving
	Develop policy implementation plan, budget and management agenda; send intended Cabinet agency appointments to the Senate	November/ December
	Train Navigators	November/ December
	Submit agency review reports and brief incoming agency heads	January
	Prepare Cabinet orientation/retreat	January
	Prepare documents for transfer into government agencies	January
PHASE III Post-inauguration (handover)	Fill top 100 Senate-confirmed positions	End of April
	Secure confirmation for additional 300-400 presidential appointments	August congressional recess
	Close down transition operation, maintaining documents necessary to submit for legal filings	Spring 2026

Source: Partnership for Public Service, Presidential Transition Guide, November 2023, 14.

Finally, participants from select agencies may be asked to take part in tabletop exercises with incoming and outgoing Cabinet secretaries to prepare for crisis situations, and the agency transition team should be ready to provide whatever assistance is needed.

POST-INAUGURATION

Agency transition teams should work with other senior career leaders to develop a plan to support appointee onboarding after the inauguration. Although the degree of involvement will vary across the government, agency transition teams should spearhead planning efforts for appointee onboarding activities. Since some appointees may not meet the agency team in person until Day One, the design of these activities should include opportunities to build trust with both agency and career leaders. Plans should be flexible enough to adjust to the preferences of incoming appointees.

What's happening on the other side

The major party presidential candidates will launch their transition teams in early spring of the election year. By July, the senior leadership will be in place and as the summer progresses, work will begin creating templates to guide pre-election agency review activities. Throughout the summer, the presidential transition team's policy teams will catalog their candidate's key promises and determine how their agency review teams will translate the candidate's priorities into action plans. By the eve of the election, the presidential transition teams will be primed to grow rapidly, incorporating members of the campaign staff. The Obama transition team, for example, grew from an informal handful of advisors 10 weeks before the election to approximately 450 full-time staff immediately after the election.[25] Hillary Clinton had expected her transition staff of about 30 would grow to close to 1,000 in the weeks following the 2016 election. In 2020, Biden's transition team began small but grew to include over 1,500 staff and volunteers at its peak.[26]

A brief summary of key milestones for the presidential transition team can be seen in the table on page 37.

Reporting and tracking process

The means by which agency transition teams track progress on deliverables, particularly the development of briefing materials, will vary based on each agency's particular circumstances such as the size of the team and the availability of resources. Those technologically inclined might consider utilizing a dedicated software application to facilitate streamlined collaboration and development of briefing materials. For instance, in the 2016-17 transition, the Department of Veterans Affairs created a system to manage "tasking, reviewing, concurrence and version control" in the development of briefing materials. The tool, known as the Light Electronic Application Footprint, repurposed the

25 Partnership for Public Service and The Boston Consulting Group, "The Presidential Transition Guide," November 2023, 56. Available at presidentialtransition.org/transition-resources/presidential-transition-guide/.
26 Ted Kaufman, "I led the Biden presidential transition. Its leadership lessons can apply to any organization.," May 4, 2021. Available at https://bit.ly/48WW4aV.

software that some organizations in the department used to approve and document travel requests. Dat Tran, a leading member of VA's 2016-17 transition team, said the system significantly improved the team's workflow and was a key contributor to the production of polished, timely briefing materials.

During the 2020-21 transition, the Department of Homeland Security created a document tracker that was updated and shared daily with the transition team. Mark Koumans, DHS's agency transition director, explained that once the transition team requested a certain document, information or resource, the request would be added to the tracking document. From there, Koumans' team would locate the document or request its generation and clear it for distribution to the transition team. While the turnaround process between the transition team's request and receipt of the document typically took 48 hours, Koumans noted that the tracking document was updated and sent daily to the team to inform them of their request's progress.

Some agency transition teams that lacked systems during the 2016-17 transition found that open-source applications, such as Google Drive, could serve a similar purpose for document sharing with the incoming team. Whatever the method chosen, agency transition teams should adopt a tracking mechanism early in the process that is accessible across the team and applicable to the range of activities that must be completed to meet the team's objectives.

PREPARING BRIEFING MATERIALS

By law and tradition, the creation of briefing materials for the incoming administration is the agency transition team's most significant task. Indeed, assembling such materials is one of the few deliverables that agencies are required to produce during presidential transition periods. While the requirement to create briefing materials related to the presidential transition that may be requested by eligible candidates is enshrined in law, the contents of those materials are not.[27] As a result, briefing materials created for past transitions displayed significant variation in length, topic coverage and overall utility.

Agency transition teams will want to create briefing materials that are informative, on point, effective in presentation and manageable in scope. At a minimum, the materials should provide customers with a solid understanding of the situation inside the agency, but some teams will take the opportunity to do much more. The agency transition team has the best insight into where and how the new leadership can have the greatest early impact. Where it is possible to ascertain some of the administration's likely priorities, the agency transition team may prepare materials that anticipate questions on those topics. Agency review team members and new appointees alike will be concerned primarily with acting on the president's agenda, and the transition team is well-positioned to use its knowledge of the agency's operating levers, culture and other factors critical for an administration's success. This ambitious effort may not be possible at every agency or on every issue but could provide valuable assistance to an incoming team and earn their respect and goodwill.

27 Edward "Ted" Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-136 (2016).

Understanding the audience and content

As mentioned earlier, if there is to be a new administration, then agency transition teams will have two main customers: members of the president-elect's transition agency review team—which have also been known as "landing teams"—and appointees. These two customers have different objectives, which may influence how agency transition teams develop briefing materials. In previous transitions, agencies were advised by the Agency Transition Directors Council to create distinct products for landing teams and appointees.

AGENCY REVIEW TEAMS

Prior to the election, the presidential transition's agency review team will likely have studied the agency using open-source material and may include individuals who have relevant agency or policy experience. The team may even have produced reports on the agency.

The Obama transition's agency review team produced two reports, a two-page paper and a 20-page paper, on each agency prior to the election outlining basic information and key opportunities to enact then Sen. Obama's agenda in that agency. The Trump transition adopted the same framework for agency review in 2016.

Members of the team that will go into an agency will not create these reports, but they will be briefed on the contents of those reports prior to entering the agencies. In 2020, the Biden transition used agency review teams to conduct reviews prior to the election and post-election at each agency. These teams prioritized early research and over the summer of 2020, and conducted thousands of hours of interviews with former agency officials and experts. They also prioritized team members with expertise in budgeting, law and IT, and those with prior civil service experience.

The combination of this experience, and a shortened preparation timeline following ascertainment, meant that some agencies had to further tailor briefing materials for the incoming team, including outlining how the agency may have changed since they last served.

The president-elect's team going into agencies are on a fact-finding mission to test pre-election assumptions about the agency, as well as to provide information for the presidential transition team to develop a plan to execute the incoming administration's top priorities during the first 100 to 200 days. The teams that go into agencies, therefore, have three specific priorities:

- Identify critical decisions that the new administration will need to make in the first 100 to 200 days.
- Identify actions that the new president could take to score quick wins that advance the agenda, and land mines that could potentially set it back.
- Gather information to support confirmation preparations for Senate-confirmed nominees.

Teams that go into the agencies also will be looking for information to help make decisions on other appointments, including potential holdovers and key career staff, and to develop an assessment of conditions inside the agency for

TRANSITION BINDER FOR THE AGENCY REVIEW TEAM AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION: TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. AGENCY CONTACT
   a. Name, title and contact information for agency liaison to agency review teams

II. IN-PERSON BRIEFING SCHEDULE
   a. Topic/date/time/location of in-person briefings
   b. Interview guide

III. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW
   a. Overview of organization's mission and priorities
   b. Organizational chart—highlight key decision makers, influencers, etc.
   c. Biographies and headshots of career and political staff in key leadership positions

IV. TOP ISSUES FOR NEW LEADERSHIP
   a. 30/60/90-day issues—include a visual calendar of critical path events and deadlines with supporting one- to two-page issue papers for critical topics
      i. Management issues (e.g., operational, budget and financial)
      ii. Draft Agency Strategic Plan and Agency Priority Goals
      iii. Potential legal, media or congressional issues, and GAO/OIG reports
      iv. Cybersecurity issues
      v. Key congressional or outside contacts for each issue
   b. Pending decisions
   c. Process for decision approval
   d. Quick wins—what can be accomplished in the first 100 days—tailor to each campaign

V. BUDGET OVERVIEW
   a. Major budget changes
   b. Funding sources
   c. Expenditures by program—highlight areas of flexibility, cost-cutting opportunities, etc.

VI. CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS AND ISSUES
   a. Oversight committees (oversight, authorization and appropriations)
      i. Membership and key issues for each
      ii. Key staff—include career agency staff who manage relationships
      iii. Overview of previous hearings
      iv. Current inquiries
   b. Other members with special interest or subject matter expertise
   c. Confirmation hearing prep
      i. Leadership and members
      ii. Top issues addressed at hearings
      iii. Process, logistics and historical roadblocks
   d. Implications of Continuing Resolutions
   e. Implications of changes in new Congress (e.g., majorities, chairmanships)

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION
   a. Contact information for agency transition team and immediate office staff
   b. Security procedures, transportation and parking information
   c. Computer access, IT usage information and telephone instructions
   d. Map/floor plan of organization facilities (including evacuation plans)
   e. Agency "owner's manual"

the president-elect.

The materials created for these teams should be concise and tailored to three main priorities. On page 41, you can find the template for the briefing materials' table of contents that the Agency Transition Directors Council endorsed during the 2016-17 transition. The template was developed by the OMB and the Partnership for Public Service's Center for Presidential Transition in consultation with many federal agencies.

Agency transition teams seeking an even more succinct approach for the landing teams might consider the approach used by the Department of Defense during the 2016-17 transition. The DOD team started with the outline provided on page 41 but pared it back. Designated Defense headquarters components prepared concise one-page documents on select topics, then identified five to 10 priority issues and composed two-page papers on each of those issues. This is an excellent example of how an agency can adapt guidance from the OMB and third-party organizations to meet its needs.

Although the approaches will vary, the key is to produce crisp, informative briefing materials that reflect the transition team's time-sensitive mission. Mary Gibert, the 2020-21 federal transition coordinator, recommended that agencies develop materials to be as concise and timely as possible and focus on answering one question: "What does the incoming team need to do when they walk in the door on Day One, and what is coming up in 30, 60, or 90 days?"

POLITICAL APPOINTEES

The other main customers for agency transition teams are the incoming political appointees. They will seek a more detailed, comprehensive overview of the agency. In some cases there may be temporary appointees who will serve for up to 120 days, and they will be focused on laying the groundwork to execute the administration's agenda.

The materials produced for incoming appointees in 2016-17 were longer and more detailed than those produced for the temporary appointees who arrived immediately following the inauguration. To reflect the change in emphasis, it is helpful to think of the product made for incoming appointees as the agency's owner's manual." This manual includes a more detailed discussion of the items contained in the briefing materials for the president-elect's representatives who visit the agency after the election along with several new areas of discussion, such as historical issues within the agency and issues raised by oversight bodies.

Additional topics not included in the briefing materials that agency transition teams might insert in a manual for incoming appointees include:

- Detailed overview of the agency that expands on the brief summary provided in the agency review team product. Topics could include biographies of key career and political officials, lines of succession, historical performance outcomes, workforce data and trends over time and a portrait of the agency's culture utilizing results of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and Best Places to Work in the Federal Government®.
- Component/division information, including on topics such as mission, budget and workforce from an enterprise perspective.

- Oversight, including Government Accountability Office and inspector general reports.
- Detailed governance and decision-making processes, including calendars of agency activities and participation in interagency councils.
- Policies and regulations, including recently adopted policies and regulations, pending decisions, an overview of the enforcement process and a summary of pending litigation.
- External stakeholders overview and issues, including details about recent and pending engagements with media, federal employee unions and interest groups.
- Crisis management and emergency response protocols, including continuity of operations information and primary points of contact.

The full "owner's manual" template can be found in Appendix 2.3.

For simplicity, some agencies will likely choose to create a single set of briefing materials, regardless of who the candidates are, and supplement this information on a component or office level rather than centrally creating separate materials for the incoming team. Agencies may determine that by the time new appointees arrive, their aim will be to get up to speed in their respective areas, and the central transition materials may have less value. This option may also be attractive when planning at a time when the president is running for re-election.

Role of OMB and GSA

The Agency Transition Directors Council will be the primary forum through which guidance will be disseminated to agencies on what to include in briefing materials. Based on previous transitions, the Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration will consult with agencies on topics to cover in briefing materials. They will then present their conclusions at a meeting of the ATDC in the summer. During the 2016-17 transition, OMB and GSA presented the guidance on contents for briefing materials as recommendations only. Asma Mirza, the OMB special assistant who played a leading role in developing the guidance and managing the ATDC, recognized that not all agencies are alike. While providing a baseline, she said OMB wanted to provide space for agency transition teams to customize their briefing materials as they saw fit. Mirza said the goal was to be as helpful as possible, serving as a "24/7 resource, guide and helpline" to agencies during the transition process. Agency transition teams, therefore, can expect that OMB and GSA may recommend topics to include in briefing materials, but will not necessarily preclude agencies from adjusting those topics or including others. During the 2020-21 transition, one way that OMB provided additional support was to offer workshops for agencies on an as-needed basis to ensure that they could ask additional questions and have clarity on what they were expected to deliver.

CROSS-AGENCY COLLABORATION

Many government executives will agree that it is rarely sufficient for planning to focus solely on individual agency priorities. Effective planning also applies to interagency dependencies and issues that cut across agency boundaries.

Agency transition leaders can work together to identify policies and programs that involve cross-agency collaboration and highlight those issues individually and collectively in their written and oral presentations to the president-elect's agency review teams. These multi-agency issues can involve everything from veteran homelessness and immigration policy to international trade, job training, food safety and economic development. Some of the greatest opportunities to reshape how government functions come at the beginning of an administration when new leadership may bring a fresh perspective to old challenges. Agency transition teams have a valuable opportunity to expose the incoming team to an enterprise or government-wide perspective to help accelerate progress on long-standing challenges.

Enhancing briefing materials with key insights

Producing truly effective briefing materials requires more than assembling binders full of data. Outstanding briefing materials are those that illuminate data with subtle but valuable commentary, lean into the first- or second-term administration's agenda and examine key operational processes in a way that will enable the new leadership to begin executing its priorities as quickly as possible. By producing briefing materials that resonate with the administration, the agency transition team has an excellent opportunity to place the relationship between the career and political staff on solid footing.

"WHAT" AND "SO WHAT"

The two templates described earlier in this chapter contain the factual contents for briefing materials. These are the hard data points, the types of information that can be researched in agency files or on Google. The Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition calls this information the "what" because it presents a factual response to a factual question. Examples of the "what" include data points about the agency's workforce, budget, organizational chart and more. The answer to the question, "What was the agency's budget during the previous fiscal year?" is a "what" insight.

Agency briefing materials will be loaded with this type of information, but information that will stand out to presidential transition teams will contain other insights. The Center calls these insights the "so what" because they enliven the facts with added context. They answer the question, "Why does this matter?" These insights can add value to nearly any of the content in briefing materials. Every agency transition team's briefing material will contain an organizational chart. The hierarchy is important to know, but the charts can be used to convey much more. The following graphic illustrates how a standard organizational chart can be converted into a primer on critical positions. The blue boxes, for example, may be used to denote those positions which need to be prioritized for the selection of appointees, or those acting career officials with whom the incoming team should speak first.

IDENTIFYING THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION'S PRIORITIES

More ambitious agency transition teams can design briefing materials that go beyond informing to enabling the new leadership to act on their top priorities.

During the 2016-'17 presidential transition, several agencies adopted this approach. The Department of Health and Human Services' transition team monitored each candidate's positions on healthcare issues. When the Trump transition's landing team arrived after the election, the HHS transition team presented 10 priorities for the landing team to consider in light of President-elect Trump's campaign promises on healthcare and other issues, as well as important career staff with whom the team should confer inside the department. John Gentile of the HHS transition team said this proactive approach helped jumpstart a close working relationship with the landing team. That relationship created opportunities to provide materials relevant to the transition team and demonstrate a readiness to engage with the Trump administration.

The Department of Justice team was also primed to assist the incoming administration. The team's leaders knew that the time between the inauguration and the development of a preliminary budget in February was short. They began tracking both candidates' relevant positions in September and then developed several policy proposals based on President-elect Trump's campaign promises that the incoming administration could incorporate into the budget.

Preparing to lean into the new president's agenda in this way is not unprecedented. In some countries such as Australia, career civil servants go even further by composing two sets of briefing materials, one for each potential administration. After the election, the winning administration receives a set of briefing materials with practical information tailored to the candidate's platform.

This proactive approach may not be possible at every agency. It requires confidence that the incoming administration will not change its priorities and that those priorities will be discernible before the election. Neither is a given. But where possible, the agency transition team can earn significant goodwill by tailoring its briefing materials to the administration's priorities. Perhaps even more importantly, this will enable new appointees and career civil servants to begin executing faster on the new administration's agenda.

The organizational chart is just one example of how even the simplest elements of briefing materials can be used by a creative agency transition team to convey valuable "so what" insights to the incoming team.

The FBI used a particularly innovative approach to transform a list of the bureau's locations into a primer on threats to national security. When creating briefing materials for the 2016-17 transition, the FBI's transition team (led by Gurvais Grigg and Charles Margiotta) wanted to inform the incoming administration about the bureau's international presence and what it said about the country's security situation. To do so, they created a map of the world pinned with FBI offices and color-coordinated the offices according to the year they were opened. The result was a map that not only visually identified the newest locations but was designed to spark conversation with the incoming team about why those offices were opened at those locations.

For the 2020-21 transition, the Department of the Treasury mostly included "what" information in their binders, but also held over 100 virtual briefings where agency review team members could assess how this information might impact policy priorities and other governing issues, providing the "so what."

These are just three ways in which to add value to briefing materials with "so what" insights. Other ideas to enhance information contained in the briefing materials table of contents can be found in the "Extracting the 'So-What' for Briefing Materials" document in Appendix 2.4. Agency transition teams should tap into the deep experience and expertise of team members to enhance briefing materials with inside knowledge that will facilitate greater engagement by the incoming team with both the materials and the career staff.

Agencies at a glance

The FBI's visually intuitive approach to telling its story highlights how agencies can make briefing materials even more effective. Whatever format is used, it is important to convey basic agency information in a crisp, easily digestible format that will be valuable to the incoming team. To assist with this approach, the Partnership for Public Service's agency performance dashboard offers a critical snapshot of agency operations, including personnel numbers, employee demographics, political appointments, employee engagement scores, information technology maturity and social media engagement, in an easily digestible visual format. These dashboards can be found online at https://ourpublicservice.org/performance-measures/agency-performance-dashboard.

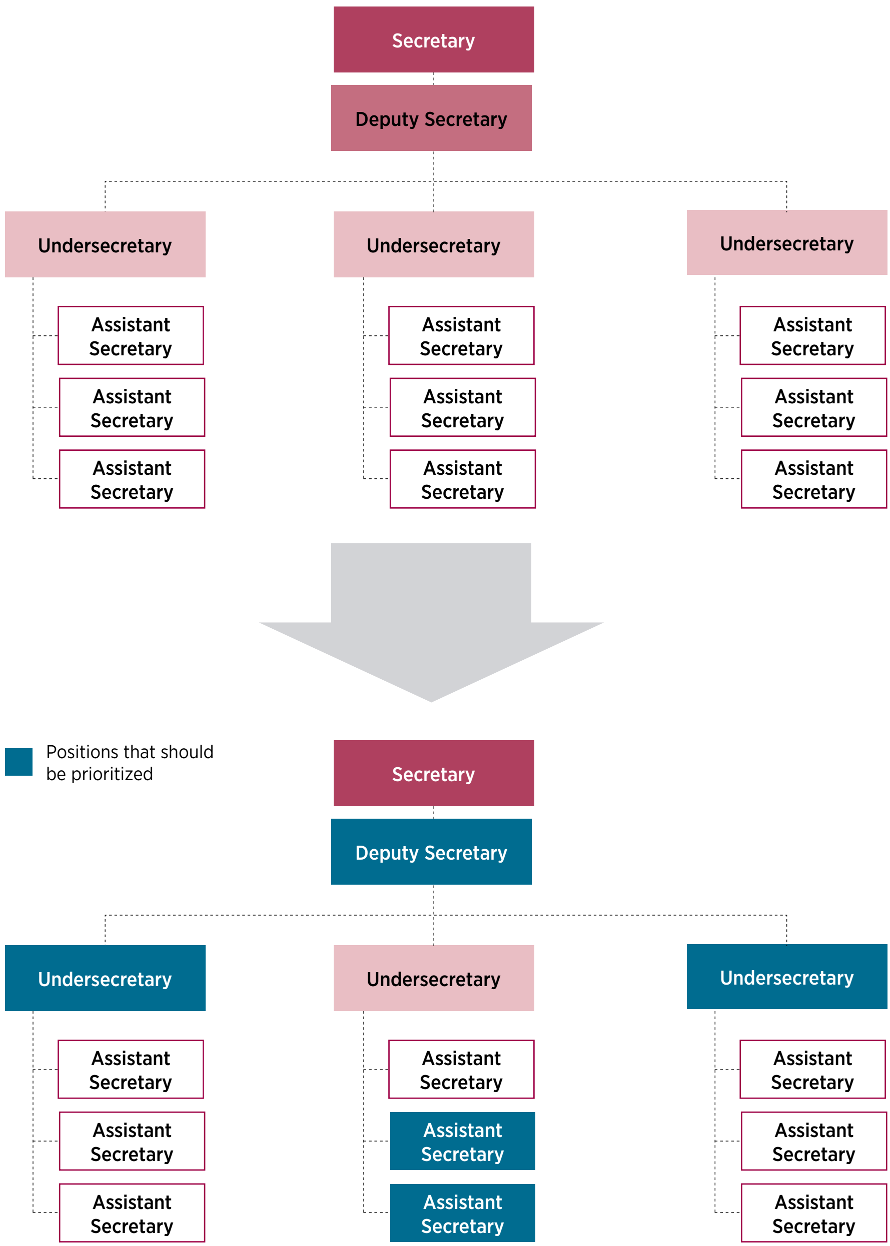
Key decision processes

Briefing materials should be designed to orient new leadership to the agency, but they are most valuable when they facilitate early and effective decision-making. Therefore, the agency transition team should provide the new leadership with the understanding of functional processes—the key levers to operate the agency—necessary to begin making decisions on day one. Relevant topics include budget and personnel, stakeholders and tools, and associated legal and regulatory frameworks. While these topics are likely to be addressed in the guidance from OMB and GSA, some agencies have shown the ability to go further.

During the 2016-17 presidential transition, for example, the Environmental Protection Agency provided the Trump team with information about key internal authorities required to make decisions on everything from the promulgation of new regulations to the publication of information on the agency's website. For its part, the Department of Homeland Security mapped all significant external stakeholders for the incoming administration. Several agencies, such as the FBI, EPA, DHS, DOD and the Department of Housing and Urban Development supplemented the two main briefing products with issue papers. The FBI, EPA and DOD placed a premium on brevity in their issue papers; the FBI tiered issues by importance and offered to provide further information through personal discussions. The goal, according to FBI special agent Charles Margiotta, was to "entice the reader to reach out to us, have us come out and explain, meet with us in person. We wanted to have conversations." The EPA took a similar approach and capped its issue papers at two pages. The agency's issue paper template can be seen on page 49.

During the 2020-21 transition, the Department of Justice produced an up-to-date organizational chart that identified positions with outgoing appointees and tracked where new appointments were made. Since the Plum Book was

Example of pulling the "so what" into briefing materials



Source: Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group analysis released later than normal that year, the Biden team found it helpful to see at a glance where positions could be filled. The department's briefing materials also included insights from career officials providing important history about agency issues the incoming leadership will soon face. Agency transition director Lee Lofthus noted: "These typically aren't flagship political issues that a new administration needs to address immediately, but they are important requirements that every agency needs to address to keep things running. It's good to communicate those nuts-and-bolts priorities to an incoming team so they know what's ahead of them." At the Department of Homeland Security, members of the president-elect's transition team sought meetings with the different component agencies. Agency transition director Mark Koumans noted that coordinating meetings in addition to preparing hard copy briefings helped bring the agency and transition teams together and "address bigger questions" by discussing the materials in greater depth.

Sourcing information

Collecting information for materials from different parts of the agency can be challenging. Instead of putting out a general request for information, the transition team can make the task easier by sending a standardized form with each request. This form would ask the same specific set of questions of each part of the agency, or otherwise indicate how information should be provided. Reaching out this way will ensure that the transition team receives the data it needs in an accessible format.

The appendix contains sample templates (Appendices 2.5-2.7) developed by the Center for Presidential Transition with federal agencies and include:

- Bureau/component executive summary template: This is a template for creating the executive overview of a specific bureau or component. The information requested includes a component overview and insights into strengths and challenges. Agency transition teams can decide which information to include and which to discard.
- Office/region executive summary template: This is a template to gather key information from offices and regions in a format that may be easily incorporated into the briefing materials.
- Deep-dive topic template: This is another possible template for a deep-dive report on a topic or issue. This template may be used to provide a more detailed explanation of any specific component in an executive summary or may be used to create separate policy-item, budget-item, management-issue or other reports. The information provided will be incorporated into final briefing materials for incoming leaders.

During the 2016-'17 transition, DHS asked components to create 10-slide PowerPoint presentations with information about the component's missions, activities, area of operations, assets and workforce. Components explained their missions by describing an "average day" of activities. The Coast Guard, for example, described how an average day for the service consisted of:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ISSUE PAPER TEMPLATE

ISSUE SUMMARY

Please provide one to two sentences to briefly describe the issue. Please also describe why this issue would be of interest to the landing team.

UPCOMING MILESTONES:

Please list any major upcoming decision points, actions or milestones and the date. Be sure to note any external deadlines.

- Key Decisions/Actions/Milestone (Date, if applicable)
- Key Decisions/Actions/Milestone (Date, if applicable)

BACKGROUND:

Please provide the relevant background information on the issue, including:

- Scale and scope of environmental issue
- Legal obligations or public commitments
- Recent actions taken
- Major challenges, concerns and sensitivities

KEY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

Please check which stakeholder(s) are likely to reach out to the incoming political team about this issue. In the space provided, include concerns stakeholder(s) may raise.

- Congress
- Industry
- States
- Tribes
- Media
- Other Federal Agency
- NGO
- Other (name of stakeholder)

Please describe key concern(s):

MOVING FORWARD:

Please provide potential options for moving forward that an incoming administration may consider when deciding its course of action on the issue. The purpose of this section is to help conceptualize different approaches that could be taken to address the decision or issue. If you are coordinating with another office or region on this paper, you do not need to arrive at consensus for the options.

LEAD OFFICE/REGION: OTHER KEY OFFICES/REGIONS:

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

- Conducting 45 search-and-rescue cases.
- Saving 10 lives.
- Saving more than $1.2 million in property.
- Seizing 874 pounds of cocaine and 214 pounds of marijuana.
- Conducting 57 waterborne patrols of critical maritime infrastructure.

Agency transition teams should strongly consider sourcing information for briefing materials with standardized templates. Sample DHS information request templates can be found at Appendices 2.8 and 2.9.

Finalizing materials

Keep in mind that many recipients of briefing materials will not be federal employees. All of the briefing materials created by agency transition teams should include unclassified information and be developed with the understanding that contents may be subject to Freedom of Information Act requests under certain circumstances.

Historically, briefing materials have been created in hard-copy binders, and that option may still be the preferred choice. But agency transition teams also should consider presenting briefing materials in multiple formats to address what are likely to be different information-consumption preferences among the incoming team. During the 2020-21 and 2016-17 transitions, agencies distributed briefing materials through PDFs, dedicated iPad apps and SharePoint-like sites in addition to binders. In 2020-21, many agencies began to make greater use of digital resources and verbal briefings, moving away from the preparation of giant briefing binders.

Ultimately, the particular medium or even the number of materials will not matter as much as whether the materials are presented in a way that is accessible, concise and geared toward enabling the incoming administration or new appointees of a second-term administration to get up to speed on the agency as quickly as possible.

Preparing for the scenario of briefing multiple eligible candidates

Amendments to the Presidential Transition Act of 2022 provide guidance in the case of an unclear election outcome if "more than one eligible candidate" exists five days after Election Day. The law requires agencies to provide transition services to eligible candidates until a "sole apparent successful candidate" is determined. As noted in Chapter 1, consideration of what to share with non-federal employees is already a standard part of briefing book preparation, as is this question: What does an incoming team need to know in order to prepare to lead the agency? If agencies are in the position of briefing the transition team of more than one eligible candidate, they should be mindful of providing information on an equitable basis and tailoring content needed to brief a team whose candidate may not ultimately be the successful candidate.

REVIEWING AND ENDING THE TRANSITION

Agency transition teams will begin to wind down in mid- to late February, although some responsibilities could be extended if there are lengthy delays in the confirmation of key political appointees. Members of the team can expect to be pulled into other projects or, depending on the relationship developed with appointees, into active onboarding activities. All transition efforts will effectively conclude by the start of summer.

To close out the transition effectively, agency transition directors should take the following steps:

- **Preserve all materials:** It is important that all materials created for the transition and the team's processes be available to future transition directors. As John Gentile of HHS said, “Everybody shouldn’t have to reinvent the wheel every time the federal government goes through a transition.”

- **Prepare an after-action report:** Vince Micone of DHS said the report should answer three key questions: “What worked? What didn’t work? And where can we find everything that the previous transition team did?” Additionally, including notes on what the agency’s senior leadership approved and disapproved of during the transition can help the next transition team avoid missteps.
- **Make recommendations to build on the transition:** Consider what materials and processes developed for the transition might be useful in other areas of agency operations. For example, might agency introductory briefings be used to onboard new career employees, or have value for the agency’s communications team?

CONCLUSION

The agency transition team will plan the agency’s entire transition effort, from setting internal goals to producing deliverables and determining how to support the incoming team. By applying best practices in strategic planning, such as composing a detailed work plan and developing materials tied to the needs of each customer, the agency transition team can enable the new leadership to get off to a fast start once in office.

Planning

Helpful Tips

- ☐ Start planning early and develop a comprehensive work plan that sets clear goals, milestones and deliverables.
- ☐ Develop a plan for the topics that will be included in briefing materials, the templates that will be used to create materials and source information from across the agency, and the process by which workflow will be managed and content approved.
- ☐ Designate a single owner for the transition work plan who will be responsible for keeping it on track.
- ☐ Create briefing materials with different audiences in mind.
- ☐ Incorporate “so what” insights into briefing materials that are loaded with facts.
- ☐ Anticipate requests by identifying an administration’s priorities and create briefing materials that equip the new team with the insights they need to act on the president’s agenda.
- ☐ Tap into expertise and resources from components and subcomponents across the agency.
- ☐ Make use of the historical records and materials that the agency has produced before.
- ☐ Interview the members of previous agency transition teams.
- ☐ Look for opportunities to use transition planning to generate momentum to advance other agency priorities.

APPENDIX 2.1

Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Transition Procedures, Identification of Transition Contacts and Access to Non-public Government and transition Information, September 2020

Source: Office of President-elect Biden and the White House
September 30, 2020

(1) The Chief of Staff to the President (the "Chief of Staff") and the designated Chair of the Joseph R. Biden Transition Team (the "Chair of the Transition Team") agree, on behalf of, respectively, the Administration of Joseph R. Biden Transition Team, that, in order to comply with the Presidential Transition Act of 1963, as amended (the "Transition Act") and the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, should Joseph R. Biden become the "apparent successful candidate [] ... ascertained by the Administrator [of General Services] following the general election[]," the Transition Team shall become the President-elect Transition Team (PETT) and the Chair of the Transition shall become the Chair of the PETT, and the President-elect and certain of his associates must become knowledgeable about currrent government policies and operations so that they can begin making informed decisions immediately upon taking office..

(2) Section 4(b) of the Transition Act provides that "The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President."

(3) The Chief of Staff and the Chair of the Transition Team enter into this memorandum of understanding in order to establish an orderly process for identifying individuals charged with transition responsibilities, to ensure that the Government's and the Office of the President-elect's standards of conduct are observed, to protect the confidentiality of non-public government information made available to the PETT during the transition period, to preserve the constitutional, statutory, and common law privileges that attach to such information in the possession of the Executive Branch, and to protect the confidentiality of transition information made available to the Government.

(4) The Chair of the PETT (or his designee) will furnish in writing to the Chief of Staff (or his designee) the name of each individual authorized by the PETT to work with the Executive Office of the President (EOP) and particular Departments and Agencies, including the designation of a Transition Team lead or leads for the EOP and each Department or Agency. The Chair of the PETT (or his designee) will also indicate in writing that each individual on the list has met the applicable public disclosure requirements of the Presidential Transition Act, as amended, has agreed to abide by the Transition's Code of Ethical Conduct, and has thereby represented that he or she has no conflict of interest that precludes the individual from working on the matters the individual has been assigned to work on with the EOP or the relevant Department or Agency. These lists will be updated as new members are added to the teams. The Chief of Staff (or his designee) will promptly forward these names to the appropriate Departments, Agencies, and EOP offices. The Chief of Staff (or his designee) will also provide in writing to the Chair of the PETT the names of individuals in the Departments, Agencies, and specified offices in the EOP who will serve as contacts responsible for coordinating transition matters on behalf of those Departments, Agencies, or specified EOP offices. The Chief of Staff (or his designee) is the contact person responsible for coordinating transition matters on behalf of those offices of the EOP for which contact persons have not otherwise been designated.

(5) The Administration will conduct its transition activities with the PETT through the contacts authorized by the Chief of Staff (or his designee) and the Chair of the PETT (or his designee). The authorized contacts for the PETT will initiate transition activities with a particular Department, Agency, or specified office of the EOP through the individual(s) at that Department, Agency, or EOP office designated by the Chief of Staff (or his designee) to coordinate transition activities for that Department, Agency, or EOP office. The authorized contacts for the PETT will initiate transition activities involving any other office of the EOP through the Chief of Staff (or his designee).

(6) Each Department and Agency will use best efforts to locate and set aside available space in their offices for the duration of the transition for use by authorized members of the PETT to facilitate review of information provided by the Department or Agency and communication with authorized contacts at such Department or Agency. Each Department or Agency will provide, to the extent practicable, appropriate support to and equipment for use by the PETT in such office space. The exact details of space and equipment will be worked out between the PETT lead(s) for that Department or Agency and the individual(s) at that Department or Agency designated by the Chief of Staff (or his designee). Each department and Agency will use best efforts to make COVID-19 related accomodations, including, to the maximum extent practicable, facilitating remote access to information and employees, consistent with concerns for maintaining confidentiality of information, including sensitive but unclassified information.

(7) In order to facilitate a smooth transition, it likely will be necessary in some circumstances to provide specified transition personnel with access to non-public information that may be protected by constitutional, statutory, or common law privileges, and material whose distribution is restricted by law. The Chief of Staff has advised the Chair of the PETT that Administration personnel will take steps to protect non-public information that are required by law or otherwise necessary to preserve applicable privileges, such as actions based on the Executive Branch standards of conduct, the Privacy Act, or the attorney-client privilege. The Transition Team recognizes that there is some information that a Department or Agency may not be able to provide in order to comply with statutory requirements or otherwise preserve applicable privileges.

(8) In order to facilitate a smooth transition and provide a mechanism for expeditiously addressing any concerns, including ethical, privacy, and privilege concerns, regarding access to non-public information as described in paragraph (7), the Chief of Staff (or his designee) and the Chair of the PETT (or his designee) will each designate in writing an individual or individuals authorized to confer in order to resolve such concerns informally.

(9) The Chief of Staff (or his designee) further advises that, before providing any classified information to a member of the PETT, it must be established:

- That the member has the security clearances necessary to have access to that information, and the requisite need to know, and
- That the member has signed the requisite non-disclosure agreement(s).

(10) The Chief of Staff (or his designee) advises that, before providing non-public information (including classified information) as described in paragraph (7) to a member of the PETT authorized to receive it under the guidelines established in this memorandum, Departments and Agencies will expeditiously:

- Brief the Transition Team member on the importance of maintaining the constitutional, statutory, and/or common law safeguards afforded the non-public information.
- Clearly label non-public records provided to Transition Team personnel with a warning against subsequent disclosures to unauthorized individuals, including unauthorized members of the Transition Team.
- Specifically advise Transition Team members that non-public information provided to them cannot be shared with other Transition Team personnel unless those other personnel satisfy the requirements for access to that information set forth in this memorandum.
- Require the Transition Team member to sign a statement representing that, to the member's knowledge, he or she has no financial interest or imputed financial interest that would be directly and predictably affected by a particular matter to which the information is pertinent. The Department or Agency may require such additional information from the Transition Team member as the Department or Agency deems necessary, in light of the proposed disclosure.
- Where advisable, prohibit the Transition Team member from removing records containing non- public information from the offices of the Department or Agency.
- Make a written record of any disclosure of non-public information made to a member of the PETT.

(11) Upon request from the EOP, a Department, or an Agency, the PETT will provide a written statement indicating that Transition Team member's need for access to the non-public information. The statement of need will be provided by the Chair of the PETT (or his designee) to the Chief of Staff (or his designee).

(12) A government employee may not allow the improper use of non-public information to further his own private interest or that of another by knowing unauthorized disclosure. 5 C.F.R § 2640.

(13) It likely will be necessary for members of the PETT to share with the Administration information that they wish to be kept confidential. Accordingly, to the extent permitted by law, the Administration agrees to protect the confidentiality of information provided to it on a confidential basis by the PETT.

(14) The PETT will implement and enforce an ethics plan to guide the conduct of the transition beginning on the date on which the President-elect becomes the President-elect. The Transition Team represents that the ethics plan incluides, at minimum, the provisions required by the Presidential Transition Enhancement Act of 2019 (the "Transition Enhancement Act"). In addition, the Transition Team represents that it has provided its ethics plan to the General Services Administration (GSA) for the GSA to make publicly available on its Internet website as required by the Transition Enhancement Act.

(15) Any disagreements between the Administration and the PETT concerning the subject matter of this memorandum that are not resolved informally pursuant to paragraph (8) or otherwise will be referred by the Administration to the Chief of Staff (or his designee) and by the PETT to the Chair of the PETT (or his designee).

(16) To the extent permitted by law, the Administration with respect to its staff members and the PETT with respect to its transition team members, state that they intend to take appropriate steps to discipline any person who fails to comply with the terms of this agreement.

Signed by:
Mark R. Meadows
Chief of Staff to the President

Date: September 30, 2020

Signed by:
Edward Emmett Kaufman
Chair of the Joseph R. Biden Transition Team

Date: September 30, 2020

APPENDIX 2.2

U.S. Department of Labor Agency Transition Team Welcome Guide, November 2020

Source: Department of Labor

WELCOME GUIDE

The purpose of this document is to outline information you may find useful as a member of the Department of Labor's Agency Review Team (ART) whether you are supporting the team virtually or travelling onsite to the Frances Perkins Building.

DOL POINTS OF CONTACTS

Al Stewart
Senior Career Transiiton Officer
Deputy Assistant Secretary (OASAM)
[email]
Office: [phone]

Braye Cloud
Administrative Officer (OASAM)
[email]
Office: [phone]

FRANCES PERKINS BUILDING (FPB)—LOCATION & INITIAL ARRIVAL

The Department's Headquarters (the Frances Perkins Building) is located at 200 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20210.

Guidance for Visitors to the Frances Perkins Building

The U.S. Department of Labor and its employees have continued to fulfill its mission during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to COVID-19, there are some building policies in place that all visitors should be aware of.

- Before coming to the FPB, or any other DOL facility, all visitors should conduct a health screening at home which includes checking for a temperature of above 100.4 degrees and considering the following questions:
    1. Are you currently experiencing any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?
    2. Have you taken any medication today to treat for these COVID-19 symptoms?
    3. In the past 14 days, have you been diagnosed with, or do you believe you have had COVID-19?
    4. In the past 14 days, have you been directed to self-quarantine, self-observe, or self-isolate by any medical professional or public health authority due to contact with an infected person, symptoms, or travel history?
    5. Have you had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, tested for COVID-19, or who may have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, within the past 14 days?
- All entrants to the building are **required to wear a face covering** while in the building common areas, including elevators and hallways, and should continue to maximize distancing between themselves and others.
- There are social distancing markers around the FPB to note one-directional foot traffic, markers for waiting, and reminders to practice hygiene etiquette to help limit the spread of COVID-19. All visitors should comply with social distancing markers.
- Current protocols for visitors to FPB are available on DOL's public facing website here: https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/visit. Please share this information with any guests when scheduling onsite meetings.

Initial Access

Your arrival should be pre-arranged with the ART Lead and will be facilitated by Al Stewart or Braye Cloud. For initial entry, Agency Review Team members should go to the 3rd and C Street visitor's entrance. If driving to the FPB, you will be asked to provide your vehicle information and provided additional information. Instructions on who to contact will be provided by the ART Lead. Directions to the FPB can be found on DOL's website here: https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/visit.

Facility Access Card / Badge Process

The ART Lead will identify to Braye Cloud or Al Stewart which ART members require a Facility Access Card. Facility Access Cards are only required for personnel who require unescorted access to the Frances Perkins Building. The Badging Office is currently open for appointments Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. OASAM will schedule appointments for ART members to visit the DOL Badging Office in South 1513B. You will need to bring your completed **DL 1-7039 – Identification Application with two forms of ID** with you to your appointment where you will be fingerprinted and enrolled in the USAccess system. Security Center staff will be able to issue you your Facility Access Card at this time. Face coverings are required within the DOL Badging Office.

Regular Building Access

After you receive your Facility Access Card, you will be able to enter the building at the various employee entrances and move around without an escort.

Please note that the Department periodically conducts 100% screening of all personnel entering the building as part of regular security practices. This may slow down the normal building entrance process.

ART members with a Facility Access Card may host visitors and act as their escorts.

After Hours Building Access

Normal business hours are between 6:00 am and 8:00 pm, Monday through Friday, but the building is open to employees after hours and on the weekend. Please use the visitor entrance at 3rd and C Street. Please note that the Department's heating/cooling posture is reduced after business hours and on weekends/holidays to manage energy costs.

Parking

The Department has allocated ten parking passes in the Frances Perkins Building South Garage that can be used by the ART members as needed. Those passes have been provided to the ART Lead. The South Garage entrance is located on 3rd Street, NW, across from the US District Court for DC. If using GPS, enter 245 3rd Street NW, Washington, DC 20001 and it will bring you to the South Garage entrance.

AGENCY REVIEW TEAM SPACE

The Agency Review Team's primary workspace is located in room [room number]. The location consists of workstations for 10 people in the first rooms A-C and then a private office set up in room D. To access the internet, the Department has established wireless access (details on connecting the Wifi are later in this guide). The ART space also includes televisions, two Video Teleconferencing (VTC) units, a copier, fax machine (number [fax]), printers, recycling/shredding bins, cabinets that lock, and various office supplies.

The [room] has also been reserved for ART meetings throughout the engagement. This room has a VTC unit and is able to accommodate 18 people although, due to COVID-19, gatherings are limited to 10 people at this time.

Additional workspace can be made available on the north side of the second floor, if required.

The ART Lead is responsible for maintaining social distancing within the ART space in accordance with DOL's social distancing guidelines (see Attachment 1)

Video Conference Lines (VCLs)

The Department has established five Video Conference Lines for the ART team. It can accommodate up to 400 connections at one time and is available on-demand. Participants can join via phone, web browser, Skype, or Jabber. Participants are able to utilize audio or video conferencing and can present materials if desired. Please note: the Leader PIN / passcode should remain private and not be distributed to participants.

VCL #1

- For Video Conferencing: [URL]
- To join via telephone (Audio Only): [phone]
- Call ID: **[ID]**
- Leader PIN: **PIN**

VCL #2

- For Video Conferencing: [URL]
- To join via telephone (Audio Only): [phone]

- Call ID: **[ID]**
- Leader PIN: **PIN**

VCL #3

- For Video Conferencing: [URL]
- To join via telephone (Audio Only): [phone]
- Call ID: **[ID]**
- Leader PIN: **PIN**

VCL #4

- For Video Conferencing: [URL]
- To join via telephone (Audio Only): [phone]
- Call ID: **[ID]**
- Leader PIN: **PIN**

VCL #5

- For Video Conferencing: [URL]
- To join via telephone (Audio Only): [phone]
- Call ID: **[ID]**
- Leader PIN: **PIN**

Video Conference Line Instructions

Join using a Web Browser

1. Navigate to [URL] (Google Chrome preferred)
2. Select Join meeting
3. If you are:
   - **A meeting participant**
     - Enter the Call ID in the Meeting ID field.
     - Leave the passcode field blank and select **Join meeting**.
     - Enter your name and select **Join meeting**.
     - You will be asked to confirm your audio and video settings. You can continue with the browser and then select **Join meeting**.
     - You will be connected when the host joins.
   - **The meeting Host**
     - Enter the Call ID in the Meeting ID field.
     - Enter the Leader PIN in the passcode field and select **Join meeting**.
     - Enter your name and select **Join meeting**.
     - You will be asked to confirm your audio and video settings. You can continue with the browser and then select **Join meeting**.

Join using a Phone (Audio Only)

1. Dial **[phone]**
2. Enter the **Call ID** provided by meeting host, followed by **pound (#)**
3. If you are:
   - **Participant**, press **pound (#)**, and you will be connected when the host joins
   - **Host**, enter your **PIN**, followed by **pound (#)**

Join the Touchpad on a Cisco VTC

1. On the touchpad, select the **Call** icon.
2. Select **Favorites**. Select **DOL Conferencing**.
3. When prompted, enter the **Call ID** provided by meeting host, followed by **pound (#)**
4. If you are:
   - **Participant**, press **pound (#)**, and you will be connected when the host joins
   - **Host**, enter your **PIN**, followed by **pound (#)**

Things to know

- Meeting participants joining without the Leader PIN are placed in a waiting lobby until the host joins.
- After the host joins with PIN, all meeting participants are connected.
- If the Host leaves the meeting, all meeting participants can remain in the meeting for up to 10 minutes.
- After 10 minutes, all meeting participants are returned to the waiting lobby.
- If the host rejoins with PIN, all meeting participants are reconnected to the meeting.

FRANCES PERKINS BUILDING - SERVICES

The FPB has a number of amenities / services that the ART should feel free to use –

- **ATM** – ATMs operated by the Department of Labor Credit Union are located beside the elevator bank on the South side of the third floor and outside next to the 3rd Street entrance.
- **Post Office** - In the center lobby of the FPB, the U.S. Postal Service provides on-site services. The hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- **Dry Cleaners** – Dry cleaning services are available on the 1st floor in Room S-1225. The cleaners is operating on a reduced schedule due to the pandemic and is open 9:00am – 3:30pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- **Health Unit** – The Health Unit, located on the 3rd floor in Room S-3214, provides on-site care and first aid treatment for illness and injuries; special medical examinations and screening programs; allergy and flu shots; physical examinations; health; education and wellness counseling; and some referral services to other health care providers. The clinic is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For additional information, please call [phone].
- **Willard Wirtz Library** - The library is located in N-2308 and although the library is closed due to the pandemic there is an on-call librarian (email [email]) should you need to access the library.

FRANCES PERKINS BUILDING WIFI

Please follow the steps below to connect the DOL wireless network in the Agency Review Team's primary workspace.

- Step 1: Locate the wireless network icon in your computer's taskbar (Note: this is typically located on the bottom-right side of your computer screen for Windows-based machines or the top-right for Mac OS X machines).
  Note: If Airport is switched off on your Mac, select Turn Airport On
- Step 2: A window with available wireless network connections will open.
- Step 3: Select the wireless network: [network]
- Step 4: Enter the password: [password]
- Step 5: Verify the Internet is working (open a browser and go to a website). If the connection is successful, the wireless icon in your (Windows) taskbar will change.

FRANCES PERKINS BUILDING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In your workspace is the Department's "Occupant Emergency Response Guide" for the Frances Perkins Building. Key takeaways –

Evacuation vs. Shelter-in-Place

Certain scenarios may require occupants to evacuate the building and move to predesignated external assembly areas. You may be notified to evacuate by the fire alarm, a public address (PA) system announcement, and/or a verbal instruction from an emergency team member.

Emergency procedures may alternatively call for occupants of the FPB to take shelter inside the building when it is deemed safer to do so. There are three types of Shelter-in-Place:

1: Employees return to or remain at their own individual workstations

2: Employees relocate to a designated shelter area in the FPB

3: Employees take cover where they are

Building Alarms

The Frances Perkins Building has one general alarm that sound throughout the building:

- Fire or Evacuation Alarm—a long, loud continuous tone

When you hear an alarm, immediately begin moving to your external assembly area. Remain quiet and listen for further instructions over the PA system or by emergency staff.

For Shelter-in-Place emergencies, security staff will provide additional information, specific instructions, or announcements over the -PA system.

Evacuating

Evacuation procedures for ART space are posted next to exits.

Important Phone Numbers

- Security [phone]
- Security Command Center [phone]
- Health Unit [phone]

COVID-19 RISK MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS

It is DOL policy that only healthy employees should return to on-premises work, and only healthy visitors should enter DOL facilities in order to protect the safety and health of DOL's workforce. These procedures are necessary to comply with DOL's obligations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act and other legal obligations, in order to protect the health and safety of DOL employees and those who are in DOL workplaces.

To reiterate – any employee or guest who is ill or who has known exposure to COVID-19 is directed to **stay home, not come to a DOL workplace, and to notify the ART Lead**. This guidance addresses situations where an employee finds out about an exposure or diagnosis after the fact and has been in a DOL workplace in the interim.

Regardless of whether the employee, contractor or visitor potentially exposed others to COVID-19 in the workplace, the Department must take timely steps to mitigate the impact of potential exposure of DOL employees and the workplace. In order to do that, DOL needs specific information about the individual's history of exposure, testing, and symptom development, if applicable. This information is used, in accordance with CDC guidance, OSHA recommendations, to assess the exposure risk to other employees and determine the appropriate cleaning protocols.

Please be aware that **timeliness is critical** when there is a potential exposure in a DOL workplace. The needed information and recommendations to OASAM should be provided the same work day when possible and no later than the following workday. The impacted workspace is to be kept closed and all access denied until a final determination on needed cleaning is made.

It is also critical that we protect employee privacy, including the identities of persons involved, throughout this process. Only provide the information needed to the ART Lead and OASAM. While concerned employees might want additional information beyond what is provided, it is imperative that we protect privacy while providing information so that all potentially impacted individuals can determine what steps are needed to protect their own health.

Information to be Ascertained from the Person Who is Ill or has Documented Exposure

Is the individual ill with, or exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19?

- If so, what symptoms?
- If so, what is the date of onset of their symptoms?
- What date where they last in the office?
- If they have been in the office within 14 days of the onset of their symptoms, what is the delta between these two dates?

Has the individual been diagnosed with COVID-19 with a lab test, or by a qualified physician, but is asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic?

- If so, can they identify the date of their exposure?
    - What was the date of the exposure?
    - What is the date of their positive test collection and result?
    - Since their positive test, have they been tested two times at least 24 hours apart and received a negative test result?

- If they cannot identify their date of exposure:
    - What is the date of their positive test collection and result?
    - Since their positive test, have they been tested two times at least 24 hours apart and received a negative test result?
    - What is the date that the employee was last in the office?

Has the individual had prolonged close contact (distance of 6 feet or less, 15 minutes or longer) with someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19 but is not ill and has not had a positive test result?

- Have more than 14 days elapsed since the exposure?
- If it has been less than 14 days, has the employee been in the office since the exposure (what days)?

ATTACHMENT 1 – SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES FOR DOL

Managers and supervisors should use the social distancing approaches provided below to help avoid close contact with others for prolonged periods in order to minimize the risk of potential exposure to the virus, in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and DOL guidance. Factors for defining this close contact include proximity (minimum of 6 feet), duration (for a total of fifteen minutes can be prolonged exposure), and the presence of symptoms (e.g., coughing increases the risk).

Must Do

- Ensure that employees have at least 6 feet of distance between them for more than fifteen minutes when seated at their workstations when they are in cubicles or other open work configurations (not private offices). The six feet for up to fifteen minutes factors are NOT mitigated by placing barriers or wearing face coverings or other measures.
    - This may require limiting which employees can work on certain days in order to maintain enough distance between occupied work areas/cubicles (e.g. only every other cubicle can be occupied). Consider establishing cohorts or other revolving shifts to keep a predictable order to onsite operations (e.g., group A is in the office M/W and group B is in the office T/TH). Consider seating arrangements to avoid employees facing each other.
    - Consider the impact of standing or sit-stand desks on social distancing plans. Pay particular attention to ensure that the height of the worker when standing is less than the height of a cubicle wall, partition, or physical barrier. Depending on the site layout in relation to other workers and/or walkways, consider if temporarily discontinuing use of the standing desk is necessary.
    - When six feet of distance for less than fifteen minutes is not possible barriers should be erected to protect both parties. This is NOT intended to allow for employees to be seated less than six feet from one another.
- Limit capacity in conference rooms, copier rooms, and break rooms to allow for social distancing and, if possible, remove furniture (if not, block furniture access with tape or other marker).
- Eliminate desk sharing.

Should Do

- Identify high touch areas (copiers, printers, microwaves, doorknobs, etc.) and place hand sanitizer nearby along with the "High touch area, please sanitize sign."*
- Designate certain doors as entrances and others as exits if the space permits this. "Do Not Enter" signs can be placed on doors. Consider leaving doors open to reduce use of doorknobs (unless it is a fire containment door).
- Encourage people to remember the names of anyone with whom they came in close contact for a prolonged period in case you later develop symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID- 19.
- Post reminder messages in workspaces and common areas.
    - Place 6 feet social distance reminders in offices.*
    - If applicable, place "Face covering required in all common areas" sign near office break areas or exit doors as an employee reminder prior to exiting the work area.

May Do

- Create a directional traffic flow for an entire office and place signs or floor decal arrows to designate the traffic flow.
- Create visitor access procedures, such as requiring appointments.
- Prevent the sharing of equipment. Add additional telephones, intercom interfaces, or similar communication tools so that employees do not need to share such equipment.

Must Not Do

- Provide **less than six feet** between employees while they are in the workspace.
- Install barriers on top of cubicle walls that are a normal height (62" including any walls and toppers). Doing this is unnecessary and will NOT allow employees to sit closer than six feet.

*Signage is available upon request

APPENDIX 2.3

Agency "Owner's Manual" Table of Contents

Source: Office of Management and Budget and the Partnership for Public Service

I. IN-PERSON BRIEFING SCHEDULE
   a. Topic/date/time/location of in-person briefings
   b. Briefing guide

II. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW
   a. Organization's mission/strategic plan/priorities
   b. Organization's history
   c. Statutory requirements and enabling legislation
   d. Key mission delivery performance measures/scorecard
      i. Performance agreements
   e. Historical performance outcomes
   f. Organizational chart (with headcount)—highlight key decision makers, influencers, etc.
   g. Order of succession
   h. Biographies and headshots of career staff in key leadership positions
   i. Biographies and headshots of political staff in key leadership positions
   j. List of agency detailees on the Hill and other agencies
   k. Workforce data and trends
      i. Size of workforce
      ii. By level (Executive and senior level, General Schedule, Federal Wage System, other)
      iii. Length of federal service
      iv. % retirement eligible
      v. Age breakdown of workforce
      vi. % of positions vacant
      vii. Agency profile trends over time
   l. OPM limits on Schedule C's/noncareer SESs and rules pertaining to hiring
   m. Organizational culture overview
      i. FEVS and Best Places to Work data
   n. Important relationships with other federal agencies

III. TOP ISSUES FOR NEW LEADERSHIP
   a. 30/60/90-day issues—Include a visual calendar of critical path events and deadlines with supporting one to two page issue papers for critical topics
      i. Management issues (e.g., operational, budget and financial)
      ii. Draft fiscal Agency Strategic Plan and fiscal year Agency Priority Goals
      iii. Potential legal, media or congressional issues, regulatory actions, expiring authorities, recent GAO/OIG reports especially high-risk issues
      iv. Cybersecurity infrastructure and Cybersecurity National Action Plan (CNAP) related procedures
      v. Key congressional or outside contacts for each issue
   b. History of key management initiatives and mandates
   c. Pending decisions
   d. Issues requiring White House involvement
   e. Process for decision-making
   f. Common challenges or roadblocks to policy
   g. Most important political staff positions needed to be filled
   h. Quick wins—what can be accomplished in the next 100 days—tailored to each campaign

        i. Administrative action

IV. BUDGET OVERVIEW
   a. Basic guide for understanding key budget details
   b. Budget dashboard that agency staff can update on an ongoing basis
   c. Major budgetary constraints
   d. Budget history
      i. Major changes from 2021 to 2024
      ii. Historical context of budget decisions, changes and implications
   e. Funding sources
   f. Expenditures
      i. Personnel/non-personnel expenses by program—highlight areas of flexibility, cost-cutting opportunities, etc.

V. COMPONENT/DIVISION INFORMATION—*This should be an enterprise overview. In-depth binders may be developed for major components.*
   a. Mission
   b. Organizational chart
   c. Workforce
   d. Budget
   e. Top issues

VI. OVERSIGHT
   a. Office of the Inspector General (OIG)
      i. Biography of the inspector general
      ii. Top issues and recent reports
   b. Government Accountability Office (GAO)
      i. High-risk list
      ii. Duplication reports

VII. GOVERNANCE
   a. Key structures and decision-making processes
      i. Talent and performance management
      ii. Budget process
      iii. Risk assessments
   b. Calendar of agency actions and activities
   c. Participation in Enterprise Government activities
      i. Interagency council membership
      ii. Cross-department initiatives and funding
      iii. Shared Services

VIII. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS
   a. Overview of historical policies and regulations
      i. Number of new regulations per year
      ii. % deemed significant by OIRA
   b. Recently adopted or pending policies and regulations
   c. Overview of the policy/regulation review and enforcement process
      i. Enforcement issues
   d. Summary of litigation

IX. CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS AND ISSUES
   a. Oversight committees (oversight, authorization and appropriations)
      i. Membership and key issues for each

        ii. Key staff—include career agency staff who manage relationships
        iii. Overview of previous hearings
        iv. Current inquiries
    b. Other members with special interest or subject matter expertise
    c. Confirmation hearing prep
        i. Leadership and members
        ii. Top issues addressed at hearings
        iii. Process, logistics and historical roadblocks
    d. Required authorization/appropriations reports and updates to Congress
    e. Key pending legislation
    f. Implications of continuing resolutions
    g. Implications of changes in new Congress (e.g., majorities, chairmanships)

X. EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS OVERVIEW AND ISSUES (MEDIA, FEDERAL EMPLOYEE UNIONS, INTEREST GROUPS AND REGULATED ENTITIES)
    a. Stakeholder group overview (mission and leadership)
    b. Special initiatives or hot topics of the stakeholder
    c. Recent engagements with stakeholder
    d. Pertinent third-party reports (e.g., NTSB)

XI. CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE
    a. Emergency response plan
        i. Roles/responsibilities
        ii. Decisions to be made
    b. Continuity of operations information
    c. Primary points of contact

XII. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION
    a. Contact information for agency transition team and immediate office staff
    b. Security procedures
    c. IT issues
        i. Privacy infrastructure
        ii. Key IT contacts
    d. Computer access, technology usage information, telephone instructions
    e. Map/floor plan of organization facilities (including evacuation plans)
    f. Transportation and parking information
    g. Lessons learned for success on day one (e.g., opportunities to streamline administrative processes to address surge in demand)

APPENDIX 2.4

Extracting the “So What” for Briefing Materials

Source: Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group analysis

The purpose of this document is to illustrate how to extract the “so what” from the data available in your agency and embed them into the briefing documents created for agency review teams and political appointees. Below is a list of examples of how to highlight the “so what” component within each section of the briefing materials.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

- Organizational chart highlighting key decision-makers, career staff with institutional knowledge, etc.
    - Hyperlink to employee bios/headshots; include position descriptions for political positions
- Provide a list of agency detailees on Hill
- Create a summary of organizational culture with relevant BPTW/FEVS data
- Explain OPM limits on Schedule C’s/noncareer SES and rules pertaining to hiring

II. TOP ISSUES FOR NEW LEADERSHIP

- Process for decision approval
- Issues requiring White House involvement
- Common challenges or roadblocks to policy
- Most important political staff positions needed to be filled to act
- History of key management, initiatives, advances, and mandates
- Visual calendar of critical path events and deadlines—30/60/90-day plans
    - Supporting one to two page issue papers for critical topics
- Quick win opportunities tailored for each campaign

III. BUDGET OVERVIEW

- Guide or instructions for understanding key budget details
- Major budgetary constraints
- Budget dashboard of critical data that agency staff can update on an ongoing basis
- Expenditures by program with recommendations for improvement
- Visual calendar of key upcoming budget events
- Areas of flexibility/control in budget
- Historical context of budget decisions, changes and implications
- Key external stakeholders related or subject to budget issues

IV. CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS AND ISSUES

- Key majority and minority staff, closest relationships (elected or staff), career agency staff that manage relationships
- Required authorization/appropriation reports and updates to Congress
- Implications of continuing resolutions
- Implications of changes in new Congress (e.g., House/Senate majorities, key congressional leadership/chairmanship roles)
- Key pending legislation
- Categorized list of outstanding oversight inquiries and why some are still outstanding
- Critical details on confirmation logistics and processes
    - Historical roadblocks to past confirmations

V. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

- Security procedures

- Expectations of surge in administrative demands on day one (e.g., IT support) and opportunities to streamline
- Relevant history of administrative and facilities changes and cultural/organization implications
- Lessons learned for success on day one

APPENDIX 2.5

Bureau/Component Executive Summary Template

Source: Partnership for Public Service analysis

This document is a template for creating your bureau/component's executive overview in preparation for the presidential transition. The information provided will be incorporated into final briefing materials for incoming leaders. Please adhere to the formatting and length-specific guidelines present throughout the template. If any of the subcomponents of this document require further explanation, use the deep-dive topic template provided to prepare an attachment to this overview.

BUREAU/COMPONENT NAME

Replace the text in this box with your bureau/component's Purpose Statement. The Purpose Statement should explain the services you provide and the stakeholders with whom you engage.

Bureau/component outcomes and impacts

What key outcomes is your bureau/component working to achieve? Tell us the story behind these outcomes—why are these your priorities? What does success look like?

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

Bureau/component snapshot and major functions

In the table below, provide a high-level overview for your subunits. For each subunit, describe its major functions in bullets.

Name	Overview
Type name of division 1 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words].*
Type name of division 2 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words].*

Current key initiatives

What are your bureau/component's key initiatives or projects? Explain why the initiative is important, and how it supports the achievement of bureau/component's key outcomes. Please do not list every initiative for each subunit.

Name	Overview
Type name of initiative 1 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 60 words].*
Type name of initiative 2 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 60 words].*

Strategic environment

Provide your top three issues/concerns that the next secretary should be aware of. As you think of your top three, consider the following categories: threats/hazards (important drivers/trends), operational constraints/opportunities, mission execution risks (external), and key mission-critical partnerships.

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

Future direction

What are your bureau/component's focus areas in fiscal 2024 and beyond? How will these upcoming focus areas help achieve bureau/component's mission and key outcomes? Please focus on the future direction at the bureau/component level, and not at the subunit level.

Type response here [limit to 200 words]

Key challenges

What are the key challenges for your bureau/component in fiscal 2024 and beyond? How might these affect its ability to deliver the mission? How is your bureau/component addressing those challenges?

Name	Overview
Type name of key challenge 1 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 100 words].*
Type name of key challenge 2 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 100 words].*

Promising opportunities

What promising opportunities for achieving new goals or developing current initiatives should your bureau/component explore? Why? What kinds of resources or support—such as additional funds, commitment from senior leaders, etc.—would you need to exploit these opportunities?

Name	Overview
Type name of promising opportunity 1 here.	Brief overview of opportunity, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 150 words].*
Type name of promising opportunity 2 here.	Brief overview of opportunity, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 150 words].*

Key partners and stakeholders

What key partners and stakeholders help you achieve your mission (key advisory boards, executive steering committees, and inter- or intra-agency stakeholder groups)? What critical roles do they have in ensuring you meet your agency outcomes? Why? Note any specific tie-in to agency decision-making. Finally, what new partnerships is the bureau/component actively developing, if any, and why?

1. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
2. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
3. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*

Points of contact

Provide two main points of contact.

Name	**POC 1**	**POC 2**
Title		
Email		
Phone		

Organizational structure

Show us how your bureau/component is structured. Please do not include names or positions in the organizational chart, only business units.

Insert chart here

Why are you organized in your current structure? Is your organizational structure effective? Why so? What regulations limit your ability to change organizational structure?

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

APPENDIX 2.6

Office/Region Executive Summary Template

Source: Partnership for Public Service analysis

This document is a template for creating your office/region's executive overview in preparation for the presidential transition. The information provided will be incorporated into final briefing materials for incoming leaders. Please adhere to the formatting and length-specific guidelines present throughout the template. If any of the subcomponents of this document require further explanation, use the deep-dive topic template provided to prepare an attachment to this overview.

OFFICE/REGION NAME

Office/region characteristics

What makes delivering the [agency name] mission in your office/region unique? For example—geography, infrastructure, environment, stakeholders, etc.

Type response here [limit to 150 words]

Threat and hazard context

What are the top three to five threats and hazards facing the office/region? How do concerns about these threats and hazards have an impact on [agency]'s mission success? This is meant to be a prioritized list of concerns that may impact [agency name]'s mission success.

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

Office/region snapshot and major functions

In the table below, provide a high-level overview for your subunits. For each subunit, describe its major functions in bullets.

Name	Overview
Type name of division 1 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words]*.
Type name of division 2 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words]*.
Type name of division 3 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words]*.
Type name of division 4 here.	Briefly describe major roles, responsibilities and outcomes *[limit to 40 words].* • **Branch 1:** Briefly describe function 1 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 2:** Briefly describe function 2 *[limit to 40 words]*. • **Branch 3:** Briefly describe function 3 *[limit to 40 words]*.

Current key initiatives

What are your bureau/component's key initiatives or projects? Explain why the initiative is important, and how it supports the achievement of bureau/component's key outcomes. Please do not list every initiative for each subunit.

Name	Overview

Type name of initiative 1 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 60 words].*
Type name of initiative 2 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 60 words].*

Special office and centers

Are there any special offices or centers reporting to your office/region? If so, what do they do and why are they important?

Type response here [limit to 200 words]

Strategic environment

Provide your top three issues/concerns that the next secretary should be aware of. As you think of your top three, consider the following categories: threats/hazards (important drivers/trends), operational constraints/opportunities, mission execution risks (external) and key mission-critical partnerships.

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

Future direction

What are your office/region's focus areas in fiscal 2024 and beyond? How will these upcoming focus areas help achieve the office/region's mission and key outcomes? Please focus on the future direction at the office/region level, and not at the subunit level.

Type response here *[limit to 200 words]*

Key challenges

What are the key challenges for office/region in fiscal 2024 and beyond? How might these affect the ability to deliver the mission? How is office/region addressing those challenges?

Name	Overview
Type name of key challenge 1 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 100 words].*
Type name of key challenge 2 here.	Brief overview of initiative, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 100 words].*

Promising opportunities

What promising opportunities for achieving new goals or developing current initiatives should your bureau/component explore? Why? What kinds of resources or support—such as additional funds, commitment from senior leaders, etc.—would you need to exploit these opportunities?

Name	Overview
Type name of promising opportunity 1 here.	Brief overview of opportunity, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 150 words].*
Type name of promising opportunity 2 here.	Brief overview of opportunity, why it's important, and outcomes *[limit to 150 words].*

Key partners and stakeholders

What key partners and stakeholders help you achieve your mission (key advisory boards, executive steering committees, and inter- or intra-agency stakeholder groups)? What critical roles do they have in ensuring you meet your agency outcomes? Why? Note any specific tie-in to agency decision-making. Finally, what new partnerships is the bureau/component actively developing, if any, and why?

1. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
2. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
3. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*

Points of contact

Provide two main points of contact.

Name	**POC 1**	**POC 2**
Title		
Email		
Phone		

Organizational structure

Show us how your office/region is structured. The organizational chart should include the primary subunits within your office/region, e.g., divisions and branches. Don't include names or positions in the organizational chart, only business units.

Insert chart here

Why are you organized in your current structure? Is your organizational structure effective? Why so? What regulations limit your ability to change organizational structure?

Type response here [limit to 300 words]

APPENDIX 2.7

Deep-Dive Topic Template

Source: Partnership for Public Service analysis

This document is a template for creating a deep-dive report on a topic or issue. This template may be used to provide a more detailed explanation of any specific component in an executive summary, or may be used to create separate policy-item, budget-item, management issues or other specific item reports. The information provided will be incorporated into final briefing materials for incoming leaders. Please adhere to the formatting and length-specific guidelines present throughout the template.

ISSUE/TOPIC NAME

Name of corresponding executive summary component or table of contents component (if applicable)

Office/region name if applicable:

Executive summary

Summarize the key components of the issue.

Type response here [limit to 250 words]

Introduction

Provide a brief description of the issue. Why is it important to highlight? Why is it important for the agency? If this is a pressing issue or opportunity, state the relevant timeline.

Type response here

Key challenges to date

What roadblocks, bottlenecks or other challenges has the agency faced in the past regarding this issue? What is the current status of handling these challenges?

Type response here

Key progress to date

What has been achieved on this issue to date? What initiatives are still ongoing that are relevant to this issue? Were the relevant methods and solutions used in the past effective?

Type response here

Next steps

What are the currently planned next steps on this topic? What are some other potential solutions or actions incoming leaders should consider? What is the recommended timeline for these action items?

Type response here

Relevant internal stakeholders

Who are the relevant stakeholders for this topic or issue within the agency? These may include key personnel, divisions or offices. What critical roles do they have? Why? Are there any individuals or groups that incoming leaders should consider engaging and leveraging?

1. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
2. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
3. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*

Relevant external stakeholders

Who are the relevant stakeholders for this topic or issue outside of the agency? These may include key congressional contacts or committees, interest groups, outside policy experts, local government partners or private/nonprofit contractors. What critical role do they have? Why? Are there any individuals or groups that incoming leaders should consider engaging and leveraging?

1. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
2. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*
3. Key Stakeholder *[limit to 100 words]*

Relevant interagency groups

Are there any key interagency groups that are vital to achieving your mission? What critical role do they have? Why? Are there any other groups that incoming leaders should consider engaging and leveraging?

1. Key Group *[limit to 100 words]*
2. Key Group *[limit to 100 words]*

Points of contact

Provide one main point of contact.

Name	
Title	
Email	
Phone	

APPENDIX 2.8

Presidential Transition Office Request for Information Number 1

Source: Department of Homeland Security

ANSWER TEMPLATE

Please use this document to respond to the Presidential Transition Office (PTO) Request for Information (RFI) number 1. Answers are due to the PTO no later than COB June 15, 2016.

Please highlight the answer option as appropriate, and provide separate documentation as attachments as requested.

Please annotate all attachments on the last page of this document. Components are highly encouraged to use existing documents to the greatest extent possible when additional information (e.g.: organization charts, personnel lists/data) is requested.

Strategic Environment, FY16-17 Priorities, and Legislative Priorities responses are limited to one brief paragraph (no more than 1/3 page) per issue/priority. More extensive discussions will be captured in topic/issue papers sent under a separate tasking over the next few weeks.

Answers must be cleared by your COS or higher and your component Transition SCAO.

Organization *(highlight answer)*

DHS / Component Organization Chart: Validated / Updates Attached

Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 DHS Budget-in-Brief Component description. Validated / Updates Attached

FY2017 Budget-in-Brief budget information: Validated / Updates Attached

Personnel—Leadership (*highlight answer*)

Component Head

Political appointee? Yes / No

Promulgated succession plan? Yes (succession plan attached) / No

Deputy/Assistant Component Head

Political appointee? Yes / No

Deputy/Asst Component Head a career senior civil servant? Yes / No

Does the Deputy/Asst issue separate delegations? Yes (delegations attached) / No

Personnel: Political Appointee—Please provide requested information as an attachment.

Personnel: Workforce—Please provide requested information as an attachment.

Strategic Environment

Issue/Concern:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Fiscal Year 2016-17 Priorities

Priority:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Legislative Agenda

Items/Issues:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

GAO/OIG Audits *(note: there is no quantity limit for this entry; however only capture high risk audits as defined in the RFI tasker)*

Audit:

1. GAO or OIG:
    - Recurring or Non-Recurring:
    - Requestor:
    - Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
    - Projected report release date:
    - Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):
2. GAO or OIG:
    - Recurring or Non-Recurring:
    - Requestor:
    - Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
    - Projected report release date:
    - Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):
3. GAO or OIG:
    - Recurring or Non-Recurring:
    - Requestor:
    - Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
    - Projected report release date:
    - Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):
4. GAO or OIG:
    - Recurring or Non-Recurring:
    - Requestor:
    - Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
    - Projected report release date:
    - Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):
5. GAO or OIG:
    - Recurring or Non-Recurring:
    - Requestor:
    - Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
    - Projected report release date:
    - Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

Attachment(s):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

APPENDIX 2.9

Presidential Transition Office Request for Information Templates

Source: Department of Homeland Security

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION OFFICE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION NUMBER 1

Please use this document to respond to the Presidential Transition Office (PTO) Request for Information (RFI) number 1. Answers are due to the PTO no later than COB June 15, 2016.

Please highlight the answer option as appropriate, and provide separate documentation as attachments as requested. Please annotate all attachments on the last page of this document. Components are highly encouraged to use existing documents to the greatest extent possible when additional information (e.g.: organization charts, personnel lists/data) is requested.

Strategic Environment, FY16-17 Priorities, and Legislative Priorities responses are limited to one brief paragraph (no more than 1/3 page) per issue/priority. More extensive discussions will be captured in topic/issue papers sent under a separate tasking over the next few weeks.

Answers must be cleared by your COS or higher and your component Transition SCAO.

Organization (highlight answer)

DHS / Component Organization Chart: *Validated/Updates Attached*

Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 DHS Budget-in-Brief Component description: *Validated/Updates Attached*

FY2017 Budget-in-Brief budget information: *Validated/Updates Attached*

Personnel: Leadership (highlight answer)

Component Head

- Political appointee? Yes / No
- Promulgated succession plan? Yes (succession plan attached) / No

Deputy/Assistant Component Head

- Political appointee? Yes / No
- Deputy/Asst Component Head a career senior civil servant? Yes / No
- Does the Deputy/Asst issue separate delegations? Yes (delegations attached) / No

Personnel: Political Appointee—Please provide requested information as an attachment.

Personnel: Workforce—Please provide requested information as an attachment.

Strategic Environment

Issue/Concern:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Fiscal Year 2016-17 Priorities

Priority:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

GAO/OIG Audits *(note: there is no quantity limit for this entry; however only capture high risk audits as defined in the RFI tasker)*

Audit:

I. GAO OR OIG:
- Recurring or Non-Recurring:
- Requestor:
- Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
- Projected report release date:
- Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

II. GAO OR OIG:
- Recurring or Non-Recurring:
- Requestor:
- Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
- Projected report release date:
- Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

III. GAO OR OIG:
- Recurring or Non-Recurring:
- Requestor:
- Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
- Projected report release date:
- Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

IV. GAO OR OIG:
- Recurring or Non-Recurring:
- Requestor:
- Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
- Projected report release date:
- Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

V. GAO OR OIG:
- Recurring or Non-Recurring:
- Requestor:
- Legislatively Mandated (yes [write legislation name] or no):
- Projected report release date:
- Description (include projected impact statement as appropriate):

Attachment(s):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

SCAO PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION DASHBOARD

Instructions: Identify one to three major actions/milestones under the appropriate category and conduct a self-assessment relative to your planned progress toward achieving your Component's/Office's/Directorate's program objectives. Not applicable areas may remain blank. Leader notes are only required to inform your leadership and the DHS PTO of delays, challenges, or changes associated with your transition plan; otherwise this column may remain blank. This document will be submitted to the DHS PTO on the 15th of each month or as requested by the PTO through June 2017.

“Everything we did for transition took into consideration relationships and personalities. The details and the content come later. Unless you make a good first impression, all those materials may not be as impactful as they could or should be.”

John Gentile, Agency Transition Director (2016-17)
Department of Health and Human Services

CHAPTER 3

People

PREPARING INCOMING AND OUTGOING PERSONNEL

The implementation of the transition plan will depend on the relationships that the agency transition team develops with key stakeholders. Successful agency transitions require the engagement of several groups including an incoming administration, the incumbent administration and the career staff. Developing respect and trust from these groups, and providing critical information and assistance are the essential elements of the agency transition team's role.

If the election produces a new president, the agency transition team must support representatives from the president-elect's team that will arrive at an agency immediately following the election. In past transitions, these representatives have been referred to "landing teams" and in some cases, beachhead teams. The transition team also must collaborate during the pre-election period with the incumbent's political appointees on the preparation of materials and briefings for a first- or second-term administration and keep them informed of ongoing activities.

In addition, the team must assist in the preparation of appointees for Senate confirmation if a new president is elected and help them acclimate to the agency. If an incumbent is re-elected, it is likely that a number of political appointees will depart before the start of the second term or shortly thereafter, and new appointees will require assistance.

During the 2016-17 transition when President Obama was ending his second term, Ed Hugler, the agency transition director at the Department of Labor, said his team's philosophy was to make a good last impression with the outgoing Obama appointees and a good first impression with the landing teams and the new appointees of President-elect Donald Trump. At the Department of Health and Human

Services, John Gentile emphasized the importance of building relationships among the incoming and outgoing appointees, and the career workforce, and understanding the different personalities involved in the process.

In addition, the agency transition team should assist the career workforce to ensure they remain engaged and supportive of transition efforts. This requires robust communication with the career workforce regarding transition activities, engaging some of them in transition-related functions, and assisting career executives who will be serving in political positions in an acting capacity.

This chapter outlines how agency transition teams can work well with the different groups involved in a transition to a first- or second- term administration.

INCOMING ADMINISTRATION

If a new president is elected, the arrival of the agency review team will command much of the agency transition team's attention and focus after Election Day. Whenever representatives of the new administration ultimately arrive, their engagement with the agency transition team will do much to shape the new political leadership's views of the career staff. By coordinating support for agency review teams, supporting the nomination process for new political appointees and integrating them into the agency environment, agency transition teams can lay a foundation for strong relationships that is rooted in respect, trust and commitment to the agency's mission.

Coordinating support for the president-elect's teams

It is important to note that not every agency will receive a representative from the president-elect's team. The Obama transition team sent approximately 500 team members to more than 60 agencies and Executive Office of the President components.[28] The Trump transition team sent 321 landing team members to 39 agencies.[29] The Biden transition team had approximately 500 members across 40 agency review teams that were prepared to work with over 180 agencies.[30] Agencies that do not receive members from the president-elect's team can apply the practices covered in this section to support new appointees. For those agencies that receive representatives, this section will look past logistical arrangements discussed in Chapter 2 to explore how agency transition teams can forge successful relationships built on trust and results with this important stakeholder group.

Knowing your customer

President-elect team members arrive at the agency sometime after the election and depart before the inauguration. Many of these individuals will be on a leave of absence from full-time positions to serve the transition and will be diverse in their personal and professional backgrounds. Some will have prior experience in the agency, although it is likely to be dated, and most will be experts in policy areas pertinent to the agency's mission. Agency transition teams

28 General Services Administration, Transition Overview, 2016 Presidential Transition, Aug. 2, 2016. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2xuiza9

29 Vice President-elect Mike Pence, Transition Accomplishments Summary, Jan. 19, 2017. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2vn8cUP

30 Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group, "The 2020-21 Presidential Transition: Lessons Learned and Recommendations," January 2022. Available at http://bit.ly/3QlM0B1

should be aware that for some members of the president-elect's team, their initial meeting will be the first time that they have set foot in the agency's headquarters. Some will receive appointments after the inauguration, but this is far from certain. Following the 2008-09 transition, roughly 58 percent of the landing team members named on President Obama's change.gov transition website ended up serving in the administration.[31] After President Trump's inauguration in 2017, 536 individuals known as beachhead team members received temporary appointments in federal agencies, and some later received permanent appointments.[32] The proportion of those who serve on the president-elect's team who ultimately go on to serve in the administration is an area that the Partnership for Public Service's Center for Presidential Transition continues to study.

First impressions

Members of the president-elect's team will have varying degrees of familiarity with the agency and may have preconceived ideas about federal employees. Extensive interviews with individuals who served on landing teams during the Obama and Trump transitions reinforced the idea that first impressions matter a great deal in how the career staff is perceived. From the location of the dedicated team workspace to the body language of career employees and engaging with representatives in a virtual room to maintain regular contact, small details speak volumes.

Many agency transition teams have seized the opportunity to start the relationship on a positive note by undertaking small but significant gestures. During the 2016-17 transition, the Department of Labor placed the landing team workspace under lock and key and gave the only key to the landing team. To underscore the security of the workspace, Hugler, the department's career transition director, gave the landing team the option of establishing a regular schedule with the cleaning staff, or they could leave trash receptacles outside the workspace for overnight collection. While this may strike some observers as being unnecessarily focused on a tiny detail, to the Labor Department's landing team, it showed that the career staff gave serious thought to their needs. Hugler and his team personally met the landing team members outside the building prior to the first meeting to welcome them, and then arranged an escort team to smooth the way for subsequent meetings. At the Department of the Treasury, the agency transition team set aside a workspace for the landing and beachhead teams that was located directly next to their own. The location did more than just facilitate easy communication; it was a simple gesture to convey the career team's eagerness to be of assistance.

While the virtual nature of the 2020-21 transition limited in-person engagement, many agencies found a way to adapt. Keith Washington, the agency transition director for the Department of Transportation, made a point of calling each of his senior career officials and sharing contact information for their incoming political appointees. He did the same to inform each political appointee who their senior career colleague would be. By making these introductions before the news broke from another source, Washington prepared his team to welcome each leader individually, and incoming appointees knew who they

31 General Services Administration, Transition Overview, 2016 Presidential Transition, Aug. 2, 2016. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2xuiza9

32 Vice President-elect Mike Pence, Transition Accomplishments Summary, Jan. 19, 2017. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2vn8cUP

could count on for support during their onboarding process.

Agency transition teams will decide what is most appropriate for their agencies, but should look for ways to convey a welcoming atmosphere to the landing team.

First meeting

The co-chairs of the Agency Transition Directors Council from the Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration will make the initial connection between the agency transition team and the presidential transition's agency review team, but then it will be up to the two groups to proceed from there. During the first joint meeting, the agency transition team should convey its commitment to support the agency review team and facilitate a smooth transition. To do that, the agency transition team should use the first meeting to accomplish the following:

- Align on goals for the agency review team engagement.
- Outline a menu of available briefings and suggest high-priority topics.
- Provide briefing materials.
- Agree on procedures for the agency review team engagement, such as points of contact and the schedule of briefings.

During the first meeting, the agency transition director might consider trying to establish a personal connection with the agency review team leader. At the Department of Health and Human Services, John Gentile and his counterpart on the Trump transition's landing team spoke alone after the first meeting of their respective teams. They used that time to have an honest conversation about the work ahead at the department and engaging the career workforce to advance the incoming administration's priorities. Protocol and personal intuition will determine whether this is appropriate at every agency, but a private meeting between leaders can build trust between the teams.

During the 2020-21 transition, Mark Koumans, agency transition director for the Department of Homeland Security, recognized that the delay in ascertainment would add urgency to incoming information requests from the Biden transition team. As soon as he received clearance to reach out, Koumans and his deputy set up the first meeting that same day with their counterparts on the Biden transition team. The Biden team immediately shared a list of over 100 questions for DHS to focus on, illustrating the importance of this initial engagement to establish a regular meeting cadence, build rapport and set expectations for how the agency would fulfill these requests.

Briefings

Many agency transition teams have approached the briefings as a demand-driven
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process. At the Department of Defense in 2016, Michael Rhodes provided the leads on the landing team with a list of briefing topics and asked them to select which ones the team wanted. In 2020, the team at the Department of Justice

spoke to the heads of the agency review teams to learn what information they wanted to receive, which topics they wanted to cover first and their preferred format for briefings. These insights enabled DOJ to tailor the briefings to their customers' needs. Agency review teams may start with strong preferences but may also defer to the agency's team on which briefings to receive. If upfront conversations about the president-elect's agency review team's priorities aren't possible, the agency's team should begin with the briefings it believes will be most useful based on the team's goals and the president-elect's stated priorities. This is an opportunity for the agency's transition team to demonstrate that it is leaning into the incoming administration's agenda. In previous transitions, president-elect team members have reported that briefings on the budget and situational overviews of the agency, including top issues that will arise in the first 200 days, were particularly helpful.

In person versus virtual briefings

The move to virtual transition briefings in 2020-21 due to the pandemic meant that agencies were able to connect with agency review teams more easily without some of the traditional logistical challenges that occur when in person. Officials from several agencies said that virtual meetings enabled them to conduct briefings more efficiently and frequently without the need for travel time to different physical locations. This setup also allowed transition representatives and agency officials outside Washington, D.C., to participate, which was especially beneficial for agencies with staff located across the country.

Conducting virtual briefings also presented challenges. Agencies that manage classified information conducted some transition briefings online but brought agency review team members to secure spaces for classified briefings in person. In addition, many agencies reported complexity related to the proliferation of different video platforms, with user unfamiliarity or compatibility being common problems. The agency transition team at Treasury ran a test session with the agency review team ahead of its initial briefings to ensure that everyone could join the meeting.

A hybrid structure is likely to be the way for future transitions, and all participants will have more practice with online platforms today than in 2020. As several officials noted, a hybrid transition enables the balance between efficiency, security and in-person connections.

Execution

When conducting briefings, agency transition teams should take account of the unique roles that members of the president-elect's team have in the transition. As discussed earlier, team members have different backgrounds in management and policy, as well as various levels of experience with the agency. With limited time available during the formal transition period to complete deliverables, the president-elect's teams will be looking for ways to get up to speed quickly. Scott Gould, former deputy secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs and co-chair of the VA landing team in 2008, explained that the president-elect's teams are "looking for the career executives to make the complex simple."

Briefings also present a valuable opportunity for agency transition teams to not only demonstrate their command of the agency's issues, but also to connect with the incoming administration. The NASA transition team, for example, delivered its briefings during the 2016-17 transition in terms that resonated with the incoming team. The team highlighted how NASA's programs were important to the president-elect's priorities, such as job creation. This approach, described by associate administrator Robert Lightfoot as "our story, their words," enabled the landing team to develop a deeper understanding of NASA's programs, and allowed the agency transition team to move from one-sided recitations of facts to substantive conversations. In 2020, the EPA took a similar approach. Agency officials developed briefings—building on the materials prepared in 2016—that considered the priorities of an incoming Biden administration. For example, on the topic of climate change, agency officials were prepared to explain what had happened in the four years since the Obama administration.

To facilitate productive conversations, agency transition teams should do their best to set a positive tone. For example, when agency transition teams receive questions about specific policy ideas or administrative actions, they should probe for the policy objective and convey a willingness to explore ways to accomplish that objective. As John Gentile of HHS put it, "Tell us what you want to do and we'll figure out how we can work together to get it done." Members of a president-elect's teams need to hear the truth, but agency transition teams can earn credibility and foster healthy dialogue by challenging their own assumptions and thinking creatively in response to new questions and ideas.

Several agency transition teams, including at the departments of Homeland Security and Labor, had their transition directors or deputies attend every meeting with the president elect's team during the 2016-17 transition. These agencies reported that having senior team leaders attend the meetings set a cooperative tone, provided confidence to career staff conducting briefings and ensured that commitments made were met.

Supporting the confirmation process and integrating new political appointees

During the transition and the first months of the new administration, the nomination of top Senate-confirmed appointees can alter the plans of agency transition teams. Some agency transition teams may be called on to support confirmation preparations at the highest levels. When President-elect Obama announced his intent to nominate Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano as secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in 2008, the entire transition operation in that agency shifted to support the future secretary. DHS's transition director, Coast Guard Rear Adm. John Acton, organized flights to Phoenix for the appropriate agency staff to prepare the governor for confirmation hearings. Agency transition teams can support confirmation preparations by:

- Identifying important information for briefing materials.
- Connecting nominees with subject-matter experts.

- Working with the agency's legislative affairs team to prepare nominees to answer potential hearing questions as well as potential questions in confirmation meetings with committee members prior to the hearing.
- Working with agency ethics officials to complete the required financial disclosure report and ethics agreement.
- Begin running agency-specific background checks parallel to the standard background check processes.
- Communicating with appointees and the transition team about the status of nominees in the pre-confirmation process.

In addition to supporting members of the president-elect's team during the transition, agency transition teams will play a role integrating new political appointees into the agency. The exact nature of the role will vary across agencies, but agency transition teams will assist with:

- Preparing to swear-in new appointees on Jan. 20 or thereafter.
- Onboarding new appointees to enable them to gain early momentum on priorities.

Integrating new political appointees

In addition to supporting landing teams during the transition, agency transition teams will play a role integrating new political appointees into the agency. The exact nature of the role will vary across agencies, but agency transition teams will assist with:

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- Onboarding new appointees to enable them to gain early momentum on priorities.

Preparing to swear in new appointees

The incoming administration will want to swear-in as many new appointees as possible after the inauguration. This is important for a new administration's ability to begin acting on the president's agenda, but it also has symbolic importance. Recognizing the significance for the incoming team, Ed Hugler and several of his colleagues at the Department of Labor did not take any chances. Since the department is in the inauguration's secure zone, Hugler and his team slept in the Frances Perkins Building on the night before the presidential swearing-in at the Capitol to make sure that they would be onsite on Jan. 20. During the 2020-21 transition, Mark Koumans and his team prioritized preparing political appointees for success starting on day one of the administration and were able to onboard the largest number of Inauguration Day appointees in the history of DHS.

The agency transition team will lead the effort to ensure the agency is prepared to swear-in new appointees by coordinating among important departments, such as human resources, the facilities staff and others. In addition, agency transition directors should keep the incoming White House liaison informed of progress and ensure that there are no surprises. Smoothly and efficiently swearing-in appointees on day one is a great way for the career staff to build goodwill with the new administration.

Onboarding new appointees

Just as agency transition teams developed programs for exiting appointees, they should also take the lead in onboarding new appointees, keeping in mind they may be the first point of contact for their agency. Onboarding must be a priority for any organization, particularly given lasting impressions during those first weeks and months and can set the stage for success. An effective onboarding process quickly integrates the new employees into the organization, equips them with all the information and tools they need to be "work ready" and helps build a strong network on which the new employee can draw going forward.

The key ingredients of a successful onboarding process include clarity on the individual's role and responsibilities, a suitable individual workspace, readily available information technology and early interactions with senior leadership. An effective onboarding process should also accelerate the assimilation of new employees.

The federal workplace is unlike any other private or public sector environment. New political appointees must understand the distinctive and important elements of operating in government. Recognizing the learning curve for even the most capable new appointees, the Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition offers a variety of resources to support new appointees. Those resources include federal position descriptions that identify the core responsibilities of even the most arcane roles, as well as Ready to Govern® courses for new appointees that cover topics such as:

- Managing political–career interactions.
- Navigating relationships with the White House and the OMB.
- Knowing the ethical factors to take into consideration when making decisions in government.
- Federal hiring, budget and acquisition processes.
- How to get things done in government and execute key priorities.

The full collection of federal position descriptions can be found online at presidentialtransition.org/resources/federal-position-descriptions/.

Several agencies have developed strong onboarding models. The Defense Department, for example, established a centralized pre-employment/onboarding process for the 2016-17 transition. Each new appointee received prepopulated onboarding packages; mandatory and practical training on subjects such as cybersecurity, information assurance, records management and ethics; and an overview of the departmental organization and governmental/agency interactions. Preprocessing enabled new appointees to complete security paperwork, obtain individualized benefits consultations and meet with an ethics attorney or a human resources specialist to address specific appointment questions. The DOD model expedited the onboarding process. Additional office and component-specific onboarding and mission orientation was conducted after permanent assignments were made. And at the Labor Department, the agency transition team provided new appointees with a "new employee orientation guide" that provided background on the department, human resources issues and more.

New appointees also received briefings on Freedom of Information Act rules. Both the departments of Defense and Labor worked to ensure that appointees felt supported but not overwhelmed, and that there were no surprises.

Enabling early action on priorities

In addition to providing general onboarding information, agency transition teams should help new appointees begin implementing their priorities as quickly as possible. The Environmental Protection Agency's transition team provided landing team members and new appointees with information on decision-making authorities and the distribution of political appointees across the agency, which helped the incoming group plan its implementation strategy. Labor embedded knowledgeable career employees in different offices to aid new appointees. Labor budget appointee Mark Zelden said that it "was very helpful for me to have someone like that. She [the Labor Department career detailee] was an excellent resource." Anything that can help new appointees get up to speed quickly will contribute to a strong relationship between appointees and career staff.

Agency transition teams have a remarkable opportunity to shape the new administration's view of the career staff. Zelden, who served on Trump's Labor Department landing and beachhead teams, said transition director Hugler "set the tone. He was a professional, a career civil servant who made clear that he and his team were there to serve the president. We were treated with respect, and we wanted to give the same respect.

INCUMBENT ADMINISTRATION

Just as incoming personnel will arrive over time, outgoing political appointees will start departing well before the election, and many may leave in the last days of the incumbent administration. Therefore, transition teams must also plan for the exit of these individuals by arranging for the completion of standard tasks such as returning IT equipment or debriefing for security, completing ethics and financial forms, as well as helping them make the transition to new careers.

Working with outgoing appointees to prepare briefings for the incoming team

Career executives leading the transition should be prepared for possible tension with political appointees. A certain amount of strain is inevitable. If the same political party retains power under a new president, some political appointees may want to be involved with transition activities to position themselves with the incoming administration. If there is a likely change to another political party, outgoing appointees may want to push particular issues or points of view. And if the current president is running for re-election, appointees may not want to discuss transition at all. These circumstances can make life complicated for the career staff involved in transition planning.

Some of this stress might be alleviated by proactively engaging the incumbent administration's appointees. During the 2020-21 transition, members of the EPA's agency transition team sent meeting schedules, agendas and attendee lists for their briefings with the president-elect's agency review team ahead of time to the deputy administrator and chief of staff and followed up with meeting minutes. Ultimately, transition planning is fundamentally apolitical and rooted in a concern for the continuity of government. It is a hallmark of our democratic system that prizes the peaceful transfer of power, and it is anchored in statute. Career executives should emphasize how transition planning is driven by law and custom.

Michael Rhodes, the 2016-17 agency transition director at the Defense Department, said briefing materials prepared for the incoming administration were developed by both career and political appointees. At the Labor Department, deputy secretary Chris Lu developed a suggested list of priority briefings for the landing team. Although not all political appointees will want to be involved in planning for their own transition, agency transition teams may be surprised by the level of interest. By reaching out to appointees, the agency transition team can build trust and obtain vital support for transition planning. But agency transition teams should not allow this constructive engagement with current appointees to obscure the significant advantages that come from having career staff drive this process—including the neutrality of the briefing materials and fostering trust with a new team after the inauguration.

Preparing for departure

History shows that a significant proportion of appointees will leave near the end of a presidential term, or shortly after the beginning of a second term. A smooth outgoing transition may not garner headlines, but for some appointees, it is the last act in their work with the agency, and therefore it is a vital objective for agency transition teams. The last days of a term are trying times for many political appointees as they close out their work and explore new employment options. The delay in the ascertainment of the 2020 presidential election results meant that the timeline and pace of some appointee separations were compressed. For example, at the Department of Interior, the agency transition team was unable to provide, on a previously established schedule, information on practical matters such as health insurance expiration dates or the post-government employment ethics restrictions, which impacted appointees' ability to prepare for their departure from the administration.

Despite the many challenges an agency transition team may face, it still plays a significant role in assisting outgoing appointees. This process should include:

- Creating a separation guide for the departing political appointees.
- Coordinating necessary separation-related meetings and activities.
- Designating easily accessible points of contact for key separation items.

Create consolidated separation guide

The first step to prepare political appointees for a smooth exit is to develop a guide that contains all the critical information that political appointees may need, including issues involving employee benefits, ethics, security, records management and information technology. Some agencies, such as the DOL, developed a brief guide intended to alert appointees to the key steps in the process. HHS created a more comprehensive guide with detailed instructions on all off-boarding-related topics. Regardless of the length, a helpful separation guide will include the information below.

In Appendix 3.1, you can find the guide developed by the Department of Labor for the 2020-21 presidential transition. OPM Q&A on separations for political appointees can be found at Appendix 3.2.

Five components of separation guide

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	ETHICS	SECURITY
• Accrued leave protocol • Health benefits rules • Severance pay guidance • Retirement options and procedure • Life insurance information	• Future employment restrictions • Post-employment counselling from the agency ethics official • Financial disclosure (Office of Government Ethics Form 278) • STOCK Act (2012) information	• Protocol regarding security debriefs • Ongoing status of background checks

RECORDS MANAGEMENT	IT AND OTHER EQUIPMENT
• Outline and rules for records that need to be filed or destroyed • Classified vs. unclassified info • Personal vs. government document guidelines • Rules surrounding government email	• List of items to be returned • Process for returning government-issued equipment

Source: Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group analysis

Organize a "one-stop shop" for separation activities

Agency transition teams may complement the guide with information sessions and one-on-one meetings for appointees to learn about individual topics.

Another practice that agencies may find helpful is to consolidate all separation-related activities into a single workshop. The departments of Labor and Health and Human Services reported that these one-stop shops, in which career staff are available to assist appointees in one place at a given time, were well-received in 2016. One-stop shops should feature personnel able to assist with the same topics that are covered in exit guides. Organizing these sessions can be challenging logistically, so planning should begin as soon as possible.

Information sessions may begin as early as September in an election year. The attendance levels will likely spike after Election Day. The one-stop shops should be convened after the election, and agencies should consider hosting several all-day sessions in January.

Designate points of contact

Agency transition teams should designate a point of contact to handle questions related to each of the following off-boarding topics:

- Benefits.
- Ethics and financial disclosures.
- IT and equipment return.
- Security.
- Records management.

The point of contact should be made available to political appointees after they leave the agency as well.

“The fourth quarter”

As the formal transition process kicks off in the spring of an election year, the incumbent administration will need to balance its planning for a possible transition of power while continuing work on the president’s agenda.

Andrew Mayock, a former senior advisor at the OMB during the Obama administration and co-chair of the Agency Transition Directors Council, described this dual-track approach as the president’s “fourth quarter.” He said the goal in 2016-’17 was to meet or exceed the level of cooperation and assistance to the incoming team that President George W. Bush provided to the Obama transition in 2008-’09. At the same time, he said, the Obama administration was intent on “running through the tape” in pursuit of accomplishing as much of its agenda as possible before time ran out.

If there will be a new president, then agency transition team members must prepare to operate in a sensitive environment after the election. This will require respecting the outgoing appointees’ wishes while assisting the incoming administration. This may require a delicate balance, one that should include openness, professionalism and commitment to the mission.

CAREER EMPLOYEES

The third main group in agency transitions is the career staff. Career employees are a resource that the agency transition team can tap for a number of roles during the transition, including working with the core transition team and serving in acting appointed positions. If utilized effectively, career employees can bolster the agency transition team’s efforts to support the incumbent and incoming administrations. They also serve as a point of continuity from one administration to the next, especially as they prepare for turnover at the top and for other key leadership positions. Agencies that actively engage in succession planning [33] and have a robust leadership pipeline will be better prepared with qualified career leaders ready to fill senior roles on a temporary basis during the transition and post-inauguration period before appointees are in place.

Working with the agency transition team

As discussed in Chapter 1, the core agency transition team should include career staff with different functional skills and programmatic expertise. Alongside the core team, the agency's transition team needs to ensure that it has a way to tap the agency for timely information and expertise. The FBI, for example, pulled together representatives from different divisions, including those with sensitive national security-related portfolios, into a network that could provide quick turnaround on requests.

Many agencies find it helpful to include promising midcareer professionals in roles supporting the core transition team and representative components. Lee Lofthus of the Department of Justice explained that the purpose is twofold. He said the transition is an excellent professional development opportunity for staff early in their careers, and it can be used to build expertise inside the agency for future transitions. In 2020, Lofthus built out DOJ's agency transition team recognizing that he and many of his senior core team members—whose transition experience dated back to 2008—would likely retire before the next transition cycle. His approach included bringing on talented people at different professional levels so they could build the knowledge and experience needed for transitions at the department.

Selecting career leaders to temporarily fill critical political positions

The Presidential Transition Enhancement Act of 2019 states that by Sept. 15 in an election year, agency leaders must ensure that a succession plan is in place for each senior noncareer position in the agency.[34] Turnover is likely to occur even if the president is re-elected. The Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition analysis of the last three two-term presidents shows that from Election Day through the first six months of the second term, an average of 46 percent of secretaries, deputy secretaries and undersecretaries left their jobs.[35] The purpose of the succession plans is to make sure that as political appointees depart, career officials are prepared to step in place until new political appointees arrive.[36] There are more than 4,000 political appointees across the federal government, about 1,200 of whom require Senate confirmation. Given the historical pace of the appointments process and Senate confirmations, many career executives will temporarily fill the vacant political positions.

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33 Strong private sector organizations embrace a set of practices to prepare for turnover at the top and for other key leadership positions. Known as succession planning, industry leaders pin- point potential succession gaps, identify individuals who might fill those positions and ensure that those people receive the necessary skills and leadership training.

34 Presidential Transition Enhancement Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-121 (2020).

35 Partnership for Public Service and The Boston Consulting Group, "The Presidential Transition Guide," November 2023, 223-224. Available at presidentialtransition.org/transition-resources/presidential-transition-guide/

36 Partnership for Public Service, "Presidential Transition Act Summary," March 2020, 1. Available at https://bit.ly/3asUdw3

Agency transition teams can be flexible in deciding when and whether to share the succession plans with the agency workforce. In 2016, OMB simply required that agency transition teams certify that they had prepared a list of acting officials. During the 2016-17 transition, some agencies kept a close hold on the names so as not to create added pressure on the designees. Others argued that being open with the list would provide reassurance to career employees and prevent the spread of misinformation among the rank-and-file.

Arguments can be made for either approach. However the information is shared, agency transition teams should ensure that those designated to serve in vacant noncareer positions receive the preparation they need to serve effectively.

Preparing career leaders to serve in acting roles

The agency transition team should ensure that career executives designated to serve in acting capacities receive the preparation they need to be successful. In general, the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 provides that acting officials can serve for 210 days unless there is a nominee for the position, but a more generous time of 300 days is allowed for positions that are vacant during the 60-day period beginning on Inauguration Day.[37] Since many political vacancies may last for months, career civil servants need to be ready to step up to lead. The agency transition team has a unique opportunity to prepare acting officials to be able to lean into their roles. During the 2016-'17 transition, the Department of Education's transition director, Denise Carter, assembled a comprehensive package of briefing materials for acting officials, including:

- Off-boarding checklist to help them assist their exiting political counterparts.
- Executive summaries of briefing materials to familiarize them with agency issues and priorities.
- Emergency contact list.
- List of all Senior Executive Service members across the agency.
- Transition project management plan to familiarize them with the transition process.
- Crisis management resource for first assistants.

Other resources are available as well. In previous transition cycles, the Partnership for Public Service ran "Ready to Act," a course that provides support for career executives who expect to serve in an acting political role at their agency.

Managing expectations among career staff

One of the agency transition team's most important roles will be to manage expectations among the agency's career staff about the incoming administra-

37 "Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998," 5 U.S.C. §3346 and "Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998," 5 U.S.C. §3349a

tion or new appointees of a second-term administration. Not every agency will receive representatives from the president elect's team, which can be a blow to morale.

Agencies often draft "transition guiding principles" that are widely distributed, explaining expectations for interaction with presidential transition team members. One common principle is that access to the landing team will be tightly controlled; career employees' ability to make direct contact will be limited.

To ensure an orderly process of communication, the team at the DOL during the 2016-'17 transition coordinated career staff interaction with landing team members and subsequently with beachhead team members who arrived after the inauguration. "No unforced errors and no headlines" was an unofficial motto for the career staff. The agency transition team should ensure that contact between career employees and presidential transition team members occurs within established channels.

CONCLUSION

Presidential transitions can be organized and planned, but their success ultimately depends on how well people with different perspectives and different roles can work together. A process involving numerous complex procedures will unfold inside individual agencies over many months, with countless micro-scale engagements between groups of outgoing appointees, incoming appointees and career executives. By building strong relationships anchored in trust and commitment to a shared ideal of national service and respect for the law, the agency transition team can coordinate activities among these groups to produce an effective presidential transition.

People

Helpful Tips

- [ ] Prior to the election, gather career staff members who will assume acting roles to make introductions and discuss how to work together as a team.
- [ ] Find ways to make personal gestures that make representatives from the president-elect's team feel welcome. Even small acts that show sincerity can have an outsized impact.
- [ ] When engaging with president-elect team members or new appointees, focus on the outcomes.
- [ ] When explaining agency concepts, make the complex simple and find visually appealing ways to present key information.
- [ ] Find a way to meet the needs of an incoming team and understand the reasons behind their requests. Do not reject requests out of hand. Ask what the goal is and then suggest the best way to accomplish it.
- [ ] Consult with current appointees who served on the president-elect's transition team to get a customer's perspective on what briefing material content, methods of sharing documents, and rhythm of engagement, and onboarding processes were most helpful.
- [ ] Situate the workspace for the post-election agency review team close to the agency's transition team.
- [ ] Organize a one-stop shop to off-board exiting political appointees.

APPENDIX 3.1

U.S. Department of Labor Separation Clearance Guidance for Noncareer Employees 2020/2021

Source: Department of Labor

The purpose of this document is to provide you with an overview that will ensure you understand the steps necessary to separate from the Government. Under each header are subcategories that describe required actions and helpful tips to make your transition easier. Also provided – where applicable – are details of the activities by OASAM staff to help facilitate your separation. Please note, that this document is not a substitute for attending one of the information sessions or speaking directly with the OASAM or SOL offices involved. Because the information in this pamphlet is not exhaustive, it is important to speak with a subject matter expert to ensure you receive all relative guidance.

Feel free to reach out to the Points of Contact at the end of the document if you have any questions or concerns.

This document was prepared by Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management with the assistance of the White House Liaison and the Office of the Solicitor.

NOTIFYING THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT YOUR DEPARTURE

Required Actions

- [ ] Notify your supervisor and the Department's White House Liaison of your planned resignation date **as soon as possible**. This will help ensure that you and OASAM have set aside enough time to process your departure briefings, actions, and paperwork. During this time, you must also return all government property and records in your custody or control.
    - Be sure to include in your message any approved leave you will take during the days leading up to your official resignation date and which days you will be onsite at the Frances Perkins Building as that will affect the out-processing timeline. If you need to out-process virtually, please let us know as soon as possible and we will make every effort to accommodate that.

For Your Information

- The White House Liaison will notify OASAM and SOL of your pending departure. OASAM will notify Senior Career Officials and Administrative Officers. Agencies are responsible for submitting off-boarding requests within Service Central.
- If planning to out-process virtually, OASAM Executive Resources will confirm your shipping address to provide a pre-paid mailing box to return IT and other equipment.

SEPARATION CLEARANCE FORM

Required Actions

- [ ] All non-career employees, including PA/PAS, Schedule C Employees and Non-Career SES, should work with administrative staff in their agency to complete the Department's Separation Clearance Form well in advance of their last day. As part of this process, you will be responsible for a number of administrative tasks, including:
    - Returning all government equipment including keys, fobs, PIV badge, special access cards (if applicable), and any government-furnished IT equipment.
    - Reviewing outstanding travel vouchers and debts
    - Closing out IT accounts, travel card accounts, and transit subsidy allowances
    - Filling out your timesheet so you can receive your last paycheck on time
- [ ] Please bring your signed Separation Clearance Form and PIV Badge to the Division of Executive Resources (N-2453) or provide it electronically no later than 4:45PM on your last day.

Helpful Tips

- An agency Career Deputy or Administrative Officer may sign-off as the Supervisor.

For Your Information

- Anyone in charge of the Agency's budget office can sign off on the Debt and Financial Sections of the Separation Clearance Form.

HUMAN RESOURCES-RELATED ACTIONS

Required Actions

- [ ] Fill out, validate, and have your timesheet certified in WebTA before you leave.
- [ ] PA/PAS positons are required to provide a written letter of resignation addressed to the President listing all currently held positions and a resignation effective date. This letter must be signed and delivered to the White House Liaison, and then to the Presidential Personnel Office.
    - Before drafting, please contact the White House Liaison for any updated White House guidance on resignation letters.

Helpful Tips

- Check your eOPF ([URL]) to verify federal service history dates are correct. It is highly recommended that you print copies for your record.
    - Incorrect information can affect the benefits that you may be entitled to in the future. In addition, if you return to Federal service and the e-OPF was not complete when you left, it may affect your leave accrual category and other benefits.
    - If your records are incomplete or not correct, please immediately contact OASAM's Office of Executive Resources for assistance.
    - Note: You can only access your eOPF from a DOL-networked computer.

For Your Information

- In order to convert some of your benefits into a private policy, you only have 31 days from the time of separation to do so. Be sure to look into this as soon as possible.
- For information on your TSP Withdrawal Options, go to: https://www.tsp.gov/PDF/formspubs/tspbk02.pdf and https://www.tsp.gov/forms/withdrawals.html.
- If you are not retiring, you may convert your health insurance into a private policy, enroll in your state's Marketplace or enroll in Temporary Conversion of Coverage for health insurance. You have 60 days from the time that you separate to make this decision.
- You may convert your life insurance into a private policy. You have 31 days to make this decision.
- Your dental and/or vision insurance cannot be continued after you separate.
- You may continue coverage by the Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program after you separate.
- You must contact Long-Term Care Partners at [phone] to arrange direct billing in order to continue this insurance.

BENEFITS

You are not required to attend a benefits session or speak with a benefits advisor prior to your departure; but it is highly recommended. During those sessions you will receive information about: health, dental, vision and life insurance; Flexible Spending Accounts; Thrift Savings Plan options; refunds of retirement deductions and redeposits; annual leave, sick leave and credit hours; and unemployment compensation.

Helpful Tips

- If you are retiring, you must work with your retirement counselor to ensure that you complete all forms well in advance of your retirement.
    - If you are retirement eligible and you have not been assigned to a Benefits Specialist, please immediately contact Ann Lyndsey, Division of Compensation, Retirement & Benefits at [email] or [phone].

For Your Information

- In order to convert some of your benefits to private policies, you only have 31 days from the time of separation to do so. Be sure to look into this as soon as possible.
- For information on your TSP Withdrawal Options, go to: [URL].
- If you are not retiring, you may convert your health insurance into a private policy, enroll in your state's Marketplace or enroll in Temporary Conversion of Coverage for health insurance. You have 60 days from the time that you separate to make this decision.
- You may convert your life insurance into a private policy. You have 31 days to make this decision.

- Your dental and/or vision insurance cannot be continued after you separate.
- You may continue being covered by the Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program after you separate.
- You must contact Long-Term Care Partners at [phone] to arrange direct billing in order to continue this insurance.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

In order to protect employees and the Department, prior to departing, DOL senior officials and Capstone officials, as well as all non-career SES and Schedule C employees, must be briefed on their responsibilities under the Federal Records Act so they can comply with Federal law and agency regulations as they consider requesting permission to remove any records, documents, or materials. You will receive a briefing in two parts with at least several days in between to allow time to identify and prepare any records and related information requiring transfer within the Agency, as well as to identify any documents individuals may want to take with them.

The first briefing will cover your responsibilities regarding the removal of Federal records, including the types of documents that you can and cannot remove, from your Agency. The briefing will also provide guidance on how to ensure proper transfer of Federal records upon departure. Individuals will receive assistance on how to organize records and documents in the days preceding the actual separation date to help achieve a smooth departure from DOL.

For the second briefing, the Departmental Records Officer (or Agency Records Officer) will conduct a review of materials proposed for removal. If the amount of materials needing review is minimal, the review will take place during the briefing. There will be separate arrangements to review these materials if the review includes an amount of materials that is voluminous.

Required Actions

- ☐ All PAS/PA employees must receive a short records exit briefing from the Departmental Records Officer and complete and submit a DL-6058 [URL].
  - The group briefings, encompassing (SOL ethics and records management) fulfill this requirement.
  - Personalized briefings are also available if needed and may coincide with the SOL ethics briefing. Please request this briefing when communicating with SOL.
- ☐ All Non-Career SES and Schedule C employees must receive a records briefing from their Agency Records Officer, and complete and submit a DL-6057 ([URL]).
  - The group briefings, encompassing (SOL ethics and records management) fulfill this requirement.
  - A list of Agency Records Officers can be found at: [URL]

Helpful Tips

- For more information please see refer to the guidance memorandum: [URL]

For your information

- Capstone (Permanent) designated positions will have their email account legally transferred to NARA for 15 years at the end of tenure for indefinite preservation. Non-Capstone (Temporary) accounts will have their email account destroyed at the end of 7 years. Records Management staff will inform you of your designation prior to your departure.

ETHICS

Required Actions

- ☐ The Ethics in Government Act requires covered positions to file a termination OGE 278e report within thirty (30) days from the date of resignation. <u>All departing Administration officials who are in a PAS, PA, Non-career SES, or Schedule C position, and have served for more than 60 days in that position are subject to this requirement.</u>
  - When SOL's Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) becomes aware of the filer's resignation, normally through the Office of Executive Resources, the filer will receive an SOL/OLC email notification and an Integrity notification to submit an OGE 278e termination report.
  - The filer will have thirty (30) days from the date of resignation to submit the OGE 278e to SOL/OLC through Integrity. For example, if a filer's resignation date is November 12, 2020, then the report will be due NLT December 12, 2020.

- SOL/OLC encourages the filer to submit the report prior to leaving DOL, approximately during the last five days prior to termination.
- The reporting period for the content of the termination report is January 1, 2020, to the date of resignation, whether the termination occurs during 2020 or January 2021. For example, if the term date is January 30, 2021, the reporting period would run from January 1, 2020, to January 30, 2021.
- The filer will complete all of the applicable information in Integrity. The filer should keep a copy of the report for their files. Then the filer should submit the report in Integrity.
- SOL/OLC asks that the filer submit a non-DOL contact email address to the ethics program manager, [POC], [email] if there is a need for additional information to process the report.
- A 30-day grace period exists for SOL's Ethics Office to receive the report. If SOL/OLC receives the report more than 30 days after the due date, SOL's Ethics Office will assess a $200 late-filing fee absent extraordinary circumstances warranting a waiver of the fee.
- If the filer has questions regarding the completion of the OGE 278e report, contact [POC] in SOL/OLC.

- [ ] All exiting non-career employees are encouraged to seek guidance on the ethics rules concerning seeking and negotiating post-DOL employment, as well as the ethics restrictions applicable after the appointees leave government.
- [ ] If you are under consideration for Career appointment in the Federal Government, you are encouraged to contact SOL/OLC for guidance and questions regarding the Hatch Act and Ethics.

Helpful Tips

- The instructions to the financial disclosure form (OGE Form 278e) are comprehensive, helpful, and interactive. They will answer most, if not all, of the questions you may have in completing the form.

For your information

- SOL's guidance on post-employment ethics rules can be found at: [URL]
- Ethics resources can also be found at: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/sol/ethics

IT, SECURITY, & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Required Actions

- [ ] Turn in your badge/PIV Card and IT equipment on or before your last workday.
  - If you will be at the Frances Perkins Building, please bring your PIV Card to Suite N2453 (appointments may be required). You can either bring IT equipment to OCIO in C-5521, Room 4 or coordinate a pickup with OCIO by calling [phone].
  - If you are virtually off boarding, please include your PIV Card with your laptop, keys, etc. in the package provided to you by OCIO and drop off at any UPS location on or before your last workday.
  - Executive Resources will coordinate with OCIO to document the collection of the DOL PIV Card/credential and any IT equipment on DL Form 1-107, Separation Clearance document, and return the PIV Card to the Security Center badging office in Suite S1513B.
  - If you have peripheral equipment (docking stations, keyboards, and mice) in the Frances Perkins Building or OASAM Regional locations, OCIO needs to pick them up. Please email the [email] with subject line: Hardware pickup. Provide a date and time and point of contact to arrange the hardware pickup.
    - If planning to officially off board after January 15th, following your return of your PIV card / equipment you may continue to access your email via Outlook Web Access [URL] and perform records management and other Offboarding activities. You will need to use a multi-factor authentication method, for assistance contact the Enterprise Service Desk at [phone].

Required Actions (if applicable)

- [ ] A debriefing for Employees that hold National Security Clearances by the OASAM Security Center prior to separating is required.
  - The Security Center will provide a list of security clearance holders to Executive Resources and the White House Liaison to help facilitate. Please contact Melissa Catterall at [email] or [phone] if you have not had a briefing.

- [ ] Employees that hold a Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) card, please contact your agency's Continuity Coordinator to turn it in before you depart.
    - A list of Agency Continuity Coordinators can be found here: [URL]

For Your Information

- Employees will need a signed property pass to remove personal items from the building: [URL]
- If Wireless Priority Service is active on your government issued iPhone, contact your agency Continuity Coordinator who will work with EMC to have it cancelled.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSIONS

Required Actions

- [ ] For a full schedule of debriefings please refer to the Separation Clearance Guidance Debriefings page on LaborNet: [URL]

POINTS OF CONTACT

General Questions about your appointment

- [LIST]

SOL

- [LIST]

HR (non-benefits related)

- [LIST]

HR (benefits related)

- [LIST]

Security Center

- [LIST]

Emergency Management Center

- [LIST]

Records Management

- [LIST]

OCIO

- To request equipment pickup, email the [email] with subject line: Hardware pickup
- For other questions, [LIST]

General Transition Questions

- [LIST]

APPENDIX 3.2

U.S. OPM Presidential Transition Guide to Federal Human Resources Management Matters Appendix A: Q&A on Separations for Political Appointees 2020

Source: Office of Personnel Management

GENERAL ISSUES

1. **Can I be separated before the resignation date of my agency head, and how much notice will I receive?**

   Yes. If you are a noncareer SES appointee, you may be removed at any time. Noncareer SES appointees must be given a written notice at least 1 day before the effective date of a removal. ***[5 U.S.C. 3592(c); 5 CFR 359.902]***

   If you are a Schedule C employee, you may be removed at any time. There is no statutory notice requirement. However, some agencies have elected to provide Schedule C employees with advance notice of their separations. Your Human Resources Office can advise you of your agency's policy on notice procedures.

2. **Do I have appeal or grievance rights?**

   There is no appeal right to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) on the removal of a noncareer SES appointee. Employees separated from their Schedule C positions have no appeal rights to MSPB. In some agencies, noncareer SES appointees and Schedule C employees may grieve their separations under an agency administrative grievance system or another agency dispute resolution system. Your Human Resources Office can advise you if your agency permits such grievances.

3. **Do I have additional procedural and/or appeal rights if I am a veteran?**

   An employee's status as a veteran does not change an employee's rights beyond those described in the answers to Questions 1 and 2 above.

4. **If my boss has a statutory term appointment that extends beyond the resignation date of my agency head, do I have to leave before the resignation date?**

   Not necessarily. This, too, will be up to your agency.

5. **If my boss is asked to stay beyond the agency head's resignation date, will I be allowed to remain in my position also?**

   Not necessarily. This, too, will be up to your agency.

6. **Can my agency provide outplacement assistance?**

   If your agency offers outplacement services to all agency employees, noncareer SES appointees and Schedule C employees may use them.

7. **Can my agency pay my travel and transportation expenses when I leave Government service?**

   The Government is not authorized to pay relocation expenses for separating Presidential appointees, noncareer SES appointees, or Schedule C appointees to return to private industry or to their place of residence. See gsa.gov/travelpolicy on the General Services Administration's website for additional information about travel and transportation allowances, in particular those for departing political appointees.

"The goal of our communications strategy was to gain the trust of each party and to be seen as honest brokers."

Denise Carter, Agency Transition Director (2016-17)
Department of Education

CHAPTER 4

Communicating

ENGAGING AUDIENCES AND GATHERING FEEDBACK

Previous chapters explored three pillars of a successful transition: organizing for success, planning for change and taking care of people. The focus of this chapter, communicating with purpose, is more than another pillar. The ability to share timely information with multiple stakeholders across the organization and to communicate clearly with presidential transition team members or new appointees builds the trust and credibility that constitute the foundation of a successful transition. Keeping internal agency audiences informed and creating opportunities for feedback will help secure vital support for transition planning and will help promote an organizational culture of energized, engaged employees ready to carry on the agency mission under new leadership. The use of technology to support virtual connections will only increase the reach and opportunity an agency transition team has to connect with key stakeholders during this critical time.

PLANNING

Engaging internal audiences

As with other major agency initiatives, engaging career staff and leadership with timely information and opportunities for two-way communication will make the transition more successful. The best internal engagement and communications plans target different audiences by using a variety of means. Key internal audiences to keep informed include:

- **Senior Executive Service:** From overseeing transition planning activities for an agency and directly supporting new appointees to potentially serving in acting roles, career senior executives will play a critical role in the transition.
- **Career staff:** Transition is a time of uncertainty, which can breed anxiety inside the agency and rumors about impending changes. Timely, consistent communication to keep career staff informed about the agency transition team's work will promote confidence and cooperation during the changes that lie ahead.
- **Outgoing appointees:** While the involvement of political appointees in the transition will differ across the government, agency transition teams will want to keep political appointees, including those who will depart shortly before or after the election, informed about the status of preparations and next steps.

Each of these audiences should have a point of contact on the agency transition team for questions, comments or concerns. Some agency transition directors, such as Denise Carter at the Department of Education, developed a comprehensive plan in 2016 to formally reach out to these audiences at critical junctures throughout the pre-election period and through the inauguration. Others relied less on a formal communications strategy than on feedback from senior executive transition leads from across the department to determine how and when to engage critical internal audiences.

The agency transition team will want to find the balance between over-communicating, which can distract from the agency's core missions, and leaving staff in the dark. The election circumstances are an important part of that balance. Has the president served two terms, or is the president seeking re-election? In the latter case, the agency transition team will want to be especially sensitive in how it communicates the issues involved in transition planning. In some cases, career agency leaders will use the term "election readiness" rather than "transition planning" to refer to required pre-election activities because the phrase does not presuppose an election outcome that creates a change in leadership. No matter the approach, agency transition teams will want to reach each of the key internal audiences with practical, timely guidance as the transition planning progresses using tools described later in this chapter.

Clear and consistent messaging will inform, calm and persuade. In contrast, inconsistency can fuel employee concerns and cause uncertainty. Therefore, it is important that coherent, consistent messages are used during every interaction, formal and informal. The following principles, content and tips may prove useful in designing a communications plan that achieves the desired objectives across audiences.

Engaging external audiences

PRE-ELECTION

Agencies and agency transition teams are not allowed to directly communicate with presidential transition teams outside of the formal administration councils prior to the election. Nevertheless, since presidential transition teams will begin doing their due diligence on federal agencies prior to the election by using

Principles, content and tips for designing a communications plan

PRINCIPLES	CONTENT	TIPS
Tailor messages to specific stakeholder needs **Ensure messages are consistent and delivered in a coordinated manner** **Communicate information early and proactively** **Consider the medium for delivering key messages e.g., virtual, in person or hybrid.**	**Identify target audience** • Management, employees, unions, etc. **Align on message and choose appropriate timing** • Continual communication during change process • Punctual communications on specific occasions **Align on communication media** • Media tailored to target audience and influence level **Define role of individuals in communication plan** • Confirm whether general management will play key role • Confirm if communications team will play support role	**Tone** • How does language choice, format, style reinforce how you want employees to feel? **Personalization** • Is it clear how the message and objectives affect each group/individual employee? **Feedback** • Have you adequately ensured proper feedback?

Source: Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group analysis

publicly available sources of information such as agency websites, the agency's internet presence is essentially the first means of communication with those who may staff a future administration. Transition teams should, therefore, ensure that their agencies' websites contain accurate, up-to-date information.

POST-ELECTION

If there is a new president after the election, the terms of engagement with the incoming administration will be framed by the memorandum of understanding signed by the president's chief of staff and the president-elect's transition chair. The MOU will specifically outline the conditions by which agency transition teams may share classified and non-public information.

Agency transition teams should communicate the conditions of engagement during the first meeting with the president-elect's incoming team. During the 2020-21 transition, the Department of Justice's transition team asked each member of the president-elect's agency review team to sign a nondisclosure agreement before gaining access to non-public information, similar to the approach taken by other agencies in this and previous transition cycles. For those agencies that deal with classified information, the transition team should convey the levels of clearance required to receive that kind of information.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, there is great value in establishing norms for how the incoming and agency transition teams will exchange information. During the Department of Labor's 2016-17 transition, Ed Hugler, the director of the transition, and one other member of his team were the primary career staff points of contact for the landing team members. At the Department of Homeland Security, 2016-17 transition leader Vince Micone managed the process.

They received nearly 230 requests for information from the president-elect's team and having a central point of contact made it much easier to track those requests. In 2020, Micone's successor, Mark Koumans, also established a central point of contact through his transition office despite the challenges of coordinating communications in a virtual environment where email addresses and other contact information were easily accessible and could be used instead of the official channels.

The bottom line is that agency transition teams should set up a channel to receive requests for information and might also consider asking the landing team to assign priority to each request. As Micone noted: "We completed everything that was asked of us, but with so many requests coming in and not much time during the transition period, prioritization can help focus your efforts."

In addition to managing the flow of information to the landing team, the DHS agency transition team facilitated meetings between incoming and out-going appointees. These meetings allowed both teams to discuss front office organization, portfolios and other issues of importance.

EXECUTION AND IMPACT

Tools for communicating within the agency

In a complex organization like a federal agency, a one-size-fits-all approach to communication is unlikely to be effective. Agency transition teams have employed multiple tools to deliver the message on transition and maintain open lines of communication. Some of the most used are described below.

MEMOS

A memo sent by the head of the agency is an excellent way to reach a large audience with a positive tone regarding the transition. During the 2016-17 transition, several Cabinet secretaries and deputy secretaries used transition memos to kick off the formal planning process. At the Department of Defense, for example, Secretary Ash Carter sent a memo to all staff members in May 2016 to introduce the transition and outline his expectations for a smooth handoff. These kickoff memos also introduced the agency transition director and listed a point of contact for questions. A memo sent by NASA Administrator Charles Bolden to his agency staff is shown below:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Office of the Administrator
Washington, DC 20546-0001

To: NASA Employees
From: Administrator
Date: July XX, 2016
Re: Agency Transition Planning and Guidance

On November 8, 2016, the American people will elect our next president. Seventy-three days later, that president will take office in a peaceful transfer of power that is a hallmark of our American democracy.

To ensure that the presidential transition is efficient and organized, every federal agency must undertake a meticulous planning process. This includes preparing materials to guide the incoming administration, as well as preparing the organization for any changes that may occur when the next president takes office. We must prepare to do our part to assist in that overall effort.

In recent months, I have established a transition team to begin undertaking this challenging but essential task. Robert Lightfoot (Associate Administrator) and Tom Cremins (Associate Administrator for Strategy and Plans) will be leading the effort with my full support.

In the coming weeks and months, transition leadership may ask you to contribute to this effort in different ways. Your support will enable NASA to continue to deliver on our vision of reaching for new heights and revealing the unknown for the benefit of humankind.

If you have any questions or if anyone outside of NASA—including but not limited to a presidential candidate's transition team—contacts you for information related to the transition, please contact Jolene Meidinger ([email]), Special Assistant dedicated to the transition efforts. Jolene will help ensure that we are both helpful and coordinated in our response to these inquiries.

With your help, NASA will set the example for an efficient, organized agency transition. Thank you for your continued hard work and support.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Agency transition directors can reinforce the message contained in memos from the agency's senior leadership with regular all-staff emails. Denise Carter, the transition director at the Department of Education, and Shannon Kenny, agency transition director at the Environmental Protection Agency, emailed staff close to important dates in the transition process to offer timely explanations of the latest developments. Additionally, several agencies updated their official websites with transition-related information and created internal websites that employees could access to learn more about the transition. The EPA's transition website contained contact information for members of the agency transition team and links to resources with more information. Internal websites might also contain an FAQ document that addresses issues such as:

- The transition process.
- Internal agency transition plans and deliverables.
- Guidelines for interacting with agency review teams and new appointees.

The Department of Defense created an official, public-facing website dedicated to the transition in 2020-21. The site contained basic details about the department and conveyed transition-specific information, requirements, and messages for departing, potential and incoming appointees. This was an excellent tool to demystify the department's role in transition for employees and external audiences alike. The archived site is available at https://web.archive.org/web/20210608142016/https:/2021dodtransition.defense.gov/.

MEETINGS

Meetings that allow agency staff to hear directly from their agency's transition team and ask questions should supplement written communications. Agencies have used a variety of different forums to reach internal audiences. Several examples are described below:

- **Senior Executive Service forums:** Convening senior executives from across a department to be briefed on the transition and provide messages to be shared with component agencies and offices.
- **Town halls and panel discussions:** Inviting employees to attend presentations on the transition process and the agency transition team's preparations and streaming and recording these sessions to offer maximum regional staff participation.
- **Appointees:** Holding meetings with outgoing political appointees to brief them on the agency transition team's preparation and solicit feedback to incorporate into deliverables for the incoming administration.

In addition, as discussed in Chapter 3, the increase of virtual meeting platforms available in 2020-21 meant agency transition teams could engage more easily with staff across their department without some of the traditional logistical challenges that occur when in person, especially for those located outside of Washington, D.C.

In 2016-17 the Department of the Treasury convened two panel discussions open to all employees. The first featured transition experts who briefed attendees on the process and provided valuable government-wide context. The second panel brought together Treasury career and political staff members who had experienced presidential transitions. They were able to provide a sense of what to expect after the election. At NASA, transition webinars were conducted for the benefit of regional employees.

The agency transition team may also consider enlisting colleagues to spread the word about transition and keeping different channels of communication open, including in person, virtual and hybrid forums. The team at the EPA, for example, empowered senior executives to address the 2016-17 transition on their own terms by creating a PowerPoint presentation and making it available to senior executives across the agency. EPA transition leaders Laura Gentile and Tim Torma were also able to insert periodic transition references and updates into all-staff emails sent by the administrator or the chief of staff. At other agencies during the 2016-17 cycle, such as the Department of Justice, components organized their own transition-themed meetings and other events that provided opportunities to share guidance from the core agency transition team, thereby amplifying the team's message. During the 2020-21 transition cycle, regular communication from career leaders helped establish and maintain transparency about how the Department of Justice was preparing for an election while avoiding any perception that transition planning was taking place behind closed doors.

GATHERING FEEDBACK

While meetings present opportunities for agency employees to be kept informed and in some instances weigh in on transition preparations, the agency transition team might also consider several other steps to answer questions and gather feedback:

- Set up an email account dedicated to receiving questions, comments and concerns about transition.
- Create an online entry form through which employees can provide feedback on the internal transition website.
- Host agency transition team office hours during which employees can discuss questions or ideas about the transition.

Additionally, the agency transition team might conduct periodic surveys of career SES or rank-and-file employees on transition preparations. The surveys might be designed to accomplish any number of objectives, including:

- Validating ideas contained in briefing materials.
- Identifying sources of expertise or gaps in topics for briefing materials.
- Flagging issues around transition preparedness, such as a high degree of uncertainty or anxiety in the agency.

Not all of the means described in this section may be suitable for every agency. However, agency transition teams should plan to obtain feedback and make themselves available to their colleagues. Meetings, webinars, websites and other methods will keep agency employees informed, but the benefits of these go beyond simple information sharing. Creating mechanisms for feedback and two-way conversation will help improve transition planning by allowing the agency transition team to keep apprised of feelings inside the agency. It will also bolster efforts to create a culture of engaged, energized employees.

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY

If a new president is elected, the new administration will likely want to make changes to agency websites to reflect their priorities and convey their message. It may be surprisingly hard from a technical standpoint for the incoming team to delete content and images of a former administration from an agency's website and social media presence. Transition teams should document their agency's public facing accounts and hand over information such as passwords to the incoming team at the appropriate time so they can be prepared to make changes they desire after the inauguration.

CONCLUSION

Effective communication is the critical element that should infuse each pillar of the agency transition team's planning. Sharing timely information, keeping key stakeholders informed and engaging in dialogue will support and strengthen the agency transition team's efforts. It also will allow the senior leadership team to engage the organization, and build employee and team morale while neutralizing rumors and minimizing disruption to the agency's mission.

Communicating

Helpful Tips

Communication plans are an integral component of every successful change management effort, and the best ones will normally do the following:

- ☐ Establish target outcomes and goals, particularly in terms of what you want employees to think, feel and do as a result of communications.
- ☐ Determine all communication channels and tools, including times, locations, technology platforms and contact methods for engaging employees.
- ☐ Define the audiences in terms of distinct stakeholder categories and assess their communication needs and expectations.
- ☐ Develop plans with timeliness and cadence for messaging each audience.
- ☐ Outline key messages for each target audience and tailored for circumstance.
- ☐ Establish clear measures of success and track progress via feedback loops.

Recognition

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The Partnership for Public Service has compiled this comprehensive guide of the activities required during the transition. The guide features detailed outlines of the transition practices, archival materials from past transitions and recommendations for a successful presidential transition.

For more resources and information, please visit the Center for Presidential Transition website **presidentialtransition.org**.

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