

POSITION DESCRIPTION

FEDERAL AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTOR

OVERVIEW	
Position Type	A senior career employee who is a member of the Senior Executive Service and designated by the head of the agency no later than May of an election year. ¹
Position Overview ²	The department level agency transition director is responsible for leading the planning and execution of presidential transition activities on behalf of their agency in accordance with the law. The director will establish clear roles and responsibilities for transition planning across the agency, work closely with internal and external stakeholders and serve as a member of the federal Agency Transition Directors’ Council. The director will uphold the integrity of the transition process, support the continuity of agency operations and implement best practices while preparing for the transfer of power to a new administration or continuation to a second term.
Reporting Structure	The transition director typically reports to the head of the agency and/or the deputy agency head, or to the assistant secretary for administration and management (or equivalent), in cases where the transition director is not also serving as the assistant secretary.
RESPONSIBILITIES	
Management Scope	The agency transition director usually manages a small team of about five to 10 core members who dedicate the most time to the transition. The number of staff will vary depending on the agency’s size and the complexity of its transition planning operations. Core team members typically include representatives from significant management or functional areas, such as the front office, budget, IT, information security, ethics, general counsel and human capital. The transition director may also coordinate activities and communication with transition representatives (and teams) from each agency component and subcomponent.
Primary Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead the planning and execution of the agency's transition activities in accordance with the Presidential Transition Act of 1963.• Represent the agency on matters related to presidential transition, implement senior leadership guidance and serve on the Agency Transition Directors Council.³• Build and manage the agency's transition team and workplan that includes identifying key roles, setting goals and timelines, ensuring clear communication among team members and establishing benchmarks for success.

¹ U.S.C. 102 note; Presidential Transition Act of 1963.

² In smaller agencies, the agency transition point of contact often leads transition efforts in addition to other formal roles.

³ A summary of responsibilities of the Agency Transition Directors Council is outlined in [OMB M-24-13](#).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with stakeholders across and outside the agency, including other federal agencies such as GSA, OPM, OMB, OGE and NARA, to align with and meet transition requirements. • Ensure information provided to candidate and president-elect transition teams complies with all applicable information sharing and privacy laws and policies. • Prepare and update succession plans for non-career positions to support continuity of operations during the transition (by Sept. 15), including where required, appointment orders and other delegations of authority. • Prepare and finalize briefing materials for a president-elect's transition team and incoming administration officials (by Nov. 1), and directly provide and/or coordinate in-person, hybrid or virtual briefings as required. <p><i>If there is a change in administration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the development of onboarding and orientation programs for new political appointees so they have the necessary information and resources from day one. • Lead preparations to swear in and onboard new appointees immediately following the inauguration, typically at noon on Inauguration Day. • Coordinate support for exiting political appointees of the outgoing administration, including but not limited to records management, ethics, post-employment restrictions and health benefits.
<p>Strategic Goals and Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain trust with agency leadership, Agency Transition Directors Council representatives and members of an incoming administration (<i>if applicable</i>) to lay the groundwork for effective working relationships that will advance the agency's mission. • Implement best practices that support the continuity of mission-critical programs and operations, and lead the agency's workforce during a period of uncertainty. • Build the agency's institutional knowledge of presidential transition planning by documenting processes, conducting an after-action review and making recommendations for future transitions.
REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES	
<p>Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior career official who is a member of the SES with extensive federal government leadership experience. • Sophisticated understanding of agency priorities, operations, stakeholders and governance. • Knowledge of presidential transition laws, policies and requirements. • First-hand experience in presidential transition planning and operations recommended. • Commitment to a non-partisan approach.
<p>Competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leadership and management skills with the ability to coordinate complex projects and teams in a dynamic and fast paced environment.

- Capacity to build trusted relationships with outgoing and incoming agency leaders, the White House and political appointees.
- Ability to work effectively under pressure with high levels of uncertainty.
- Excellent communication, stakeholder and risk management skills.
- Political acumen and ability to operate with discretion to anticipate and manage tensions with stakeholders, including political appointees.
- Strong problem-solving, project management and decision-making capabilities.

PAST AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTORS

Members of the 2020 Agency Transition Directors Council:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201018072131/https://www.gsa.gov/governmentwide-initiatives/presidential-transition-directory/agency-transition-directors-council-atdc>



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