

		Policy/Procedure Name:	Chief of Staff Selection and Succession Planning
Manual:	Governance	Number:	
Section:	Leadership	Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

Rationale

The position of Chief of Staff is a central element in the organization's success. Therefore, ensuring that the key functions are well understood by senior staff and volunteer leaders is important for safeguarding the organization against unplanned and unexpected change. This risk management strategy is also equally helpful in facilitating a smooth leadership transition when it is predictable and planned.

This document reflects MAHC's commitment to sustaining a healthy functioning organization including steps to be taken in the event of an emergency situation, a short-term temporary absence, a long-term temporary absence or a permanent unplanned absence.

Purpose

To ensure that the organization's leadership has adequate information and a strategy to effectively manage MAHC in the event the Chief of Staff is unable to fulfill their duties and in order to enable:

- Maintenance of continuity of leadership for the organization in the event of a temporary vacancy, resignation, retirement or termination of the Chief of Staff; and
- Leadership growth and development within the organization.

Scope

The policy pertains to all staff members and credentialed staff at Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC).

Policy

- The Board will ensure there is a documented succession plan in place in case the Chief of Staff position becomes vacant due to sudden vacancy (e.g. death, resignation, or termination) or planned vacancy (e.g. retirement).
- The succession plan will also specify the process of appointing an interim Chief of Staff should the Chief of Staff require an extended leave of absence from the Corporation due to personal, health, or other reasons. The Chief of Staff is expected to cultivate management talent at the senior ranks of the organization including one or more successors to his/her position through internal succession planning.

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Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

- In the event a Chief of Staff absence arises that is not specifically addressed in the Policy, the Board Chair shall be authorized to make decisions concerning the situation that has arisen and to report to the board regarding the actions taken
- The Chief of Staff will report on the succession plan annually, including the following:
 - Identification through this policy which member (or members) of the Medical Advisory Committee is recommended to fill the role of interim Chief of Staff should a planned or unplanned vacancy in the position occur.
 - The status of talent within the Medical Advisory Committee including the potential successors to the role of Chief of Staff.
 - Activities undertaken throughout the year to promote leadership development and succession planning.

Definitions

Unplanned/Planned Absence, Temporary Short Term:

- An unplanned/planned leave (vacation, sabbatical, illness, death) and it is expected that the Chief of Staff will return once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- Is 30 days or less.

Planned Absence, Temporary Medium-Term:

- A planned leave (vacation, sabbatical, etc.) and it is expected that the Chief of Staff will return once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- Is between 30 and 90 days.

Planned Absence, Temporary Longer-Term:

- A planned leave (parental leave, medical, etc.) and it is expected that the Chief of Staff will return once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- Is greater than 90 days.

Unplanned Absence, Temporary Long-Term:

- One that arises unexpectedly.
- Is 90 days or more.

Unplanned Absence, Temporary Medium-Term:

- A unplanned unexpected leave and it is expected that the Chief of Staff will return once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- Is between 30 and 90 days.

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Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

Manual:	Governance
Section:	Leadership
Pages:	1 of 9

Unplanned Absence, Permanent:

- One in which it is firmly determined that the Chief of Staff will not be returning to the position.

Acting Chief of Staff

- To be appointed in the event of a planned temporary short- or medium-term absence in accordance with Section 2.2 below.
- May be appointed for a temporary longer-term absence greater than 90 days that is approved by the Board of Directors.

Interim Chief of Staff

- Hiring of an Interim Chief of Staff will be considered by the Board of Directors in the event of an Unplanned Absence, Permanent as outlined in *Section 4 Unplanned Absence, Permanent Succession Plan*.

Temporary Incumbent

- Refers to either the Acting or Interim Chief of Staff.

1. Temporary Succession Plan

1.1 Plan Implementation

The Board of Directors authorizes the Board Chair to implement the terms of this temporary succession plan in the event of a planned or unplanned absence.

It is the responsibility of the Chief of Staff to inform the Board Chair of a planned temporary absence.

It is the responsibility of the temporary incumbent to immediately inform the Board Chair of an unplanned absence.

As soon as feasible, following notification of an unplanned absence, the Board Chair shall convene a Board meeting to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan, or to modify them if needed.

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Manual:	Governance	Number:	
Section:	Leadership	Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

1.2 Priority Functions of the Chief of Staff and Temporary Staffing Strategy

As per the Chief of Staff Direction and Position Description Policy, among the duties listed, the following are considered to be the key functions of the Chief of Staff and have a corresponding temporary staffing strategy:

Temporary Staffing Strategy - Key Chief of Staff functions

- Leadership and Vision - Board Chair with temporary incumbent.
- Board Administration and Support – Temporary incumbent with the Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff and Medical Affairs Coordinator.
- Medical Advisory Committee Chair and Clinical Issues – Temporary Incumbent Chief of Staff.

2. Planned Absence, Temporary Succession Plan

2.1 Temporary Staffing Strategy

For temporary planned or unplanned absences of 30 or fewer days the Chief of Staff will refer to the current annual *Chief of Staff Temporary Succession Plan (Appendix “A”)*

In the event of a temporary medium-term planned or unplanned absence (i.e. 30-90 days) the Board Chair shall determine if the Temporary Staffing Strategy outlined above is to be activated and is sufficient.

2.2 Appointing an Acting Chief of Staff

Based on the anticipated duration of the absence (i.e. greater than 90 days) and the accessibility of the current Chief of Staff, the Board Chair may recommend to the Board the appointment of an Interim or Acting Chief of Staff and/or continuing with the Temporary Staffing Strategy outlined above.

Annually, the Chief of Staff will provide a written report (Appendix “A”) to the Performance Management Committee that outlines the potential/recommended appointees to the position of an Acting Chief of Staff:

- In determining this recommendation, the Chief of Staff will take into consideration the competencies in alignment with the LEADS leadership capability framework as well as experience, tenure and readiness to serve in the capacity of an Acting Chief of Staff.

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Manual:	Governance	Number:	
Section:	Leadership	Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

- The final recommendation will move forward to the Board of Directors in an in-camera session.

2.3 Authority and Restrictions of the Acting Chief of Staff

The Acting Chief of Staff shall have full authority for day-to-day decision making and independent action as the permanent Chief of Staff.

2.4 Board Oversight and Support to the Acting Chief of Staff

The Board shall be alert to the special support needs of the Acting Chief of Staff in this temporary role. The Performance Management Committee shall convene monthly when an Acting Chief of Staff is appointed.

2.5 Communications Plan

Within 48 hours of the appointment of the Acting Chief of Staff, the Board Chair and the Acting Chief of Staff shall meet to confirm a communications plan drafted by Corporate Communications.

3. Unplanned Absence, Temporary Long-term

Procedures to be followed shall be the same as for a temporary absence (see section 2) with the following addition:

3.1 The individual appointed Acting Chief of Staff shall give immediate consideration, in consultation with the Board Chair, to temporarily filling the position left vacant by the Department Chief appointed as Acting Chief of Staff or reassigning priority responsibilities to other staff where help is needed. This is in recognition that, for a term of 90 days or more, it may not be reasonable to expect the Acting Chief of Staff to carry the duties of both positions.

3.2

3.3 The Performance Management Committee is responsible for gathering input from stakeholders and reviewing the performance of the Acting Chief of Staff. Feedback shall be collated and shared with the Acting Chief of Staff between 30 and 45 days. This process will be supported by the Vice President, People.

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Manual:	Governance	Number:	
Section:	Leadership	Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

4. Unplanned Absence, Permanent Succession Plan

While the decisions are being made as identified in the procedures below the Board of Directors will appoint an Acting Chief of Staff.

4.1 Procedures to be followed shall be the same as for a temporary absence with the following addition:

- a) The Board of Directors shall consider the need to hire an Interim Chief of Staff from outside the organization instead of appointing an Acting Chief of Staff. This decision shall be guided, in part, by the presence of internal candidates for the Chief of Staff position, the expected timeframe for hiring a permanent executive, and the management needs of the organization at the time of the transition.
- b) The Board of Directors shall appoint a Chief of Staff search committee to implement the organization's Succession Plan to transition to a new permanent Chief of Staff.

4.2 Hiring an Interim Chief of Staff

If an Interim Chief of Staff is hired, the Board Chair supported by the Vice President, People shall negotiate an independent contractor agreement with a defined scope of work. The scope of the agreement with an Interim Chief of Staff shall be determined based on an assessment of the organization's needs at the time of the leadership transition.

4.3 Responsibilities of the Interim Chief of Staff

An Interim Chief of Staff shall have full authority for day-to-day decision making and independent action as the regular permanent Chief of Staff.

4.4 Board Oversight and Support to the Interim Chief of Staff

The Interim Chief of Staff reports to the Board. The Board shall be alert to the special support needs of the Interim Chief of Staff in this temporary role. The Performance Management Committee shall convene monthly when an Interim Chief of Staff is in place.

The Performance Management Committee is responsible for gathering input from stakeholders and reviewing the performance of the Interim Chief of Staff. Feedback shall be collated and shared with the Interim Chief of Staff between 30 and 45 days. This process will be supported by the VP, People.

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Manual:	Governance	Number:	
Section:	Leadership	Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages:	1 of 9	Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

5. Compensation

The Acting Chief of Staff may receive additional remuneration for the acting period up to 6 months. This shall be determined by the Board Chair, in consultation with the Board, based on the duration of the assignment and available resources. If staff serve as Acting Chief of Staff for 6 months or more, a salary adjustment will be enacted.

6. Permanent Planned Vacancy

In accordance with the Credentialed Staff By-law, the Board shall appoint a Chief of Staff, and in making such appointment, shall consider any recommendation or input of the Medical Advisory Committee or of any other appropriate Credentialed Staff members.

- The Board shall appoint a selection committee for the purpose of recommending a successor candidate for the position to the Board. The selection committee shall be composed of:
 - the Chair, or their designate, who shall serve as committee chair;
 - the Vice Chair of the Board;
 - two members of the Medical Advisory Committee, selected by the Medical Advisory Committee, one of whom may be the President of the Medical Staff;
 - the Chief Nursing Executive;
 - the President and Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate; and
 - such other members as the Board may determine .
- The selection committee will be provided with appropriate resources to perform its mandate, including a search firm subject to Board approval.
- The selection committee will interview a short list of candidates and recommend to the Board their candidate of choice.
- Subject to annual confirmation by the Board, an appointment of the Chief of Staff shall be for a term of four years subject to earlier termination in accordance with applicable policies, contract provisions, and by-laws; however, where a planned vacancy succession plan is underway, the incumbent Chief of Staff shall hold office until a successor is appointed (subject to the Corporation's right to terminate earlier in accordance with applicable policies, contract provisions, and by-laws).
- In accordance with the Credentialed Staff By-law, the maximum number of consecutive years of service of the Chief of Staff shall be twelve years, provided, however, that following a break in continuous service of at least one year, the same person may be reappointed.
- An offer will be subject to submission of a declaration that the candidate has no conflict of interest consistent with organizational policy, in a form as required by the Board, and subject

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Manual: Governance		Number:	
Section: Leadership		Effective Date:	01 JUN 2006
Pages: 1 of 9		Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

to satisfactory results of a criminal reference check as determined in the sole discretion of the Board.

- An employment agreement will be executed by the Board Chair and the candidate accepting the position of Chief of Staff.
- The Board may at any time revoke or suspend the appointment of the Chief of Staff, subject to and in accordance with applicable policies, contract provisions, and by-laws.
- If a new Chief of Staff has not been appointed prior to the departure of the incumbent Chief of Staff, the individual approved by the Board to act as interim Chief of Staff during a sudden vacancy shall serve as interim Chief of Staff until a new Chief of Staff is appointed.

Cross Reference

Chief of Staff Direction and Position Description Policy

Notes

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Appendices

Appendix “A” – Temporary Chief of Staff Succession Plan Template

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Revision Date:	27 MAR 2025

Manual:	Governance
Section:	Leadership
Pages:	1 of 9

Appendix "A" - Temporary Chief of Staff Succession Plan

Short-Term (less than 30 days)

	Decision Maker	Acting Chief of Staff Appointee
Planned	Chief of Staff	To be determined annually by Chief of Staff
Unplanned	Board Chair	

Medium-Term (30 – 90 days)

	Decision Maker	Appointees
Planned or Unplanned	Board Chair	Acting Chief of Staff To be determined if the Temporary Staffing Strategy is sufficient/activated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Vision - Board Chair with temporary incumbent. • Board Administration and Support – Temporary incumbent with the Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff and Medical Affairs Coordinator. • Medical Advisory Committee Chair and Clinical Issues – Acting Chief of Staff.

Longer-Term (greater than 90 days)

	Decision Maker	Recommended Appointee
Planned or Unplanned	Board Chair to recommend to Board of Directors appointment of Acting or Interim Chief of Staff	<i>To be completed and presented separate from policy annually to the Performance Management Committee annually for recommendation in-camera to the Board of Directors</i>

The approved Temporary Chief of Staff Succession Plan shall be posted annually on the [Education and Resources page of the Board portal](#).

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