

**FRESNO COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION (FCERA)  
SUCCESSION PLAN POLICY**

**I. Purpose**

- 1) This policy establishes succession plan procedures for temporary and permanent absences and guidelines with respect to the executive management positions in the Retirement Office. While leadership change is inevitable in every organization, proper planning and policy development is fundamental to the sustenance of a healthy, thriving organization. Proper planning and policy development regarding succession issues can help limit the problems of leadership transition and provide a degree of stability.
- 2) It is the policy of the FCERA to comply with Government Code Sections 31522.1, 31522.2, and 31522.6, which, among other things, grants the Board the sole responsibility to hire and assess the permanent leadership needs of FCERA including the appointment of a Retirement Administrator who is a good fit for FCERA's mission, vision, values, goals and objectives and who has the necessary skills to lead the organization.
- 3) The Board also authorizes administrative, investment, technical, and clerical personnel as is required to accomplish the necessary work of the Board and may contract with a third-party to temporarily assume administration of FCERA, with the goal of resuming employed administration as soon as practical.
- 4) In this regard, the Board hereby establishes these appropriate guidelines to ensure that FCERA's operations are continued without interruption on a short and long-term basis. The Board recognizes that succession planning within FCERA will be consistent with County Personnel Rules, and State and Federal laws (e.g. CERL and the Brown Act requirements).

**II. Definitions**

- 1) Short-Term Absence: A short-term absence is one in which it is expected that the absent staff member will return to duty, within six (6) weeks or less, once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- 2) Mid-Term Absence: A mid-term absence is one in which it is expected that the absent staff member will return to duty, between seven to twelve (7-12) weeks, once the events precipitating the absence are resolved.
- 3) Long-term Absence: A long-term absence is thirteen (13) consecutive weeks or more, and it is anticipated that the absent staff member will be returning to duty under the time frames, rights and responsibilities outlined in the County personnel rules and applicable State and Federal laws.
- 4) Permanent Vacancy: A permanent vacancy is when the absent staff member will not be returning to duty.

- 5) Assigned: The “Assigned” capacity may be used for short-term, mid-term and long-term absences.
- 6) Acting: The “Acting” capacity and title may be used for mid-term and long-term absences.
- 7) Interim: The “Interim” capacity and title would be used for a permanent vacancy while a search is undertaken to permanently hire for the position.

### **III. Guidelines**

#### **1) Priority Functions**

- a) The Retirement Administrator shall be responsible for managing succession for key staff positions, including Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, and Executive Assistant, and shall report to the Board as appropriate.
- b) In order to help ensure continuity in the position of Retirement Administrator, the Board has established the positions of Assistant Retirement Administrator and Investment Officer. Therefore, the Assistant Retirement Administrator shall be familiar with all aspects of the administration of FCERA including accounting, benefit administration, stakeholder relations, and the technology used by FCERA. The Investment Officer shall be familiar with all aspects of FCERA’s investment program.

#### **2) Applicability**

- a) This policy applies to the positions of Retirement Administrator, Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, and Executive Assistant.

#### **3) Succession plan in the event of a Temporary Absence**

##### **a) Short-Term Staffing Strategy**

- i) In the event of a vacancy of an applicable position, the Retirement Administrator may consider the following. In the event of the incapacity of the Retirement Administrator, the Board may consider the following for the Retirement Administrator’s position:
  - 1) Temporarily assigning staff within the office.
  - 2) Temporarily subcontracting some of the organizational functions to a trained consultant or other organization(s).
- ii) This strategy shall be initiated, as directed by the Retirement Administrator, for absences of six (6) weeks or less.

b) Mid-Term Staffing Strategy

- i) For mid-term absences of the Retirement Administrator between seven to twelve (7-12) weeks, and considering accessibility, the Retirement Board may appoint an Acting Retirement Administrator, or continue to implement the Short-Term Staffing Strategy.
- ii) For mid-term absences of either the Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, or Executive Assistant between seven to twelve (7-12) weeks, the Retirement Administrator may appoint an acting staff position, or continue to implement the Short-Term Staffing Strategy.

c) Succession plan in the event of a Long-term Absence

- i) In addition to the procedures and conditions to be followed for the short-term and mid-term staffing strategies, and in recognition that, for a term of thirteen (13) consecutive weeks or more, it may be unreasonable to expect any acting staff person to successfully carry out the duties of both the acting and original position, the Retirement Board shall give immediate consideration to the Retirement Administrator or Acting Retirement Administrator to also:
  - 1) Fill an additional position through the submission of an extra help position request to County Administrators Office, and/or
  - 2) Temporarily reassign priority responsibilities to other staff.

d) Preferential Assignees or Appointees

- i) Employees must meet the minimum qualifications of the temporary assignment or appointment.
- ii) The first preference to be temporarily assigned or appointed Acting Retirement Administrator is the Assistant Retirement Administrator.
- iii) The second preference to be temporarily assigned or appointed Acting Retirement Administrator is the Retirement Benefits Manager.
- iv) The preferred temporary assignee or appointee to the position of Assistant Retirement Administrator is the Retirement Benefits Manager.
- v) The preferred temporary assignee or appointee to the position of Investment Officer is the Supervising Accountant.
- vi) The preferred temporary assignee or appointee to the position of Executive Assistant is the Administrative Assistant.

- 4) Succession plan in the event of a Permanent Vacancy
  - a) Procedures for the permanent absence of the Retirement Administrator
    - i) In addition to the procedures and conditions to be followed for the Short-Term Staffing Strategies, the Retirement Board shall consider the need to contract for an Interim Retirement Administrator from outside the organization instead of appointing an Acting Retirement Administrator from a member of staff. This decision shall be guided, in part, by internal candidates for the Retirement Administrator position, the expected period for hiring a permanent Administrator and the management needs of the organization at the time of the transition.
    - ii) If an Interim Retirement Administrator is selected, the Board Chair and Board Counsel shall negotiate an agreement with a clear and defined scope of work.
    - iii) The scope of the agreement with an Interim Retirement Administrator shall be determined based on an assessment of the organizations needs at the time of the leadership transition.
    - iv) The Retirement Board shall be alert to the special support needs of the Interim Retirement Administrator in this temporary role and the Board Chair will meet at least once per month with the Interim Retirement Administrator.
  - b) Procedures for the permanent vacancy of all other applicable positions.
    - i) In general, an Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator will not make a permanent selection of a candidate for executive management positions covered by this policy to allow the permanent Retirement Administrator to make the selection of positions that work closely with that permanent Retirement Administrator.
    - ii) In certain instances when the Retirement Administrator position may be temporarily filled for an extended period of time, and leaving vacancies in executive management positions would create a hardship for the organization, the Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator may, with Board approval, open a recruitment and fill the positions of the Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, or Executive Assistant.
- 5) Salary Considerations
  - a) Under the Short-Term Staffing Strategy, filled by a temporarily assigned member of staff, there shall be no salary adjustment.
  - b) Under an Acting or Interim staff position, filled by an appointed member of staff, the temporarily appointed member shall be paid as determined by County Human Resources upon the submission of a "Request for Special Salary Upgrade".

- c) Under a Staffing Strategy, filled by a temporarily assigned consultant or other organization(s), compensation shall be determined by negotiated contract.

6) Powers and Duties of Acting or Interim Positions

- a) An Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator shall have the powers and duties of the Retirement Administrator and shall report and be accountable to the Retirement Board in a manner consistent with a permanent Retirement Administrator.
- b) All other acting staff positions shall have the powers and duties of the position to which was appointed and shall report and be accountable to the Retirement Administrator, or Acting Retirement Administrator, in a manner consistent with an individual serving in a permanent capacity for that position.

7) Communication Plan

- a) Upon appointment of an Assigned, Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator, the Board Chair shall announce FCERA's temporary appointment to all FCERA staff and the County.
- b) If the Assigned, Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator is a contractor or a member of staff not already granted signature authority, the Retirement Board shall adopt a temporary signature authority resolution and notify vendors as necessary to conduct the business of FCERA, and upon the return or replacement of the Retirement Administrator, the Retirement Board shall rescind the temporary signature authority resolution.
- c) Upon appointment of all other Assigned, Acting or Interim staff positions, the Retirement Administrator shall announce the temporary appointment, or appointments, to the Board, all FCERA staff, and the Sponsors.

8) Retirement Administrator Recruitment

- a) The Personnel Committee shall be the body responsible for the oversight of the selection process for the position of Retirement Administrator and will oversee the search process.
- b) The Personnel Committee shall utilize an informal recruitment/information Request for Quotations ("RFQ") process, as provided under Section VI.2. of FCERA's Procurement Policy, to contract with a recruitment consultant. Staff and Board Counsel will assist the Personnel Committee through the procurement process to select the recruitment consultant. Recruitment consultants responding to the RFQ shall be required to include in their responses the method, plan and timeframe that will be utilized in the search, along with a detailed cost quote.

- c) The Personnel Committee Chair, appropriate staff and Board Counsel shall work with County Human Resources to ensure that the recruitment is compliant with Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Laws and County personnel rules and guidelines.
  - d) The consultant will work with the Personnel Committee and Board to hire a replacement for the Retirement Administrator position. Legal counsel and staff will assist the Personnel Committee, Board and the selected consultant in negotiations, including creating a post offer contract that complies with County personnel rules.
  - e) To establish a high degree of transparency in the recruitment process, Board Members cannot be considered for employment as Retirement Administrator at FCERA unless they have been off the Retirement Board for at least one year.
  - f) Any recruitment brochure related to the recruitment and selection process to fill the position of Retirement Administrator must be approved by the Board prior to being issued to the public.
  - g) Any offer of employment must be approved by the Board.
- 9) Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, Executive Assistant Recruitment
- a) The Retirement Administrator in his or her sole discretion, or Acting or Interim Retirement Administrator with Board approval, shall be responsible for the oversight of the selection process for the position of Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, and Executive Assistant.
    - i) For the hiring of the Assistant Retirement Administrator, a hiring/recruitment consultant may, at the Retirement Administrator's discretion, be procured in compliance with the FCERA Procurement Policy ..
    - ii) If procured, the consultant will work with the Retirement Administrator or Acting Retirement Administrator to hire a replacement for the Assistant Retirement Administrator position.
  - b) The Retirement Administrator or Acting Retirement Administrator shall work with County Human Resources to ensure that the recruitment is compliant with Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Laws and County personnel rules.
  - c) The Retirement Administrator or Acting Retirement Administrator, who will be responsible for the final ranking and selection of the position of Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer or Executive Assistant has the option to obtain the assistance of either the Personnel Committee or an Ad Hoc Committee, if so formed, to assist in the interview process and to provide input.

- d) To establish a high degree of transparency in the recruitment process and to comply with all conflict-of-interest rules and regulations, Board Members cannot be considered for employment as Assistant Retirement Administrator or Investment Officer at FCERA unless they have been off the Retirement Board for at least one year.

10) Cross Training Plan

- a) The Retirement Administrator shall exercise best efforts to train staff for each of the key functions of the Retirement Administrator, Assistant Retirement Administrator, Investment Officer, and Executive Assistant and to ensure that procedures are in place to achieve the objectives of this policy.
- b) All staff shall exercise best efforts to maintain desk procedures.

**IV. Policy Review**

- 1) This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or as needed.

**V. Policy History**

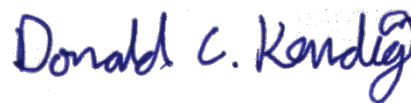
- 1) This policy was adopted on June 3, 2020.

**VI. Secretary's Certificate**

I, Donald Kendig, the duly appointed Secretary of the Fresno County Employees' Retirement Association, hereby certify the adoption of this Policy.

June 3, 2020

**Date of Action:**



**By: Retirement Administrator**