Transition Overview

2016 Presidential Transition

August 1, 2016

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the 2016 Presidential transition process. It outlines the major transition activities and governance structure in order to provide a quick guide of the who, what, and when of the major milestones that occur during a Presidential transition. While this document offers a broad overview, the designated transition lead within each agency is the appropriate contact for agency-specific transition questions.

The peaceful transfer of power has been a hallmark of American democracy for more than 200 years. Presidential transitions are a time of significant change across the Federal government. President Barack Obama was grateful for the seriousness and thoroughness with which the George W. Bush Administration approached the transition process in 2008. Like his predecessor, President Obama is committed to leaving the federal government in the best possible stead for his successor.

As we prepare for the upcoming Presidential transition we know that, while many Federal employees have experienced one or more Presidential transitions, it will be the first transition for a number of Federal employees. Regardless of whether this transition is your first one or one of many, we hope this overview will help all Federal employees – both career and appointees – better understand and engage in this important process. Federal employees play a critical role in the process, and we look forward to working collaboratively across the Administration to ensure a smooth Presidential transition.

2016 Transition Activities

The 2016 Presidential transition process consists of three phases, each comprised of major activities:

The activities described below are crucial to the successful transfer of power between the incoming and outgoing Administrations. (See also Appendix 1 for a timeline of these activities)

Phase 1: Pre-Election

May 6, 2016: Transition Councils Formally Established

In May, the President issued an Executive Order that took the following steps to provide governance for the transition:

- Created the **White House Transition Coordinating Council (WHTCC)**, which is chaired by the Chief of Staff to the President and comprised largely of senior White House officials, to oversee the overall transition effort (see Appendix 2 for council membership);
- Created the **Agency Transition Directors Council (ATDC)**, which is co-chaired by the Federal Transition Coordinator at the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and the Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and comprised of senior career officials from twenty-one agencies, to manage day-to-day agency transition activities (see Appendix 3 for council membership); and
- Directs the ATDC to consult on transition-related issues with the existing **President's Management Council (PMC)**, which is chaired by the OMB Deputy Director for Management and comprised of Deputy Secretaries from large agencies, to maintain consistent engagement by senior agency leadership.

Working in close coordination, these three councils provide guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and other information relating to the Presidential transition. The councils also oversee the preparation of career employees who are designated to fill non-career positions on an interim basis during a Presidential transition, and assist in the off-boarding of political appointees concluding their service and the onboarding of political appointees joining service to work for the President-elect. In addition to these three councils, OMB and GSA are convening regular calls and meetings with other Federal agencies, boards and commissions throughout the government so that they receive guidance for their respective transition preparations.

May 6, 2016: Agency Transition Leads Designated

In May, the head of each agency also designate senior career employees from the agency to serve on the ATDC. The ATDC meets on a monthly basis to share best practices and discuss issues. In addition, agencies also designated senior career leadership for each

agency major component and subcomponent to implement activities relating to the Presidential transition. Staff within each agency meets on an as-needed basis to prepare their agencies. As mentioned above, OMB and GSA are convening regular calls and meetings with Federal agencies, boards and commissions not represented on the ATDC so that they receive guidance for their respective transition preparations.

August 1, 2016: Eligible Candidates Offered Transition Services and Facilities

Following the nominating conventions in late July, the transition teams of each eligible Presidential candidate are offered the use of facilities and related services to prepare for the coming change in government. These teams focus on the development of their candidate's policy agenda and personnel so that he or she is ready to govern if elected.

September 15, 2016: Acting Officers Identified for Vacant Non-Career Positions

In preparation for potential gaps between the exit and onboarding of senior political appointees between Administrations, agency heads are required to identify qualified career employees to serve in critical non-career positions in an acting capacity if a position becomes vacant. These "Acting Officers" will be identified by September 15.

November 1, 2016: Agency Briefing Materials Finalized

In line with guidance from the ATDC agencies prepare briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition for Agency Review Teams (also known as Agency Landing Teams), who will review briefing materials and meet with internal agency transition teams to better understand each agency and its current state of affairs. Briefing materials are prepared for two audiences: Agency Review Teams and incoming political appointees following the Inauguration. Agency Review Teams (see below) begin arriving at agencies after the election and are responsible for gathering information about the structure, function, and pressing issues facing federal agencies. Accordingly, these materials include, but are not limited to, an agency's mission, vision and strategic goals; organizational chart; budget; human capital overview; current Presidential appointees; and an overview of priority issues facing the organization.

Phase 2: Post-Election

November 9, 2016: President-elect and Vice-President-elect Offered Support

Following the election on November 8, the Administration (through GSA) will offer services and facilities to the President-elect and Vice-President-elect as they prepare to assume their duties. Post-election support will begin immediately following the GSA Administrator's ascertainment of the apparent successful candidates for the Office of President and Vice-President. The offices for the President-elect's transition will be located at GSA headquarters.

November 9, 2016: Agency Review Teams Begin Arriving at Agencies

Soon after the election, Agency Review Teams will be deployed by the President-elect to federal agencies. As mentioned above, the teams review briefing materials and meet with

internal agency transition teams to better understand each agency and its current state of affairs. In 2008, the Obama-Biden Transition team had approximately 500 agency review team members across more than 60 agencies and Executive Office of the President (EOP) components.

November 9, 2016: Selection of Incoming Presidential Appointees Begins

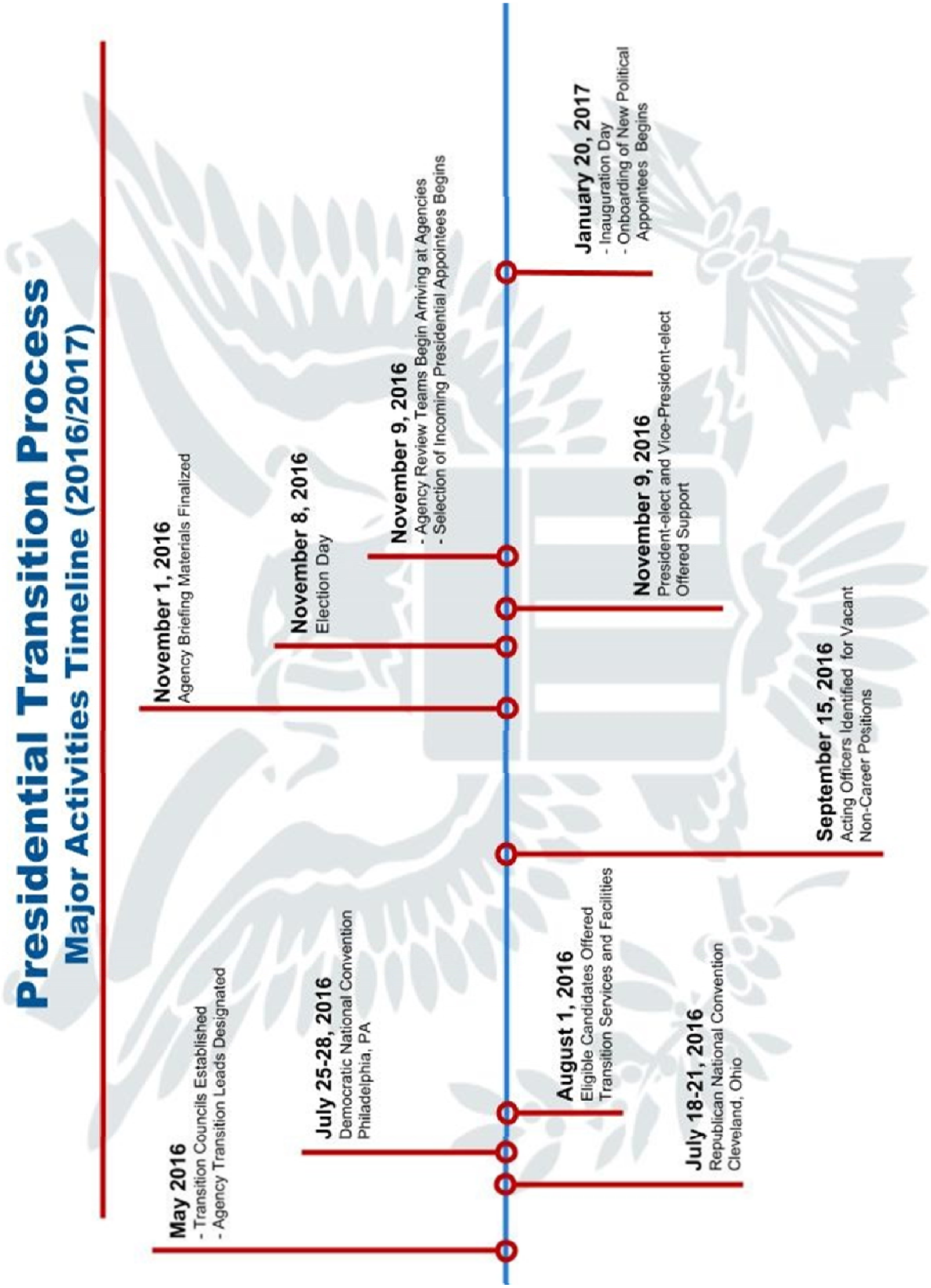
Following the election, the incoming Administration begins identifying, selecting, and vetting candidates for approximately 4,100 Presidential appointments. In some cases, an eligible candidate may begin identifying and vetting of potential appointees during the pre-election phase. Announcements of candidates for key positions often occur between the election and Inauguration. Nominations of individuals for Senate-confirmed appointments, confirmation of nominees, and appointments to positions not requiring Senate confirmation begin on Inauguration Day and continue through the post-Inauguration phase. Presidential appointments may involve background, security, and financial disclosure reviews conducted by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Department of Justice (DOJ), and the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) prior to nomination. Agency Reviews and information from OPM plays a key role in understanding, from a human capital perspective, the skills, number, and types of Presidential appointments that need to be made.

Phase 3: Post-Inauguration

January 20, 2017: Inauguration & Onboarding of New Political Appointees Begins

Inauguration Day marks the official end of the current Administration. In past transitions, the President has requested all non-termed political appointees to submit in advance a letter of resignation effective upon the swearing-in of the new President. On this day, agencies will begin onboarding new appointees and will continue to do so over the course of 2017. Onboarding includes appointee orientation activities, such as briefings and workshops, which are funded through the GSA. On January 20, 2009, the Obama Administration had seven Senate-confirmed appointees ready to begin work.

Appendix 1: Presidential Transition Process



Appendix 2: 2016 White House Transition Coordinating Council Members

Chair

Denis McDonough
Chief of Staff to the President

Vice Chair

Anita Breckenridge
Assistant to the President & Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations

Council Members

Kristie Canegallo
Assistant to the President &
Deputy Chief of Staff for Implementation

Susan Rice
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

Lisa Monaco
Assistant to the President for
Homeland Security and Counterterrorism

Jeff Zients
Assistant to the President for Economic Policy &
Director of the National Economic Council

W. Neil Eggleston
Counsel to the President

Shaun Donovan
Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Rudy Mehrbani
Assistant to the President for
Presidential Personnel

Denise Turner Roth
Administrator of General Services

James Clapper
Director of National Intelligence

Timothy O. Horne
Federal Transition Coordinator

Appendix 3: 2016 Agency Transition Directors Council Members

Co-Chairpersons

Andrew Mayock
Senior Advisor
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Timothy O. Horne
Federal Transition Coordinator
U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

Council Members

Beverly Ortega Babers
U.S. Department of the Treasury (DOT)

Barbara E. Carson
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

Denise Carter
U.S. Department of Education (ED)

Thomas Cremins
National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA)

Shelley K. Finlayson
U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE)

John Gentile
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

Henry Hensley
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

Edward C. Hugler
U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Lana Hurdle
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Edward Keable
U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)

Kristie A. Kenney
U.S. Department of State (DOS)

Shannon Kenny
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Ingrid Kolb
U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Lee Lofthus
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)

Vincent Micone
U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Richard Christian (Chris) Naylor
National Archives & Records Administration (NARA)

Dennis Alvord
U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)

Michael Rhodes
U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)

Jozetta Robinson
U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Kevin Shea
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Robert (Bob) D. Snyder
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Council Staff

Asma Mirza
Special Assistant
OMB

Rayden Llano
White House Fellow
OMB

Jamise Harper
Chief of Staff to the FTC
GSA

Nathan Kreoger
Special Assistant
GSA

Appendix 4: Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who should I contact with any questions pertaining to the Presidential transition?**

   You should contact your manager or your agency's designated transition point of contact with any questions regarding the transition (see Appendix 3). If you are unable to identify your point of contact, please email presidentialtransitionteam@gsa.gov.

2. **What are the roles and responsibilities of the White House Transition Coordinating Council (WHTCC)? Who sits on the council?**

   The WHTCC supports the Presidential transition by providing guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials. The WHTCC also facilitates communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President, and it prepares and hosts interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises. WHTCC members include:

   - Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff (Chair)
   - Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (Vice Chair)
   - Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Implementation
   - Counsel to the President
   - Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel
   - Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
   - Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism
   - Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director, National Economic Council
   - Director of National Intelligence
   - Director of the Office of Management and Budget
   - Administrator of General Services
   - Federal Transition Coordinator
   - A Transition Representative for each Eligible Candidate (Advisory Capacity)

3. **What are the roles and responsibilities of the Agency Transition Directors Council? Who sits on the council?**

   The ATDC's responsibilities include coordinating transition activities among the Executive Office of the President, agencies, and the transition team of eligible candidates and the President-elect and Vice-President-elect; providing guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition; and ensuring agencies adequately prepare career employees who are designated to fill non-career positions during a Presidential transition. ATDC members include:

   - OMB Deputy Director for Management (Co-Chair)
   - Federal Transition Coordinator (Co-Chair)

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Justice
- Department of Labor
- Department of State
- Department of Transportation
- Department of the Treasury
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Small Business Administration
- Office of Personnel Management
- Office of Government Ethics
- National Archives and Records Administration
- A Transition Representative for each Eligible Candidate (Advisory Capacity)

4. How will responsibility for transition activities be divided between the WHTCC, the ATDC and the PMC?

The WHTCC will provide overall oversight and guidance on the Presidential transition process to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator. The ATDC, in concert with the PMC, will coordinate transition activities across large agencies drawing upon WHTCC guidance.

5. My agency is not represented on the ATDC. How will we be kept informed of and engage in the Presidential transition process?

To ensure a whole of government approach, OMB's Deputy Director for Management and the Federal Transition Coordinator will regularly convene the transition directors of agencies that are not covered by the ATDC to provide updates on the transition process.

6. Is there guidance to assist Federal agencies in developing transition related briefing materials for the incoming Administration?

In the spirit of approaching the Presidential transition process through a demand-driven perspective that is based on prior experience and input from the eligible

candidates' transition representatives, the current Administration will provide broad guidance to assist agencies in developing briefing materials for the incoming Administration that is useful and enables the next team to quickly and smoothly begin their new roles.

7. Where can I find additional resources related to the Presidential transition?

For additional information on the Presidential transition, please visit the Presidential Transition Directory at https://presidentialtransition.usa.gov/.