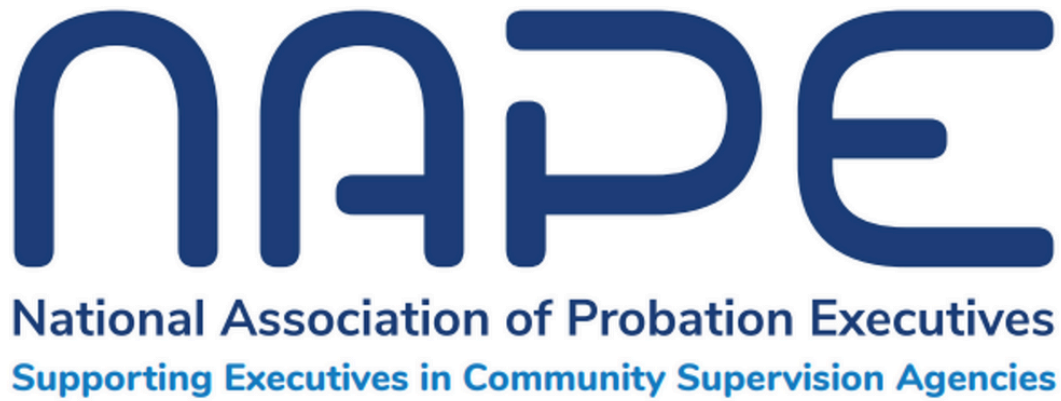




Be Ready for Change - whether planned or unexpected

Organizational change can happen at any time. When executives have a transition plan in place, they should be ready for change most every time.



Plan for Smooth Transitions

As an executive, building and mentoring a team of professionals is critical to the routine operations of an organization. Conducting a regular assessment of existing positions, duties, responsibilities, and expectations, as well as creating a strategic workforce plan for your agency can help executives plan for and deliver smooth transitions when change occurs.

A strategic workforce plan analyzes and identifies current and future staffing needs while assessing gaps to ensure the following criteria (commonly referred to as the “Rs” or “Rights” of strategic planning) are considered to steer your team in the “right” direction:

- Goals
- People
- Structure
- Skills
- Size
- Time
- Place
- Cost

Dale Carnegie once said, “An hour of planning can save you ten hours of doing.” When executives take the time to regularly and strategically plan for transitions, they are better able to ensure swift, smooth, and relatively seamless organizational change—whether the change is planned or unexpected.

Related Reading:

[United States Office of Personnel Management: Planning a Strategic Approach](#)

[Forbes: 11 Strategies for Successfully Transitioning Responsibilities to New Hires](#)



Marlon Yarber

Chief Probation Officer
Sacramento County, California

"I cannot overemphasize the importance of self-assessment and self-awareness. This includes not only technical skills and abilities but also physical health and well-being, family support and capacity, and the ability to lead during difficult situations such as financial crises or the loss of an officer."

- Marlon Yarber

Taking on a New Role

Leadership transitions are often challenging. Studies indicate that we succeed roughly 50% of the time, which means that the outcome can be a matter of chance. Although there is a lot of literature on this topic, I would like to share a few useful tips that I have found helpful:

- Listen, take action, and advance the department's mission.
- Develop and communicate your vision, especially when it's necessary to chart a new course.

- Evaluate your team and surround yourself with trustworthy individuals, not just those who look, act, or think the same way you do.

Before the transition, I encourage everyone to do a few things. As someone who has both joined a new organization as a second-in-command and later ascended to Chief, I cannot overemphasize the importance of self-assessment and self-awareness. This includes not only technical skills and abilities but also physical health and well-being, family support and capacity, and the ability to lead during difficult situations such as financial crises or the loss of an officer. Ask yourself if you are ready, and if not, please prepare yourself as the job's demands can be challenging and come at you quickly.



Retirements and Appointments

It isn't always easy to predict when an employee may leave your organization. The reasons employees leave vary; however, there are a few key milestones that can help an executive prepare for employment transitions such as retirement and appointments.

Retirement

In the public sector, years of service are often a predictive factor for retirement. For many in public safety, the magic number is 20 years. While not every team member may choose to retire at the 20-year mark, keeping those milestone years in mind when creating a strategic workforce plan is critical because long-term employees don't just leave a vacancy, they take with them a lot of institutional knowledge.

Creating a mentor program, where new or mid-career employees shadow seasoned employees, is one way to ensure institutional knowledge is transferred and maintained.

Another consideration is the time of year. Many people choose to retire in the first month or quarter of a new calendar year because they're more likely to benefit from a cost-of-living increase, pension credits/payouts, and because it may lower their tax bracket. With this in mind, and once a retirement date is confirmed, it's wise to begin recruiting in November or December.

Appointments

While appointments can happen at any time, because anyone who is appointed serves at the will of their elected official, most appointments are driven by election timelines. Many probation executives may be appointed and are, therefore, well aware of the interim status of their role.

Recognizing and planning for a change in appointed employees to ensure agency roles and responsibilities are met is essential to a smooth transition when elected officials change or change their mind about their appointees.

Succession planning, similar to strategic workforce planning, is one way executives can prepare for a smooth transition whether an employee retires or an appointment changes.

Related Reading:

[National Institutes of Health: Succession Planning: A Step-by-Step Guide](#)

[Forbes: A Comprehensive Guide to the Leadership Succession Planning Process](#)

[Harvard Business Review: The High Cost of Poor Succession Planning](#)

Save the Date

Empowering Leadership in Community Corrections Webinar

April 23, 2024

11:00 am EST

The Florida Department of Corrections, in partnership with the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE), and the Florida Association of Community Corrections (FACC), is excited to present a 90-minute webinar on "Empowering Leadership in Community Corrections: Strategies for Success and Well-being."

Presenters:

- Regional Director Justine Patterson, Florida Department of Corrections
- Director Greg Dillon, Brazoria County
- Circuit Administrator Jennifer Whipple, Florida Department of Corrections

Join us as we dive into effective leadership techniques in the field of community corrections. This collaborative webinar brings together expertise from the Florida Department of Corrections, NAPE, and FACC to explore:

- Leadership strategies in Community Corrections
- Leadership development initiatives and professional growth opportunities
- How to overcome burnout as a Community Corrections Leader

Don't miss this invaluable opportunity to learn from industry leaders and engage in meaningful discussions on advancing community corrections leadership.

Registration information will be forthcoming.

We invite members to share information about NAPE with other community supervision executives to help expand our network and strengthen our opportunities, data, and expertise. Affordable annual NAPE membership options are available and can be purchased/renewed at napehome.org

- Individual (recurring discount available)
- Retired
- Organizational
- Corporate

NAPE is dedicated to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness in the field of community corrections by creating a national network for executives, bringing about positive change in the field, and making available a pool of experts in community corrections management, program development, training, and research.

Learn more: napehome.org

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