

Texas Orthopaedic Association
Executive Director Removal/Selection/Succession Plan

Preamble: To avoid confusion and disruption of Texas Orthopaedic Association (TOA) activities, it is prudent to have a removal, selection and succession plan in place in the event of the untimely death or involuntary or voluntary departure of TOA's Executive Director. Absent a plan, many volunteer-led trade associations are stymied and confused and ultimately scramble chaotically in such circumstances to determine an appropriate course of action. Precise procedures will more likely lead to the selection of a qualified successor and provide time for volunteers to carefully consider the skills and attributes of candidates matched with the objectives of the TOA.

This document lays out specific recommendations for the selection of the TOA Executive Director if such office becomes vacated. It will become a permanent part of the official personnel policies and procedures of the TOA once approved by the Executive Council, and reviewed and updated annually if needed.

Voluntary Retirement or Resignation of Executive Director

The Executive Director serves at the pleasure of the TOA board of directors. The TOA Executive Council should reasonably expect that upon the voluntary election of the Executive Director to retire or resign his/her position, the Executive Director shall:

1. Give notice to the TOA Executive Officers (president, president-elect, secretary and treasurer) preferably six months, but at least two months prior to such retirement.
2. Within one week after the announcement is made, the President shall inform the full Executive Council of the intentions of the Executive Director.
3. The President shall seek Executive Council approval for the TOA search committee (see #4 below). The search committee shall be empowered to engage a third-party search firm to assist in identifying candidates if it so chooses. The Executive Council will approve a budget for the search.
4. The President shall chair and name a search committee comprised of five members of the Executive Council (including him or herself) and two Past Presidents for a total of seven members. The Executive Director and the General Counsel shall be ex-officio members of the committee.
5. The TOA Executive Director will work with the search committee to identify internal or external candidates (and the search firm if one is engaged) with the intent to have a successor candidate selected and on the job no later than two months from the voluntary retirement of the Executive Director.
6. The search committee shall interview candidates and be empowered to negotiate salary and benefits and other contractual terms with the candidate and make final recommendations on the selection of an individual to the Executive Council for approval.
7. The retiring Executive Director would be allowed to serve out the last two months of his/her existing contract either as Acting Executive Director or as a consultant as determined by the TOA Executive Council.

Involuntary Retirement, Disability or Death of Executive Director

Should the TOA Executive Council find just cause to remove the TOA Executive Director, the following procedure is recommended:

1. The President of TOA should review the terms and permissible “causes” of termination found within the Executive Director’s employment contract, and consult with the TOA General Counsel to verify just cause.
 - a. The President should advise the TOA Executive Council of his/her findings and seek approval of the Executive Council to proceed consistent with the terms of the contract.
 - b. The President has the responsibility of notifying the Executive Director of the Executive Council’s decision.
 - c. The President has the responsibility of notifying the staff and independent contractors of the Executive Council’s decision.
2. The President shall select an Interim Executive Director. Ideally, this position should be filled by a paid individual with professional association management experience, but may be filled by a volunteer. (See attached resources.)
3. Once the Executive Council of TOA has voted to proceed with termination, the President shall name and seek Executive Council approval for the TOA search committee (see #4 below).
4. The President shall chair and name a search committee comprised of five members of the Executive Council (including him or herself) and two Past Presidents for a total of seven members. The General Counsel shall be an ex-officio member of the committee.
5. The TOA search committee shall meet in person or by telephone within two weeks of removal of the Executive Director to set the parameters and timetable for the search. The search committee shall be empowered to determine and engage a third-party search firm to assist them in identifying qualified candidates if it so chooses. The Executive Council will approve a budget for the search.
6. The search committee shall interview candidates and be empowered to negotiate salary and benefits and other contractual terms with the candidate and make final recommendations on the selection of an individual to the TOA Executive Council for approval.

Resources

Texas Society of Association Executives (recommended)

- <http://www.tsae.org/>
- TSAE has a program to place interim executive directors, usually retired CEOs.
- Career Center for job posting.

Bob Harris, CAE

- <http://www.rhcae.com/>
- Website provides excellent sample policies, best practices and job descriptions.