POLICY: A change in executive leadership is inevitable for all organizations and can be a very challenging time. Therefore, it is the policy of the Community Health Center (CHC) to be prepared for an eventual permanent change in leadership – either planned or unplanned – to insure the stability and accountability of the organization until such time as new permanent leadership is identified. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for implementing this policy and its related procedures.

It is also the policy of the board to assess the permanent leadership needs of the organization to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who is a good fit for the organization’s mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives; who has the necessary skills for the organization’s leadership; and who has the qualifications needed to lead a Community Health Center that has to meet DHHS federal grant program requirements.

To ensure that the organization’s operations are not interrupted while the board of directors assesses the leadership needs and recruits a permanent executive director, the board will appoint interim executive leadership. The interim executive director shall ensure that the organization continues to operate without disruption and that all organizational commitments previously made are adequately executed, including but not limited to, grant applications, loans approved, reports due, contracts, licenses, certifications, memberships, obligations to lenders of Community Health Center and other important project or deadlines.

It is also the policy of CHC to develop a diverse pool of candidates and consider at least five (5) finalist candidates for its permanent director position. CHC shall implement an external recruitment and selection process, while at the same time encouraging the professional development and advancement of current employees. The interim director and any other interested candidates are encouraged to submit their qualifications for review and consideration by the search committee according to the guidelines established for the search
and recruitment process. Prior review by Department of Health and Human Services’ HRSA Division is required of final candidates for the Executive Director position.

PROCEDURES:

1. For a temporary change in executive leadership (i.e., illness or leave of absence for 30 days or less), the Chief Financial Officer shall temporarily be in the charge of the daily operations and essential duties of Executive Director/CEO.

2. In the event the executive director of CHC is no longer able to serve in this position (i.e., leaves the position permanently), the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall appoint an interim executive director or acting executive director.

3. In the event that a permanent change in leadership is required, the Board Chair shall appoint an Executive Transition Committee within fifteen (15) business days. This Committee shall be comprised of at least two members of the Executive Committee, and two members of the Personnel Committee or other Board Members. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to implement the following preliminary transition plan:
   - Communicate with key stakeholders regarding actions taken by the Board in naming an interim successor, appointing a transition committee, and implementing the succession policy. The organization shall maintain a current list of key stakeholders who must be contacted, such as funders (i.e., DHHS/HRSA/BPHC) and lenders of CHC, foundations, government agencies, bank used for operating and payroll accounts, etc.
   - Consider the need for consulting assistance (i.e., transition management, executive search consultant, HRSA Project Officer, Primary Care Association) based on the circumstances of the transition.
   - Review the organization’s business plan and conduct a brief assessment of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to identify priority issues that may need to be addressed during the transition process and to identify attributes and characteristics that are important to consider in the selection of the next permanent leader.
   - Establish a timeframe and plan for recruitment and selection process.
   - Refer to the Executive Director Job Description for sample of job description and qualifications.

4. In the event that an executive transition simultaneously involves the executive director and other key management staff, the Board may also consider temporarily subcontracting some of the organizational functions from a trained consultant or other organizations.