



**Regional Administrator Transition Process**  
**Applying Change-Capable Leadership Principles**  
January 27, 2023

## **Overview**

A change in the CEO of any organization is inevitable. For Region 3 Behavioral Health Services, this change is brought about by the pending retirement of the Regional Administrator (RA) after 34 years with Region 3. Beth Baxter has identified her retirement date of June 30, 2023. This coincides with Region 3's fiscal year and is an appropriate time of the year to officially pass the leadership baton to the future RA.

Region 3 is applying the principles of Change-Capable Leadership defined as **the individual and collective actions, behaviors, and mindsets needed to lead change effectively**. It's about *how leaders behave* while doing the work of change and how to forge a common direction to move the necessary change forward. Change-capable leadership requires knowing how to align people and resources in order to facilitate effective and efficient change and builds the collective commitment to making the change effort successful. Great change leaders focus on people and process.

Strategic change doesn't happen on its own. It takes effective and committed change leaders who listen, communicate, plan, initiate and lead. Region 3 is utilizing its Leadership Team to ensure a smooth shift in leadership and minimize operational disruptions along the way. The Leadership Team has been tasked with the responsibility of facilitating the RA Transition Process. The Leadership Team consists of senior management, leadership, and staff representatives.

The RA Transition Process is flexible, open to opportunities to enhance the process, and incorporate additional strategies as necessary to ensure the best outcome that keeps Region 3 a strong, effective and progressive organization. As this is a flexible process to allow for maximizing opportunities, the following timeline includes both actual dates of significant events that have occurred throughout the process and is an estimate of the dates that remaining transition strategies will be introduced and completed.

### **Timeline** (fluid and subject to change)

March 11, 2022: Region 3 conducted its Annual Strategic Planning session. Several comments expressing concern and some anxiety that Beth Baxter was going to retire sometime and leave Region 3. Given the focus of these concerns, Beth chose to share with staff the target date of her retirement. Region 3 was in a strategic planning mode and moving forward needed to include an effective RA transition plan and process.

April 26, 2022: Leadership Team meeting and designation of their role in facilitating an effective, smooth and successful transition process. This meeting laid the groundwork and

foundational principles of the purpose and expectations of the transition process. *Our mission statement is our compass and our philosophy is our roadmap.* Discussion solidified what we know, what we want to do, and how we will achieve this.

May 18, 2022: Leadership Team meeting for further planning and information sharing. Beth Baxter announced that she had submitted a revised System Enhancement Plan that includes a Network Project Director who will serve in a key leadership position. Discussion on how this position works into the transition process and possible successor to the Regional Administrator. Note: Beth received approval of the System Enhancement Plan on May 20, 2022.

May 27, 2022: Executive Committee and Regional Governing Board Meetings to inform the Board of retirement date and present a draft transition process and timeline and obtain feedback/input to incorporate into the plan. Clearly articulate the importance of pursuing an internal candidate to ensure continuity across the organization, Provider Network and Region 3 area. This is in the best interest of Region 3. Region 3 leadership has depth, tenure, vision, experience, and great respect across the region and state with our stakeholders.

June 8, 2022: All staff meeting to update staff on where we are in the timeline and discuss the date(s) and purpose of employee focus groups. Share “draft” transition timeline.

June 9, 2022: Leadership Team Meeting. Beth Baxter presented the plan and timeline as presented to the Executive Committee and Regional Governing Board with their feedback/edits. Beth B presented general functions of the Network Project Director and the next iteration of the RA job description.

June 15, 2022: The search for Network Project Director position was opened internally. The NPD more than likely will be the successor to the Regional Administrator when Beth retires. This will provide training, acclimation, and skill building opportunities for the Network Project Director to move into the RA position. This will also allow for the logical transfer of some current responsibilities of the RA that will be better accomplished by the Network Project Director to improve effectiveness and efficiency for Region 3. Region 3 will rehire for the Network Project Director once he/she moves into the RA position. This position will be cross-trained for the RA succession plan in the future.

July 1, 2022: Close the Network Project Director search.

July 6 & 11, 2022. Two Staff Focus Groups were conducted along with gathering information from individuals who were unable to attend a Focus Group. The purpose was to gather information and ideas from the staff at-large regarding the RA transition process, organizational changes related to this transition, etc. Also, Tammy Fiala, Regional Consumer Specialist, conducted a focus group with individuals served through the rehabilitation and recovery services provided by Network provider organizations asking the same type of question as to what do they believe is important characteristic of the Regional Administrator, etc. The information gathered through these three focus groups was used to develop the interview questions and inform the selection process.

August 15 – 26, 2022: Conduct Network Project Director interviews.

*Finding the “right fit” is extremely important due to the significance of this new position for Region 3, the responsibilities of this position, the magnitude of the job, and the intent to transition this individual to the Regional Administrator position prior to June 30, 2023. The elements of the “right fit” include a person’s hard and soft skills, strengths, experience, motivation, attitude, ability to forge positive relationships, and values weighs whether or not a candidate is a good match or “right fit”.*

August 26, 2022: Offer Network Project Director position to selected candidate. Tiffany Gressley was offered the position and accepted.

August 26-31, 2022: Announce results of selection of Network Project Director internally and with external stakeholders.

September 2022: The selection of Tiffany Gressley for the Network Project Director created a vacancy at the Region as Tiffany Gressley served as the Prevention System Coordinator. The Region 3 moved forward in the selection process for this position.

September/October 2022: Due to the vacancy of the Prevention System Coordinator position, Region 3 opened internally first to gauge interest of current Region 3 employees and if no interest expressed or the applicant was not a good fit for the position, the Region would open it externally. Shyanne Adams, Prevention Coordinator, applied, interviewed, deemed an excellent fit for the position and was hired as the new Prevention System Coordinator. (Note, the Prevention Coordinator position vacated by Shyanne Adams was opened internally and externally. Region 3 hired Sarah Godejohn as the Prevention Coordinator.

From Hiring of NPD – February 28, 2023: Onboarding of Tiffany Gressley to her new position as the Network Project Director. Ongoing review of the RA job description and Network Project Director responsibilities and fine-tuning both job descriptions. Tiffany shadowing Beth B as needed. We’ll continue to review and revise the timeline as we move forward.

March 1, 2023: Target date to open the Network Project Director position to prepare for Tiffany to transition to the RA role. This will be an internal search and, if needed, an external search as well.

April 3, 2023: Plan to announce selection of new Network Project Director.

April 17 – May 5, 2023: Transition and onboard new Network Project Director.

May 8, 2023: Transition Tiffany to the “RA In-Waiting” position. This will begin the formal onboarding and acclimation period to assume the permanent RA role on June 30, 2023.

June 30, 2023: Transition process complete – It’s cake time!