



GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

The Departing Governor

Office of Management Consulting & Training

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Since their initial meeting in 1908 to discuss interstate water problems, the governors have worked through the National Governors Association (NGA) to deal collectively with issues of public policy and governance. The association's ongoing mission is to support the work of the governors by providing a bipartisan forum to help shape and implement national policy and to solve state problems.

The members of NGA are the governors of the 50 states, the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, and the commonwealths of the Northern Mariana Islands and Puerto Rico. The association has a nine-member Executive Committee and four standing committees—on Economic Development and Commerce; Education, Early Childhood, and Workforce; Health and Human Services; and Natural Resources. Through NGA's committees, the governors examine and develop policy and address key state and national issues. Special task forces often are created to focus gubernatorial attention on federal legislation or on state-level issues.

The association works closely with the Administration and Congress on state-federal policy issues through its offices in the Hall of the States in Washington, D.C. The association serves as a vehicle for sharing knowledge of innovative programs among the states and provides technical assistance and consultant services to governors on a wide range of management and policy issues.

The NGA Center for Best Practices is a vehicle for sharing knowledge about innovative state activities, exploring the impact of federal initiatives on state government, and providing technical assistance to states. The Center works in a number of policy fields: education; environment, energy and natural resources; health; homeland security and technology; and social, economic and workforce programs.

NGA's Office of Management Consulting & Training serves as management consultant to governors and their offices and as NGA's primary liaison to governors' chiefs of staff. The office helps governors lead and manage state government and assists staff in organizing and operating the governor's office. The unit provides these services as part of a state's membership in NGA.

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Acknowledgments

The National Governors Association (NGA) has focused much attention on assisting newly-elected Governors as they assume the reins of state government. Yet, one thing is certain when a new Governor takes office: at some future date, that Governor will also leave office. However, relatively little has been written on the process of preparing to finish an administration and depart office.

This management note, originally published in 1986, was the first NGA publication designed to help Governors plan for an orderly departure from office. Although reformatted and slightly revised, it retains the timeless advice and lessons learned by many former Governors and staff on whose experience the original document was based. A companion document, *The Governor's Final Year: Challenges and Strategies*, was published in 1990 to provide supplementary guidance for departing Governors.

The text of this management note was written by Doug Champion, director of NGA's Office of Management Services (now the Office of Management Consulting and Training), who served on the senior staff of North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt Jr. in his first two terms in office. Kelly Donley French of NGA's Office of Management Services compiled and analyzed the survey of former Governors. The paper was edited by Mark Miller and Alicia Abersold through NGA's Office of Public Affairs.

We hope this information is useful to incumbent Governors as they develop their plans for a successful transition out of office. More specific assistance to Governors and their staffs on this issue is available on a request basis by calling the Office of Management Consulting and Training (202/624-5300).

Transition Challenges for Departing Governors

The Certainties and Uncertainties of Transition

Governors come and go—by design. Incoming Governors when running for the office naturally are concerned with getting into office. Many incumbent Governors seeking reelection are concerned with staying in office. Departing Governors too typically ignore the equally demanding challenges of leaving office.

Leaving the governorship is certain. Most state constitutions limit gubernatorial terms, and succession is not permitted in one (Virginia). We know exactly when tenure will end or be reviewed by the electorate—mostly in four-year cycles, with a few biennially (New Hampshire and Vermont).

All Governors become former Governors. Some leave voluntarily—through choice or constitutional mandate. Others depart involuntarily—through election defeat, death, or incapacity.

Our systems for gubernatorial transition are designed to ensure an orderly transfer of power. It should be a period of stability, but it often is a period of uncertainty, posing difficulties for those coming and going.

One former Governor offers this classic observation: “No corporation, even in a hostile takeover situation, would ever handle transition the way we do in the states. It’s as though you fired the president of a company, all the heads of operating divisions, and the staff of the central office at once.”

The certainties of change include stress, resistance, and frustration. The uncertainties of change include the unknown, the unusual, and the unexpected.

All incumbent Governors have experienced transition on the way in; former Governors also have experienced transition on the way out. Frequently they have been dissatisfied with both.

This Management Note has been written for incumbent Governors, particularly those whose term of office will or may expire within a year. Undoubtedly, Governors who

already plan to leave have begun preparing for transition. The note can be a helpful guide in completing preparations.

It is likely that Governors running for reelection are planning for another term. Some contingency plans can and should be considered now. Others may await election results.

Incoming vs. Outgoing Perspectives

Most attention in gubernatorial transition is focused on the incoming administration. The Governor-elect is “news,” employees in the state bureaucracy are concerned about their futures, and the incoming administration needs a great deal of help to become an administration. Many states have legislation and make appropriations for the transition process for the Governor-elect.

NGA guides and seminars also are designed for new Governors and their staff and spouses. Typical guidance for departing Governors is oriented to what assistance should be given to the Governor-elect. It has tended to overlook what happens to the Governor leaving office.

Departing Governors face three transition challenges winding down the old administration, preparing for a new administration, and preparing for a new life. The winding-down process may begin very early or very late (whenever one becomes a “lame duck,” by design or defeat). Typically, it continues well beyond the end of the term, with many loose ends still to be tied. Assistance to the incoming administration is needed to provide continuity; it represents good governance and good politics. Preparing for life beyond the governorship is highly individual and personal; it also is public in its residual demands, too frequently without provision for office space, staff; or financial support.

The outgoing Governor sets the tone for transition. Its smoothness largely depends on the incumbent Governor, whether the departure is voluntary or involuntary. The “politics” of transition are a reality, but should not be an obstruction.

The Politics of Transition

For Governors leaving office by constitutional mandate, transition begins when “lame duck” status becomes evident, typically during or at the end of the last long legislative session. For those who choose not to seek reelection, that status often begins with the announcement. In either event, opportunities for advance planning and an orderly transition are considerable.

However, politics can obstruct a smooth transition. The style and record of the incumbent Governor may be an issue in the gubernatorial campaign. If the successor is from another party, cooperation during and after the campaign may be awkward. Even if the successor is from the same party, transition may be difficult if the successor has not been supported by the incumbent Governor or is from a different faction of the party.

An incumbent Governor running for reelection faces tougher transitional challenges. It is harder to have a smooth transition after a rough campaign. Campaign politics often leave a bitter aftertaste, and the stigma of defeat makes statesmanship more difficult. Even if defeat could be anticipated, few Governors seeking reelection can or will take time from a busy campaign to plan for transition, which could be interpreted as preparing for defeat.

An incumbent Governor running for some other office shares some of the same problems. The style and record of the incumbent administration will be an issue, gubernatorial clout is diminished without the prospect of succession, and the demands of one's own campaign will divert energies from transition.

The circumstances surrounding departure, including personal and political compatibility with a successor, most assuredly affect the tone, timing, and visibility of transition preparations. Regardless, preparations are needed and transitions can be smooth. As one defeated Governor observed: "The incoming and outgoing Governors can make transition work smoothly and relatively painlessly if they want to. Each must eat a bit of humble pie and see to it that staffers do likewise."

The Challenge of Finishing Strongly

The challenges in leaving office go far beyond helping the Governor-elect. The final phase in the life of an administration offers an opportunity to finish strongly, to promote continuity in governance, and to ease the adjustment to another life. Preparations can and should begin well before the brief period between election and inauguration.

When asked for advice on how to successfully wind down an administration, one former Governor responded: "Don't! Finish up!" To finish "up" and strongly requires a plan and a commitment from the top. Finishing should be no less important than starting, requiring the same kind of energy, determination, and attention.

It is better to plan ahead and make adequate preparations than to let events overtake you. Lessons learned from the past can help guide approaches for the future.

Lessons from Former Governors

The Greatest Problems

The National Governors Association has conducted various surveys over the years of former Governors after they have left office. Among other things, these former Governors were asked to identify the aspects of leaving office that were of most concern or presented the greatest problem to them and their families.

The personal aspects of transition posed the greatest difficulties. For example:

- preparing for change, including adjusting to an election loss, worrying about a period of decompression, dealing with the abrupt cessation of activity and sense of involvement, experiencing diminished opportunity to participate in challenging activities, and losing close personal associations with staff and fellow officials;
- determining future employment (for the Governors and their spouses), including deciding what to do for a career change and the type and location of new employment; and
- handling the details related to housing and moving, including getting situated in a new home, locating or reacquiring personal belongings (e.g., a car, furniture, household items), actually moving, and returning to household maintenance responsibilities.

The months following the end of term also presented problems for both former Governors and their spouses. For example:

- fulfilling the continuing commitments of being a former Governor and First Lady, including handling the state work that can continue for many months, such as mail, papers, and scheduling; and
- fulfilling these commitments without an “office,” staff or secretarial support.

Other problems experienced by former Governors during the last months in office included:

- rushing to complete unfinished program agendas;
- sharing experiences and offering advice to others without appearing to be imposing or domineering;
- handling job assistance requests; and
- disposing of records and papers.

Steps That Might Have Been Taken

In looking back, these former Governors identified steps they could have taken to help address these problems or concerns in a more satisfactory manner. Regardless of the circumstances prompting their departure (constitutional mandate, choice, or defeat), the message from former Governors is consistent: “Plan ahead.”

Major planning advice cited by former Governors includes the following.

- Conduct better long-range planning in general.
- Implement a records disposition policy at the outset of the term.
- Develop a more sensitive process for dealing with transition.
- Create a more comprehensive plan spaced over the entire transition period, rather than focusing solely on the final weeks.
- Start planning earlier for the return to nonofficial life.
- Plan for heavy residual responsibilities for state “business” after leaving office, including arranging for staff assistance. (In one former Governor’s words: “Plan to spend practically full-time for at least sixty of the first ninety days out of office, then perhaps forty-five of the next ninety days, then [from] thirty to forty-five of the next ninety days, an some lesser amount in the final quarter.”)

Advice to Incumbent Governors

According to the former Governors surveyed, successors generally are not open to advice from a departing Governor, nor did they accept advice well when they were incoming. The surveyed Governors hold more hope for incumbents. One former Governor commented: “Unlike a newly elected Governor, one who has already served is more willing to listen and certainly has a higher appreciation for the experience of others.”

The experience of others—former Governors, spouses, and senior staff—is difficult to capture and summarize. From the NGA survey, interviews, and the rather sparse literature on the subject, the following advice can be gleaned.

- Plan ahead and organize the effort.
- Maintain control to the end of the term.
- Help others, both the incoming administration and incumbent staff.
- Start early on records and papers.
- Help yourself and your family, personally and professionally.
- Get help from others.

Planning and Organizing for Transition

The Importance of Planning

A year out of office, a former Governor observed: “Is there life after being Governor? Yes—a good one. The kind of life can be determined only by the Governor. But preparing for the new life and leaving there will be much easier for the Governor who plans for it early enough and takes advantage of the lessons learned by those who have already gone down the path.”

That Governor’s chief of staff considers gubernatorial transition to be “one of the most mishandled aspects of the institution of American Governor.” He cites several reasons: Governors-elect often do not heed advice of peers and predecessors, too few guidelines exist for transition planning, and incumbents are not inclined to begin planning early in the term.

Major regrets have been expressed by former Governors and senior staff about not doing enough to ensure a smooth transition. They believe their efforts were too little too late, generally disorganized, and hampered by mistrust. They strongly urge departing Governors to start planning for transition early, organize the effort, and move on with it.

Transition planning is important governmentally, politically, and personally. It can help reduce the chaos and trauma often associated with the “changing of the guard” and promote governmental continuity and an orderly transfer of power. Good governance is good politics. Departing Governors can make transition a positive part of their record. They also can help ease their own adjustment to the “good life” after being Governor.

Although advance planning may seem less compelling and feasible to a Governor seeking reelection, administrative and legislative provisions for any transition can and should be made routinely. Specific plans should begin early. One former Governor advised: “Start planning for transition now. It’s never too early.” That goes for organization, as well.

Organizing the Effort

The “players” in a gubernatorial transition represent incoming and outgoing teams with vastly different experience, both capable of “winning.” The outgoing team has an advantage because it has played the game before. Like any other team, it must be organized.

A musical analogy was made by one former Governor: “We have run our [state] governments like a pick-up orchestra, where the members meet at a dance, shake hands with each other, and start to play.” To prevent discordance, the “musical scores” and the “practices” must be carefully arranged, orchestrated, and conducted.

An outgoing transition coordinator should be assigned to orchestrate the effort. This should be a person who is respected within and outside the incumbent administration and who can devote the time and energy needed to direct the transition from start to finish. For some departing Governors, this person is their chief of staff. Others give that responsibility to some other trusted and capable staff member. A few reach outside the incumbent administration. Most advise a very early (even if invisible) appointment.

With all of the complexities and diverse aspects of transition, a transition planning group should be considered to develop a plan for the transition. Lead responsibilities should be assigned to appropriate individuals or groups to help plan and oversee implementation of major requirements. Staff and cabinet meetings can be used to help monitor progress.

Because transition is a major legacy of any administration, the ultimate responsibility rests with the Governor. The personal commitment and attention provided by the incumbent Governor is as crucial to his or her administration as to the one that will follow.

Suggested Timetables

In retrospect, former Governors and their staff advise paying attention to transition matters over a much longer period of time than is usually associated with transition. The narrowest and stereotypical conception is the two-month period between the election and inauguration of a new Governor. A broader view covers the last year of an incumbent’s term. The broadest vision extends over a two-year period, including the first six months out of office.

A checklist of major actions suggested for the transition out of office is included in the following table. The actions are comprehensive, yet illustrative. The checklist corresponds to chapter headings in this report. These can be reviewed for further explanation.

Some actions may be routine or seem trivial, and some may not be applicable. However, all have concerned former Governors.

The suggested timetable distinguishes three periods: pre-election, post-election, and post-term. It is constructed primarily for those who plan to leave office. Those running for reelection who are “surprised by the ballot box” may have to catch up, and quickly.

Checklist and Timetables for Transition

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION FOR TRANSITION			
✓ Assign a transition coordinator	■		
✓ Assign a transition-planning group	■		
✓ Develop and approve a transition plan.	■		
✓ Assign lead responsibilities to help plan and oversee implementation of major requirements.	■		
✓ Use staff and cabinet meetings to monitor progress.	■	■	
MAINTAINING CONTROL			
Governing to the End			
✓ Put someone in charge in the governor's absence.	■	■	
✓ Clarify roles of senior staff as focal points for information and decisionmaking in the Governor's absence.	■	■	
✓ Assign a staff group to manage the Governor's schedule.	■	■	
✓ Continue or assign responsibilities for legislative liaison.	■	■	
Completing the Administration's Agenda			
✓ Develop a plan for completing the administration's agenda, including as appropriate:	■		
– Blending current and future agendas;			
– Institutionalizing major programs and initiatives; and,			
– Building the next budget.			
✓ Monitor and report progress on major administration goals and priorities.	■	■	
✓ Direct appropriate individuals or groups to continue dealing with policy issues of major concern.	■	■	
Preventing Deterioration of the System			
✓ Research the history of turnovers in prior transitions of positions served at the pleasure of the incumbent governor.	■		

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
✓ Analyze the legal rights of employees occupying those positions (for “career” positions, if terminated).	■		
✓ Develop a plan for communicating those rights to current occupants.	■		
✓ Send “messages to management” through words and deeds (e.g., still governing to the end).	■	■	
Reducing Political vulnerabilities			
✓ Develop and disseminate ground rules covering political activities of state employees.	■		
✓ Develop guidelines for dealing with:	■	■	
– Inside concerns (e.g., appointments, travel, political involvement); and			
– Outside concerns (e.g., legislative, press, candidates).			
HELPING THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION			
Laying the Groundwork			
✓ Review statutes on gubernatorial transition.	■		
✓ Establish a cooperation policy.	■		
✓ Develop an overall plan to deal with candidates and staff and to help the incoming administration.	■		
✓ Develop a strategy for transition documents.	■		
Dealing with Candidates			
✓ Offer assistance (e.g., information).	■		
✓ Coordinate and respond to requests.	■		
Helping the Incoming Transition Team			
✓ Anticipate immediate needs.	■		
✓ Assure logistical support (e.g., space, equipment, staff).	■		
✓ Provide critical information (e.g., organization charts, budgets, exempt positions and salaries, pending appointments).			■
✓ Arrange meetings with counterparts on both transition teams.		■	

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
Helping the Governor-Elect			
✓ Invite participation in scheduled events and meetings (e.g., budget preparation).	■		
✓ Orient the Governor-elect (e.g., critical issues and personal matters).		■	
✓ Orient the Governor-elect's family (e.g., residence, security).		■	
Helping Counterpart Gubernatorial Staff			
✓ Develop profiles of major offices and staff functions.	■		
✓ Provide and brief the profiles.		■	
✓ Identify critical Issues ("boiling points" and politically sensitive matters that should be handled verbally).		■	
✓ Describe office and administrative procedures.		■	
✓ Provide for special orientations and training (e.g., computer programs, word processors).		■	
Helping Incoming Cabinet Officials and Staff			
✓ (Same as counterpart gubernatorial staff.)			

HELPING INCUMBENT STAFF

Retaining Staff

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| ✓ Develop an overall plan to help key members of the current administration. | ■ | | |
| ✓ Establish and communicate a departure policy. | ■ | | |
| ✓ Motivate retention where needed. | ■ | ■ | |

Placement Assistance

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| ✓ Provide placement assistance to those who wish to remain in state government. | ■ | ■ | |
| ✓ Provide placement assistance to those who will leave state government, including: | ■ | ■ | |
| – Guidance on conflicts of interest; | | | |
| – Policies on accumulated leave; and | | | |

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
– Processes for referrals and recommendations.			
Finishing with Class			
✓ Communicate the need to maintain and monitor the integrity of the office.	■	■	
✓ Express appreciation.		■	
DISPOSING OF RECORDS AND PAPERS			
Establishing a Retention Policy			
✓ Begin the effort early.	■		
✓ Establish a retention policy.	■		
✓ Assign a person or group to develop and implement a plan for dealing with public and private papers.	■		
MAKING THE PERSONAL TRANSITION			
Preparing for Change			
✓ Prepare to resume private responsibilities.	■	■	
✓ Discuss special needs with family and friends.	■	■	
Future Employment			
✓ Determine legal restrictions or conflicts of interest.	■		
✓ Anticipate and factor in residual demands.	■		
✓ Arrange for future employment.	■	■	
Housing and Moving			
✓ Decide on post-term location.	■		
✓ Arrange for housing.	■	■	
✓ Arrange for moving.		■	
✓ Transfer furniture and personal effects.			■
Transportation and Security			

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
✓ Secure personal transportation and licenses.		■	
✓ Arrange for security, if applicable.		■	
Special Family Considerations			
✓ Pay particular attention to the transition needs and concerns of the Governor’s spouse (e.g., personal adjustment, employment, staff support, household help).	■	■	
✓ Pay particular attention to the transition needs of school-age children (e.g., personal adjustment, school arrangements).	■	■	
MANAGING THE MONTHS FOLLOWING THE END OF THE TERM			
Correspondence and Calls			
✓ Anticipate demands.	■	■	
✓ Arrange for secretarial and office support.	■	■	
Completing Disposition of Personal Papers			
✓ Consider possible demands.	■	■	
✓ Arrange for assistance.		■	
Continuing Involvement in State Affairs			
✓ Establish a policy about commenting on the new Governor and administration.	■	■	■
✓ Establish policies about dealing with public issues and about public appearances.		■	■
✓ Arrange for scheduling assistance.	■	■	
ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE			
Financial Support			
✓ Explore post-term assistance from state government (e.g., stipend or staff retention) to handle residual “state business.”	■	■	
✓ Identify other potential sources of supplementary assistance (e.g., foundations, universities, campaign funds, new employer arrangements).	■	■	
✓ Arrange for supplementary assistance.		■	

<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Pre-Election</i>	<i>Post-Election</i>	<i>Post-Term</i>
Advice and Technical Assistance			
✓ Obtain and review transition publications.		■	■
✓ Seek counsel from former Governors and staff.	■	■	■
✓ Arrange assistance from or through NGA.	■	■	■

Maintaining Control

Governing to the End

What a Governor does last often is remembered most. As one former gubernatorial aide commented, “It’s possible for a Governor to ruin himself in his last sixty days in office.” How a Governor finishes can be left to happenstance or can be planned and managed.

Former Governors urge incumbents to govern to the end—working “full steam ahead” through the last day in office. Altruistically, Governors ought to. Practically, Governors need to. One former Governor used this familiar agricultural adage: “Plow out to the end of the row.” Such advice should apply to the final months of any gubernatorial administration.

For Governors already planning to leave office, governing to the end requires vigilance in protecting the integrity of the governorship, persistence in finishing what has been started, and diligence in keeping things under control. For Governors running for reelection or some other office, it requires this and more.

Involvement in a campaign necessarily diverts attention and energies from governing. Assuming good government is good politics, the ship of state must be run and run well in the Governor’s absence. Several steps can be taken to keep that ship on course.

- In the Governor’s absence, put someone in charge who is not involved in the campaign.
- Clarify the roles of senior staff as focal points for information and decision-making in the Governor’s absence.
- Assign a staff group representing both the Governor’s office and the campaign organization to help manage the Governor’s schedule—planning opportunities, reviewing requests, and permitting no commitments without such review.

- Reiterate and clarify lead responsibilities for legislative liaison.
- Emphasize and reinforce the importance of “governmental” matters.

Whether running for office or not, incumbent Governors must manage in a highly politicized environment. Control must be maintained to complete the administration’s agenda, prevent deterioration of the system, and reduce political vulnerabilities.

Completing the Administration’s Agenda

The final year of an administration brings pressure, and sometimes a rush, to complete the “agenda.” That may involve finishing what has been started and institutionalizing what has been done. The former is expected. The latter may be considered Machiavellian.

Finishing what was started is a noble goal, but it is not easily achieved. Former Governors and their staff offer simple advice: Keep the agenda short, monitor progress, and get it done. Specific comments illustrate.

- Don’t clutter up the landscape with new initiatives.” (A former chief of staff.)
- Pay enough attention to programs and initiatives to prevent them from falling through the cracks in the state of flux that exists during the final months of a term.” (A former chief of staff.)
- “Don’t leave undone what can be started. Put in place and safeguard what has been started.” (A former Governor.)

Maintaining program momentum is a major challenge. The last year of an administration is usually no time to begin major new projects. The “troops” should be admonished to consolidate and focus their energies on programs and initiatives already underway, thus motivating a strong finish. Incumbent Governors should consider setting a few clear priorities. Progress on major goals and priorities should be monitored and reported. Concurrently, policy issues of major concern need continuing attention and action.

Ensuring program continuity beyond the current administration is quite a different challenge. Some former Governors regret their failure to imbed some major program initiatives for posterity. For those concerned about program survival, several approaches might be considered.

- Make sure that programs are well-conceived and supported by strategic constituencies.

- Build institutions, not projects.
- Develop ownership among those who will continue to serve in the next administration.
- Get the incoming Governor (or family) involved.
- Build programs into the ensuing budget, with involvement of the incoming gubernatorial staff.

Notwithstanding efforts by incumbent Governors to institutionalize programs and blend current and future agendas, successors frequently are not receptive, because they have their own agendas. As one former Governor suggests: “Save something for the new Governor.”

Preventing Deterioration of the System

The bureaucratic system or “infrastructure” of state government provides stability for any administration. With the reality or prospect of a change in administrations, the system can deteriorate rapidly. Work can grind to a halt, people can begin jockeying for future positions, and programs and people can get out of hand.

Problems within the Governor’s office and cabinet generally occur later rather than sooner. They need the personal attention of the departing Governor (See Chapter on Helping Incumbent Staff).

Problems within state government agencies generally occur sooner rather than later. The incumbent Governor and his or her cabinet officials can take steps to maintain commitments and loyalties, reduce workforce anxieties, and send clear messages to management

Agency employees, whether careerists or gubernatorial appointees, may become more concerned with maintaining their current jobs or obtaining new ones rather than in performing their current duties. Even those who have been loyalists can jump ship. The workforce becomes anxious when facing uncertainty. Management needs reassurance and reinforcement.

Several preventive steps can be taken by the incumbent Governor, staff and cabinet officials.

- Carefully analyze current staff positions that are likely to be vacated and those that are most critical to finishing the Governor’s agenda.

- Develop a contingency plan for staff replacement.
- Research the history of turnover in prior transitions, analyzing the legal rights of employees occupying those positions and communicating those rights to current occupants.
- Recognize agency differences and approach potential problems of employee uncertainty in appropriate ways.
- Have one-on-one talks with key people about their concerns and options.
- Develop and communicate a clear stance on people leaving for other jobs, such as granting permission to do so or stating expectations for them to remain to the end.
- Deal with individuals on a professional basis.
- Send clear messages, through word and deed, about the administration's intentions to lead and work fully to the end.

Such actions and signals are not political, but they are politic.

Reducing Political Vulnerabilities

Political environments produce political vulnerabilities. Whenever an incumbent Governor is perceived to be a “lame duck,” his or her real or apparent power is threatened by those seeking their own power. If that Governor is immersed in a political campaign, politics dominate. Even if the incumbent Governor is not running for office, the integrity of the governorship may be threatened and attention may be shifted elsewhere, to campaigns and prospective Governors. Running or not, the incumbent Governor must attend to both outside and inside political concerns.

Outside concerns include public apathy, campaign opponents or candidates, the legislature, and the press. For those not running for any office, public apathy emerges. As one former chief of staff recalls, “It usually takes a calamity to wake up the public in the final months, for them to take notice of what the Governor is doing.” For those not seeking reelection, former Governors and staff advise staying above the battle and out of the political fray. Incumbents seeking reelection are advised to ignore potshots, avoid major mistakes, and finish strongly. When dealing with the legislature, incumbent Governors are urged to defend the integrity of the office. And with the press, one former

Governor's observation is universal: "Good press relations can't save a poor administration, but poor press relations can destroy a good one."

Inside concerns are less situational. They include political activities of employees, the handling of remaining appointments, and manipulation of existing staff and programs. Incumbent Governors are advised to develop and disseminate ground rules covering acceptable campaign involvement of state employees who are endorsing or supporting candidates. It goes without saying that rank political appointments should be resisted. Further, charges of manipulating people and programs can best be avoided simply by not doing it.

Such actions are within the incumbent Governor's control. The election of a new Governor is not. Notwithstanding, steps taken beforehand to maintain control can help smooth the transition.

Helping the Incoming Administration

Laying the Groundwork for Transition Assistance

Former Governors have two chances to view a transition—coming in and going out. Many have been dissatisfied with both. Too often, transition assistance from one administration to the next has been disorganized and somewhat insensitive. Governors and their staff may mistrust what is given to them as they come into office, then make efforts to help as they leave office only to find their successors are not paying sufficient attention. It is debatable whether this is in the eye of the beholder, a function of transition politics, or a fault of transition planning.

Groundwork can be laid to increase the odds that transition assistance will be well offered and well received. This includes statutory and financial arrangements for transition assistance, a policy for cooperation, and a documentation plan.

A majority of states have enacted some legislation pertaining to gubernatorial transition. (See the table on the following page for a comparison of the assistance provided by the various states.) Most states appropriate funds, the amount of which varies considerably and often requires supplementation (through emergency and contingency funds or budgetary reallocations). Such funds and other statutory provisions are designed to cover staff office space, equipment, and sometimes the inauguration of the Governor-elect. Virtually all such assistance is targeted for the Governor-elect. The departing Governor is the designated provider, not the recipient.

These statutory and financial arrangements, if they exist, often prove to be inadequate. Departing Governors compensate informally.

State statutes and appropriations should be reviewed for coverage and sufficiency. What is not covered statutorily must be provided administratively. Statute or none, the incumbent administration should develop an overall plan for helping the incoming administration—what should be done, when, and by whom.

Plans generally convey substance, not style. A cooperation policy should be established to reflect the incumbent Governor's commitment to a smooth transition, regardless of campaigns or successor party. Staff and agency directors should be advised to cooperate fully. The designation of a transition coordinator can underscore and signal that commitment.

Transition documents can be an important part of transition assistance. Outgoing administrations frequently prepare transition “books” and volumes of briefing documents for the incoming administration, which require large investments of staff time and energy. Too often, these documents are overly detailed and much of what is done may be ignored. A strategy for transition documents should be developed that is tailored for (and ideally is developed in consultation with) the various targets of transition assistance: candidates, the incoming transition team, the Governor-elect (and family), counterpart gubernatorial staff, and incoming cabinet officials and staff. Related transition assistance should be targeted as well.

THE GOVERNORS: PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TRANSITION

State or other jurisdiction	Legislation pertaining to gubernatorial transition	Appropriation available to gov-elect	Provision for:					
			Gov-elect's participation in state budget for coming fiscal year	Gov-elect to hire staff to assist during transition	State personnel to be made available to assist gov-elect	Office space in buildings to be made available to gov-elect	Acquainting gov-elect staff with office procedures and information	Transfer of records, etc.)
Alabama.....	★	•	•	•	•	•
Alaska.....	•	★ (a)	...	•	•	•	•	★
Arizona.....	★	...	•	•	•	•
Arkansas.....	•	10,000	...	...	...	...	...	...
California.....	★	450,000	★	★	★	★	•	•
Colorado.....	★	10,000	★	★	★	★	•	★
Connecticut.....	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Delaware.....	★	15,000	•	★	•	•	•	•
Florida.....	★	2,500,000 (b)	•	★	•	★(b)	•	•
Georgia.....	★	50,000	•	★	★	★	•	★
Hawaii.....	★	50,000	★	★	•	★	•	•
Idaho.....	★	15,000	★	★	★	★	★	★
Illinois.....	★	...	★	★	★
Indiana.....	★	40,000	...	...	...	★	★	★
Iowa.....	•	100,000	★	•	•	•	•	★
Kansas.....	★	150,000 (c)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Kentucky.....	★	200,000	★	★	★	★	★	★
Louisiana.....	★	• 65,000	★	★	...	★	...	•
Maine.....	•	5,000	★	•	•	•	•	•
Maryland.....	★	•	...	★	★	★	★	★
Massachusetts.....	•	•	•	...	•	•	•	★
Michigan.....	•	•	...	•	•	•	•	•
Minnesota.....	★	(d)	★	★	★	★	•	★
Mississippi.....	•	★(e)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Missouri.....	★	100,000	★	★	•	★	•	• (f)
Montana.....	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	•
Nebraska.....	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Nevada.....	★	reasonable amount	★	...	...	...	...	★ (g)
New Hampshire.....	★	75,000	★	★	★	★	★	...
New Jersey.....	★	(h)	•	★	★	★	•	★
New Mexico.....	★	(i)	★	★	★	★	★	★
New York.....	★	★	★	★
North Carolina.....	★	★(j)	★	★	★	★	★	★
North Dakota.....	•	10,000	(k)	(l)	•	...	•	★
Ohio.....	★	Unspecified (m)	•	★	•	...	•	★
Oklahoma.....	•	•	★	•	•	★	•	•
Oregon.....	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Pennsylvania.....	★	★	•	•	•	...
Rhode Island.....	★	500,000	...	★	★	★	•	•
South Carolina.....	...	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
South Dakota.....	★
Tennessee.....	★	★	•	★	★	★	•	•
Texas.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Utah.....	★	★(n)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Vermont.....	...	★(o)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Virginia.....	★	★(p)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Washington.....	★	★	•	★	•	★	•	•
West Virginia.....	...	•	...	•	...	•	•	•
Wisconsin.....	★	Unspecified	★	★	★	★	★	★
Wyoming.....	•	...	•	•	•	•	•	•
American Samoa.....	...	Unspecified	★(q)	★	•	•	★	•
Guam.....	★	(r)	...	...	★	★	★	...
No. Mariana Islands.....	★	Unspecified	...	★	★	★	★	★
Puerto Rico.....	★	...	★	★	★	★	★	★
U.S. Virgin Islands.....	★	100,000	...	★	★	★	★	★

Sources: The Council of State Governments' survey, November 2008.

Key:

. . . — No provisions or procedures.

« — Formal provisions or procedures.

· — No formal provisions, occurs informally.

N.A. — Not applicable.

(a) Varies.

(b) There is a budget for the governor-elect to use during transition. Very specific procedures including legislative review to access the funds. Some of these funds may be shared with Cabinet transitions: CFO and Commissioner of Agriculture. Transition information is available with no formal provisions. Budget allows for space, etc., but actual office space determined by availability at the time.

(c) Transition funds are used by both the incoming and outgoing administrations.

(d) 1.5% of amount appropriated for the fiscal year to the Governor's office.

(e) Miss. Code Ann. § 7-1-101 provides as follows: the governor's office of general services shall provide a governor-elect with office space and office equipment for the period between the election and inauguration. A special appropriation to the governor's office of general services is hereby authorized to defray the expenses of providing necessary staff employees and for the operation of the office of governor-elect during the period between the election and inauguration. The state fiscal management board shall make available to a governor-elect and his designated representatives information on the following: (a) all information and reports used in the preparation of the budget report; and (b) all information and reports on projected income and revenue estimates for the state.

(f) Activity is traditional and routine, although there is no specific statutory provision.

(g) As determined in budget.

(h) No specific amount - necessary services and facilities.

(i) Legislature required to make appropriation; no dollar amount stated in legislation.

(j) Governor receives \$80,000 and lieutenant governor receives \$10,000.

(k) Responsible for submitting budget for coming biennium.

(l) Governor usually hires several incoming key staff during transition.

(m) Determined in budget.

(n) Appropriated by legislature at the time of transition.

(o) Governor-elect entitled to 70% of Governor's salary.

(p) Determined every 4 years.

(q) Can submit reprogramming or supplemental appropriation measure for current fiscal year.

(r) Appropriations given upon the request of governor-elect.

SOURCE: Council of State Governments, *The Book of the States*, 2009, vol. 41 (Lexington, Ky., 2009), pg. 196-197.

Dealing with Candidates

Understandably, incumbent Governors running for reelection are loathe to help their opponents. But they can help themselves *by* responding quickly and factually to attacks or information requests from opponents or the press. Although frequently handled by campaign staff or the press secretary, responses often need to be drafted by office or agency staff. These responses, in substance and tone, become part of the “record” and affect any transition thereafter. The same applies when a Governor is running for some other office.

Incumbent Governors who intend to leave the Governor’s office should develop a plan for dealing with candidates seeking that office. Some former Governors have taken elaborate steps to invite candidate participation before the general election. Examples include representation at cabinet meetings, involvement in budget preparations, requests or suggestions for transition preparations, and even recommendations on pending appointments. Others have been less forthcoming. Even those who want to help (or influence) candidates have found it difficult to get their attention—they naturally are more interested in getting elected than in having a smooth transition.

Despite these concerns, departing Governors can and should offer information assistance, establish points of contact, and coordinate and respond to requests. As the outcome becomes apparent or real, attention to transition and requests for assistance shift dramatically. Incumbent administrations should be prepared to respond immediately.

Helping the Incoming Transition Team

Whether or not a Governor-elect is surprised by election results, it is likely that he or she will be unprepared for the transition. Typically, an incoming transition team either exists or is formed quickly. That team has immediate needs for logistical support and information. Those needs should be anticipated and actions should be taken before the election to help the team move quickly and intelligently.

In terms of logistics, the incoming transition team needs office and parking space and equipment (e.g., telephones, computers, and copying machines). Staff support also may be needed. The outgoing transition coordinator should plan for such requirements, either by actually providing the space, equipment, and staff, or by making financial arrangements for it.

Over time, informational needs of the incoming transition team progress in urgency, focus, and sophistication. Immediate needs are basic. The first transition package should be available immediately after the election, if not before, to answer these and other basic questions.

- What funds and logistical support are available for transition?

- What is the budget for the Governor's office?
- What positions are served at the pleasure of the Governor and what are the salaries for those positions?
- What appointments to boards and commissions are pending?
- Whom should the incoming transition team contact when help is needed?

Information overload at this early point may be distracting or unwelcome. Meetings between counterparts of the incoming and outgoing transition teams should proceed, at pace.

More detailed and descriptive information should be provided as the incoming transition team becomes better oriented and the faces of the new administration take shape. This information and assistance should be designed to help the Governor-elect, counterpart gubernatorial staff and incoming cabinet officials prepare to assume their new duties.

Helping the Governor-Elect

The Governor-elect will look for help primarily from his or her own transition team. Thus, the quality of help provided to that team will indirectly help the Governor-elect.

The departing Governor is in the best position to directly help the Governor-elect. The same is true for spouses and families. There is no substitute for personal experience.

Departing Governors are advised to offer help to the incoming Governor, rising above any differences of opinion that may accompany a changing of the guard. At the same time, the departing Governor should be cautioned that what is given may not always be noted or remembered. As one former Governor said: "We held a few meetings in my office talking about issues and policies. I told him what I thought was ripe for leadership, things I would have done if I stayed on. He didn't want much. He didn't follow my advice."

The Governor-elect and family should be helped with those matters most immediate and critical to them. Personal meetings and tours should be scheduled to deal with personal concerns such as the office itself, pay and allowances, the executive residence, and security. Substantive issues of interest can be discussed in private sessions or through involvement in ongoing events and preparations.

A schedule should be prepared of forthcoming events and meetings that might help orient the Governor-elect. Key resources should be made available, such as planning and budgeting staff, that otherwise might be underutilized during the transition period.

Participation in the budget process, where appropriate, can be valuable, particularly if the Governor-elect's positions on key matters can be accommodated.

The Governor-elect will seek and need help from many quarters. The incumbent Governor should reflect on his or her own incoming experiences and improve on them accordingly.

Helping the Counterpart Gubernatorial Staff

The members of the incoming transition team often act as surrogate gubernatorial staff until various staff members are appointed. At this stage in the transition, the outgoing staff can and should provide information to help counterparts understand and prepare for those positions.

This is easier said than done. As one former chief of staff commented: "Transition never has been an organized process. Incoming staff don't feel they should ask questions of their departing counterparts and outgoing staff don't think those coming in want their help." These perceptions may be at odds with compelling realities: Incoming staff need help and outgoing staff can provide it.

Transition team members who are organizing the new Governor's office and those who will run it need to know how the office currently operates. The outgoing staff can help in several ways. Separate profiles should be prepared for each component of the incumbent office, summarizing roles and functions, organization and management, special procedures or processes, and any special issues that warrant immediate attention. Most profiles can and should be written. Others, including politically sensitive issues or functions such as patronage or legislative liaison, may be best handled in private conversations.

Even in the most adversarial transition, several matters must be profiled. Emergency management authorities and contingency plans must be clearly understood. However infrequent and unlikely, any natural disaster or other emergency requires an immediate and informed response. Other matters are boiling-point issues that may erupt or require decisions in the first few weeks or months in office. "Blindsiding" in the early stages of any administration is not appreciated, by anyone.

More routine, but not at all trivial, are office and administrative procedures. The outgoing staff should describe in detail the essential functions for operating the office, such as handling the mail and phones, budget and personnel administration, and general administrative support. Special orientations and training should be provided regarding any special equipment, including computers, word processors, and telecommunication networks.

What is done for Governor's office operations also applies to the executive residence. Briefings and profiles, where appropriate, should be prepared and provided on basic operations, including scheduling and hosting public functions, housekeeping and maintenance, food service, and security.

Helping Incoming Cabinet Officials and Staff

However important, the Governor's office is only one part of an administration. What is done to help the Governor-elect and incoming gubernatorial staff should be mirrored in cabinet agencies. One sage observer of gubernatorial transitions offers this advice to departing Governors, cabinet officials, and their staff "Show in your last days of office what you did in your first."

Incoming cabinet officials and staff should be oriented and briefed as they prepare to assume their respective offices. Briefing packages should be planned and coordinated. (A uniform format across agencies could prove helpful.) Analytical studies or personal briefings on major problems and issues also should be planned.

Helping Incumbent Staff

Retaining Staff

Just as help to the staff of an incoming administration should focus on their needs, the needs of the incumbent administration and staff cannot be neglected. Departing Governors leave at a time certain. Incumbent gubernatorial staff and cabinet appointees may leave sooner than either they or their Governor may wish.

Some may want to remain in state government during the next administration; some may prefer jobs elsewhere. Others may be uncertain. Ostensibly, all have strong loyalties to the incumbent Governor. Most will be worried about breaching that loyalty if perceived to be more concerned about their own future than the current needs of their leader.

Incumbent Governors should be concerned about these very human concerns of their loyalists. An overall plan should be developed to help key staff members of the current administration. That plan should include a policy on departures, ways to motivate retention where needed, and mechanisms for placement assistance.

A policy or policies on departures can help clear the air about this subject, which many find awkward to discuss. The incumbent Governor should take the lead in clarifying his or her expectations of immediate staff and cabinet officers (e.g., stay until the end, with assistance assured; or leave beforehand, with backup assured). Those staff members and cabinet officers should do the same for their subordinates.

Former Governors generally have been satisfied with their ability to retain key staff in the final year of their administration. Several steps have been and can be taken to motivate retention, when needed. Personal encouragement helps. Finishing strongly stimulates. Providing placement elsewhere reassures.

Providing Placement Assistance

Departing Governors should determine the degree to which they will help incumbent staff and other appointees obtain new employment. Some former Governors were very active and open in providing placement assistance. Others were more quietly active and less visible in their efforts, perhaps reflecting a concern that “patronage-out” may be as sensitive politically as patronage-in.

Placement assistance can include personal intervention, such as contacts, lobbying, personal interviews, written recommendations, or outside professional help. Assistance should be given to those who need it most, such as clerical staff and to those who are frequently overlooked, including the residence staff.

Increasingly, businesses are offering placement assistance to those who leave, voluntarily or involuntarily. Former Governors have followed that practice, in varying degrees, to help place members of their administration who wish to leave state government for jobs in other sectors. One former Governor, who regretted not doing enough, advises, "Make sure people in the administration have somewhere to go after the term ends and are on track in finding other employment."

Some staff members with illusions of staying may need to be reminded that they are likely to be replaced. Those who will be leaving and are willing to stay to the end deserve to be helped.

Help to departing staff may need to extend well beyond the traditional contacts, referrals, and recommendations. Departing staff and officials should be briefed on applicable administrative and personnel procedures (e.g., health insurance conversions, retirement fund options, the use of or payment for accumulated leave balances), as well as any conflict of interest policies or restrictions that may affect future employment and activities.

For staff members who have been out of the job market for a long time, more targeted help may be needed (e.g., career counseling, advice on job-hunting strategies, and resume writing assistance). Such help can be made available through referrals or by professionals who are hired to provide such assistance.

Some staff may want to remain in state government. Some former Governors and officials have attempted to "bury" such staff members in the bureaucracy, with mixed results. Such protective movements are vulnerable to public resistance and to private retaliation and change by the next administration. One former gubernatorial aide cautions, "It's hard to hide a red flag in the snow."

Staff carryovers to a new administration are more likely when the transition is friendly and within the same party. Even so, reluctance can be anticipated. A former chief of staff explains, "An outgoing Governor can expect from an incoming Governor the same reluctance the outgoing Governor might have felt about retaining key incumbent officials when he or she was an incoming Governor."

Incoming administrations may argue the need for a dean slate, filled by those loyal to the new leader and committed to his or her policy agenda. Outgoing administrations may point to the need for governmental continuity, immediate technical competence, professional (not just political) loyalty, and commitment to the governorship rather than to a particular administration. Such arguments need not be debated; personal persuasion offers more promise. Departing Governors and officials can and should lobby their incoming counterparts, where appropriate.

The same care and attention should be given to staff at the end of an administration as was given to them at the beginning. Placement assistance, properly planned and sensitively provided, is one way to finish with class.

Finishing with Class

The last few months, weeks, and days of an administration provide an opportunity to finish with good taste and class. This requires attention to the obvious.

The departing Governor and staff should continue good management practices, even while anticipating the end of the administration. Decisions should not be made that would not be acceptable if the current administration was continuing. Expenditures should be planned at a rate that can be sustained and that will not erode budget levels for the balance of the fiscal year. Last-minute personnel reclassifications should be avoided.

Maintaining the integrity of the administration extends to the immediate office as well. Drastic changes in pace can be expected in the Governor's office toward the end of an administration. One former aide recalled the transformation at the end of the last legislative session—"like a plug pulled from an electric clock." Whether the transformation occurs at the end of the last legislative session or the day after the general election, enthusiasm inevitably wanes, anxieties about the future intensify, and animosities may develop toward the strangers who will be occupying the office. The troops need to be rallied, reassured, and energized.

They also need to be thanked. One former Governor offers rather simple and obvious advice: "Say thank you to employees. Leave them with a good taste."

Disposing of Records and Papers

Establishing a Retention Policy

One former Governor reports an “unfortunate shadow” cast over his last months in office “when some overzealous aides discarded or destroyed records that might have more appropriately been saved for historical purposes and sent to the state archives.” He laments, “If I could repeat any of the transition activities so that I might improve on what was done, I would more clearly direct an office-wide records disposition policy during the transition period.”

Former Governors, aides, and professional archivists urge incumbents to establish a policy and systematic program for managing gubernatorial documents. Ideally, this policy should be established soon after assuming office. Incumbents also need to make decisions on the retention and disposition of papers long before they prepare to leave office. (More information and guidance on records management is available in the NGA management note, *Managing Gubernatorial Records: A Guide for Governors*, which was revised in 2006 with assistance from the Council of State Archivists.)

Laws, policies, and procedures regarding gubernatorial documents vary considerably among the states. Incumbent Governors and their staff should review these requirements and look to the designated state agency for active assistance with this increasingly complex and important issue. A policy should be established and a plan should be developed to:

- distinguish personal papers from public documents;
- transfer official records;
- maintain current files; and
- handle personal papers.

Distinguishing Personal Papers from Public Documents

A former chief of staff recalls: “Without question, the most difficult part of the transition out “and the area of greatest shortcoming” was disposition of official and personal papers. Much of the difficulty was in distinguishing between the two.” State statutes should help resolve this dilemma, but few do.

On the surface, distinctions between personal papers and public documents seem obvious.

- Official records are those created or received by the Governor, his or her immediate staff, and other units and individuals in the executive office, in the conduct of government business. These records relate directly to the constitutional and administrative functions of the office and document those functions.
- Personal papers are materials of a personal or private character that do not relate to the carrying out of official duties. These include personal correspondence and political files, where they do not relate to government business.

In practice, such distinctions are murky. For example, political campaign documents dearly would be personal papers. Some documents maintained by a patronage or appointments office about prospective appointees dearly relate to official business, but are highly political and most assuredly are considered by staff to be private. The same may be said about handwritten notes and staff advice about politically or personally sensitive matters. Working papers also may be problematic.

Many states have laws that proscribe the retention and disposition of and access to official records. Common practice permits Governors wide latitude in determining and controlling personal papers.

Such distinctions can be a lawyer’s dream and a Governor’s nightmare. Incumbent Governors and staff should seek the help of the stare archivist to interpret applicable state laws and to distinguish personal papers from public documents. A definition of personal papers should be developed and promulgated, along with guidelines for retention and disposition.

Transferring Official Records

By any definition, official records are considered to be public property. State laws vary on requirements for retention, disposition, and access. Many states mandate the transfer of official records to a designated state agency, such as the state archives. Even if it is not mandated, Governors still can choose this option. Other options include transferring official documents to historical societies and universities.

Professional archivists generally appraise the records for their administrative, fiscal, legal, and historical value, and establish retention and disposition schedules based on their archival value. If left to the final days of an administration, the process will be rushed and incomplete. Incremental transfers throughout an administration are preferable.

Many states have freedom of information and personal privacy laws concerning access to government records. Governors and their staff may be concerned about public access to sensitive or confidential information in official records. Federal law permits the President to restrict access to records regarding appointments, confidential advice, and certain personal files. Governors concerned about the coverage and protection afforded in state statutes should consider initiating remedial legislation.

Questions about record retention, disposition, and access should be resolved before any documents are transferred. A plan for the orderly transfer of official records then should be developed and implemented.

Maintaining Current Files

Although most official records should be transferred by the end of an administration, some documents and files should be retained for immediate use by the incoming administration. Otherwise, the new administration will be handicapped when dealing with pending or residual issues.

Departing staff should be in the best position to identify essential documents needed to deal with such issues and to facilitate efficient office operations. In meeting with counterpart staff to discuss these issues and operations, departing staff should determine, collaboratively, if possible, which documents and files should be kept active.

Handling Personal Papers

As a general rule, personal papers are handled as the Governor desires. Several personal decisions are needed, including where they should be held, under what access controls, and for how long.

One former Governor interviewed six years after leaving office pointed to an adjoining room filled from floor to ceiling with boxes of his personal papers. Another former Governor divided his official records and personal papers between two archival institutions, and suffered through years of definitional and jurisdictional disputes. Such problems can be alleviated, if not prevented, by advance planning.

Repository options for personal papers include the state archives, a historical society, or a university. The decision should not be made casually or sentimentally. Many factors should be considered, including proximity to the Governor's official records, professional competence of the repository, and enduring interest of the papers.

Access of the Governor and staff and others should be negotiated, including permissions required and time limits. A deed of transfer incorporating these conditions should be executed and the papers then transferred accordingly.

Such decisions and arrangements should be completed before leaving office. If they have not been made, they must be handled later, and probably without much help.

Leaving a “Record” of the Administration

Governors may think that the official record of their administration doesn't tell the whole story of its accomplishments. The Governor's legacy and proper place in history may be obscured in the archives.

A positive legacy most often is promoted by a good job, well-documented, while in office. It is likely that undue emphasis on legacy during the transition will be greeted with skepticism by the incoming administration, the general public, and historians thereafter. Indeed, the incoming administration's seeming inattention to transition documents might be attributed to suspicions that the documents are “propaganda” or that they are motivated by a political desire to leave a legacy. A transition oriented to the incoming Governor may have a more credible and lasting effect.

Former Governors have been creative in supplementing the written record. Examples include:

- collections of film clips;
- a library of television and radio interviews;
- oral histories, including videotaped interviews of key administration officials and sage observers; and
- a televised end-of-term review, such as a special cabinet meeting.

Special efforts to present the overall record and major accomplishments of an administration should be approached cautiously and done objectively. Like all other gubernatorial documentation, it should be planned early and well.

Making the Personal Transition

Preparing for Change

Governing isn't easy; not governing isn't either. Making the personal transition to a new life can be very difficult for a departing Governor, spouse, and family. Personal concerns range from decompression to resuming private responsibilities that had been handled by staff or others during the governorship.

One former Governor described in a single word the greatest problem his family experienced when he left office—"loneliness." Another former Governor illustrated his own adjustment this way'. "I sat in my new office the Monday after inauguration and the telephone wasn't ringing. That was an unnerving experience." His personal secretary (who continued in his new office) put the adjustment in perspective: "Starting anew is as difficult as going into the Governor's office."

Starting anew for some may mean adjusting to another public office. For others, it involves a return to life as a private citizen and seemingly mundane responsibilities frequently forgotten. One three-term Governor remarked, "I never realized how much of a man's life he spends on looking for a parking space."

The personal transition may involve some very practical considerations—future employment, housing and moving, transportation, and security. It always requires special attention to self and family. These personal and special needs should be anticipated and planned with the same care given to transition into the office itself.

Future Employment

Many departing Governors and spouses face the prospect of changing careers and finding new employment. That obviously requires personal time and attention. The transition schedule should reserve time for this important matter.

Moving from the governorship to another position may carry some restrictions and most assuredly will carry residual demands. Both should be anticipated.

Departing Governors should review state laws and policies on conflicts of interest or other provisions that may affect future business interests or contacts with state officials. Some states prohibit certain activities for a period of time after leaving office, such as

involvement in matters decided during or pending from a gubernatorial administration. Regardless of any statutory restrictions, departing Governors might choose to impose their own constraints. For instance, some may choose to avoid registered lobbying. Such restrictions and self-imposed constraints should be considered carefully.

The flow of gubernatorial responsibilities does not stop on a Governor's last day in office. Unfinished business must be completed. Public demands continue. These residual and continuing demands should be anticipated and factored into plans for future employment.

Housing and Moving

For most departing Governors, leaving office also means changing residences, a universally stressful experience. Future employment may dictate location. Otherwise, geographic choices must be made. One former Governor advises, "The worst thing you can do is stay in the capital."

Whether returning to the family homestead or acquiring a new residence, a move must be planned. Personal belongings must be gathered and moved. Some household and personal effects may need to be reacquired, such as a car, furniture, and even cleaning supplies. Household maintenance responsibilities should not be forgotten.

Arrangements for housing and moving can be time-consuming and costly. They should be anticipated and planned accordingly.

Transportation and Security

A new Governor's inauguration generally spells the end of state-provided transportation and security for the former Governor. That reality becomes starkly evident when the former Governor and family leave the reviewing stand and begin to fend for themselves.

For most former Governors, the removal of security protection may be a welcome relief: However, any continuing requirements should be anticipated and planned.

The loss of state-provided transportation and drivers may be more traumatic. An automobile may need to be acquired, driver's licenses renewed, and driving itself re-learned. One former Governor suggests this remedy. "Lease a car and hire a chauffeur." A former chief of staff relates this anecdote about the more independent travails of his departing Governor who "slipped out of state late in his last year in office and rented a car in New York to brush up on his driving skills. As he returned the car at LaGuardia Airport, he abruptly changed lanes and cut in front of a cab driver, who rolled down his window, swore, and made an unfriendly gesture at the Governor. 'I realized then my transition out was about complete,' [the Governor] said."

These examples help illustrate the obvious. Arrangements should be made for personal transportation and licenses and, if applicable, retraining in requisite skills.

Special Family Considerations

Many of the transitional challenges that confront a departing Governor extend to the spouse and family as well. Their personal adjustments should be considered carefully.

Spouses may bear the brunt of the more personal transitions that must be made—their own employment, the physical move, arranging for transportation, and the like. They must prepare for change and will need help in doing so.

Special consideration also may be needed for other family members, particularly school-age children. Adjustments to new status and location can be problematic.

Managing the Months Following the End of Term

Handling Correspondence and Calls

Much of what former Governors do during their initial months out of office is essentially state business. For many, the volume of correspondence and calls is substantial and, for some, rather staggering. Too few receive adequate assistance from the state. More often than not, former Governors must look for staff help and forbearance from new employers, or take on the burden themselves, a situation described by one former Governor as “shameful.”

Demands on a recently departing Governor (and spouse) run the gamut from residual gubernatorial correspondence to a myriad of requests for assistance—from the general public, former staff; and even his or her successor. In transitional terms, the tables are now turned. The new Governor now can help the former Governor, by arranging for office space and staff. Indeed, retaining one or more former staff for a reasonable time may be an attractive alternative for a new administration, whose own staff may be overwhelmed with its own business. A cooperative transition might encourage such an arrangement.

A departing Governor should anticipate these needs. Office and secretarial support should be planned and arranged beforehand.

Completing the Disposition of Papers

When not answering correspondence and calls, former Governors may still be faced with the unfinished business of their gubernatorial documents (See Chapter on Disposing of Records and Papers). The task is the same whether in or out of office. The amount of help available after leaving office makes completion more difficult.

While still in office, departing Governors should anticipate their needs for continuing assistance with their public records and private papers. Such assistance should be arranged before leaving.

Continuing Involvement in State Affairs

Incumbent Governors spend a great deal of time during their administrations speaking about public issues and appearing at public functions. These demands don't cease when leaving office.

Former Governors frequently are pressured or personally tempted to comment on the new Governor and administration. Some do and some do not. One who does not explains: "I imposed a moratorium on myself relative to issues, with no time limitations, because I did not believe I should be second-guessing a new Governor. If I had wanted to, then I should have run for office again." A former Governor should set his or her own policy and follow it accordingly.

Involvement in and commentary on more generic public issues such as education and the economy may be more situational, depending on the issue and its importance to the former Governor. Continuing demands can be expected for political and personal appearances, public statements and speeches, and service on various boards or commissions. Some welcome the opportunity. Others prefer to take a less active role. Whether active or passive, a policy should be established on dealing with public issues and public appearances.

Former Governors also can expect a variety of requests for personal help, including political advice, letters of introduction, and assistance with business problems. These add to the pressures of other demands on a former Governor's time and schedule.

Approaches for controlling and managing these demands again are situational and personalized. One former Governor responds "by saying 'no' frequently, but not with great success." Other reports, "I have begun to tell some that I am in the practice of law and will have to charge for my time."

Scheduling assistance may be needed during the initial months out of office. Such assistance should be arranged beforehand.

Assistance Available During Transition

Financial Support

State funds appropriated or reallocated for transition typically are targeted for assistance to the Governor-elect. Few states earmark financial assistance for the former Governor, in those cases, the amounts are disproportionately small and generally inadequate.

The initial demands on a former Governor are substantial. An office, staff support, and related supplies and equipment will be needed.

Post-term assistance from state government, such as a stipend, staff retention, or both, should be arranged beforehand, when possible, to handle residual state business. Potential sources for supplementary assistance should be explored and arranged before leaving, as well.

Some former Governors have obtained help from foundations. Others have arranged fellowships with universities or nonacademic institutions. Many have negotiated an understanding with their new employer, such as using an understood portion of time and staff support for public affairs.

Some former Governors have borne the post-term financial burden themselves. Advance planning might help prevent that situation.

Advice and Technical Assistance

Many former Governors and senior staff have offered to help their counterparts—while entering or leaving office. Incumbent Governors and staff who will or may be departing office can benefit from those who have done so already. Such counsel and expertise can be pursued directly or arranged through NGA's Office of Management Consulting and Training.

The Office of Management Consulting and Training also can help provide or arrange more intensive transition assistance. Such consultation can be tailored to the specific concerns and needs of an incoming or outgoing administration. And as former Governors and staff advise, the earlier the better.