



# PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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## **PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE LAUNCHES CENTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION**

*The center will serve as the only permanent source of critical information and assistance for presidential transitions in 2016 and beyond*

**WASHINGTON** —The nonprofit, nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service today announced the launch of the Center for Presidential Transition to help candidates navigate the transition process and ensure our next president will be ready to govern on day one.

A year from today, a new president will take the oath of office and instantly assume responsibility for a four million-person organization with an annual budget of \$3.7 trillion. The new chief executive will have to deal with a multitude of global emergencies and pressing economic and domestic challenges, while simultaneously filling 4,000 critical leadership positions.

“There is an expectation that the nation’s newly elected president will hit the ground running, but the transition of power and knowledge from one president to another has traditionally been rushed and chaotic, resulting in delays in filling key jobs, policy blunders and management missteps,” said Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service. “A lack of thorough preparation could put the nation in jeopardy and seriously impede the progress of a new administration.”

“Even in the midst of the heated campaign, it’s imperative that the presidential candidates begin the hard work of preparing to govern as early as this spring, long before the political party nominating conventions,” Stier said.

New data from the Center for Presidential Transition shows that the lengthy confirmation process often leaves critical positions vacant for extended periods of time, including highly sensitive vacancies dealing with public safety as well as economic and national security.

Historically, less than 30 percent of a president’s top leadership positions are filled by the August congressional recess, and nearly 19 percent of those positions remain vacant during a president’s administration.

“The 77 days between the election and the inauguration are not enough time for an incoming administration to identify and vet their top management team or get up to speed on the complex policy and management issues they’ll face,” said Stier. “The result has been that every administration has started slowly and behind, negatively impacting policymaking and diminishing the capabilities of our government.”

Although the transition between administrations occurs every four or eight years, there has never been a single place to store the body of knowledge relating to presidential transitions, forcing each incoming

administration to essentially start from scratch. The Partnership's new center will fill this void by creating a permanent organization dedicated to presidential transitions.

The Center for Presidential Transition will provide the only existing repository for documentation from previous transitions, offer guidance on how to set up and execute a transition, work with the outgoing administration to encourage a smooth transfer of power, share management recommendations for the new administration to address government's talent and operational challenges, engage Congress to promote presidential transition reforms and prepare new political appointees to lead effectively.

The center will also link to the good work of other organizations that study or support presidential transitions, including the White House Transition Project and federal agencies. This enables the center to serve as a "one-stop" resource for transition planning information.

"During the coming year, the Center for Presidential Transition will work with the campaigns, the White House, federal agencies, Congress and other interested parties to help ensure that the transfer of power on January 20, 2017 is organized and well-planned, and not left to luck or chance," Stier said.

The Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition recommends that:

- The presidential candidates announce a transition chairman by the first week of April so that this individual can set up a transition office by May.
- The transition staff compile lists of potential top-level appointees, including individuals who know how to manage large organizations.
- The transition team formulate the new administration's policy agenda and develop a management strategy for implementing those priorities.
- Once elected, the next president should have the White House staff and top 100 agency leaders in place immediately after Inauguration Day.
- 300 more key political positions should be filled by the August congressional recess.

In a message to the presidential candidates, the center's six advisory board members – Democrats and Republicans who have been involved in planning, executing and closely observing presidential transitions — echoed these recommendations.

"Some may view such early preparation as presumptuous, but the days of candidates attacking each other for 'measuring the drapes' should be over. The global security environment and wide range of domestic concerns demand that the next team start preparing as soon as possible," they said in the letter.

The six members of the Center for Presidential Transition's advisory board are Joshua Bolten, former chief of staff to President George W. Bush; Clay Johnson, former executive director, Bush-Cheney Presidential Transition; Ted Kaufman, former senator and advisor, Obama-Biden Transition Project; Michael Leavitt, former governor of Utah and former chairman, Romney Readiness Project; Thomas "Mack" McLarty, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton; and Donna Shalala, former secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

As part of the center's launch, the Partnership will unveil a Presidential Transition Guide, which will share many of the lessons learned from past transitions and suggest best practices and key choices that will most likely contribute to smooth and successful transitions in the future. The content in the guide will be the basis of a new digital platform that will provide a central hub for transition work, research and analysis.

The Partnership's presidential transition work is currently supported by The Boston Consulting Group and the following companies and foundations: Accenture, the Ford Foundation, the IBM Center for the Business of Government, McKinsey & Company and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

The Partnership for Public Service is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that believes good government starts with good people. We help government serve the needs of all Americans by strengthening the civil service and the systems that support it. The Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition helps ensure the efficient transfer of power that our country deserves. The center's Ready to Govern<sup>®</sup> initiative assists candidates with the transition, works with Congress to reform the transition process, develops management recommendations to address our government's operational challenges and trains new political appointees. Learn more at [presidentialtransition.org](https://presidentialtransition.org).

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