



## BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Public Safety and Government Operations

Bill 21-0059

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### Study and Report – Succession Planning

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**Sponsor:** *Councilmember Robert Stokes*

**Introduced:** *March 22, 2021*

**Purpose:**

For the purpose of requiring that the Department of Human Resources, in consultation with certain other agencies, submit a report to the Mayor and City Council examining the short and long term sustainability of the City's internal workforce, to ensure that we are able to provide and maintain appropriate service delivery standards for our constituents; and providing for a special effective date.

**Effective:** Date of enactment

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### Agency Reports

Agency	Comments
Law Department	
Department of Human Resources	Favorable/Amendment
Department of Finance	Favorable
Employees' Retirement System	
Baltimore City Public School System	
Mayor's Office of Employment Development	

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## Analysis

### Background

Succession planning is the plan an organization develops to meet its most critical employment needs. Now, while these plans are frequently used in the private sector, succession plans are rarely employed in the public sector. When most jurisdictions have embarked on this process of assessing their current and future workforce needs, they've found that there are large numbers of individuals eligible for retirement, and the potential loss of knowledge and experience could easily "disrupt the continuity of city services."

As of 2018, the millennial generation now accounts for the largest number of workers in the American labor force according to the Pew Research Center and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Contrary to those numbers, public sector employment of millennials has lagged behind the national average, potentially creating a management and workforce crisis as more experienced workers are beginning to transition into retirement. The City of Baltimore faces that same problem as we currently employ over 13,000 people, many of whom are currently eligible for retirement, or are within a five-year window of eligibility. Knowing that this looming crisis is upon us, we need to take the time to examine the short and long-term sustainability of our internal workforce to ensure that we are able to provide and maintain current service levels, while also creating recruitment initiatives to attract local residents to fill these vacancies to build our economy.

In a survey conducted approximately 5 years ago by the International Public Management Association for Human Resources members, 60 percent said they were developing a plan for replacing employees and managers at all levels. But only 11 percent actually had a process in place. When interviewed, many of the respondents expressed that succession planning takes support from top leadership for it to be effective. Those in leadership must have an understanding of a departments' strategic goals, analysis of workplace needs, a solid sense of the attributes needed for critical positions, and a training and development component that will help employees gather skills way before the day when they may be needed.

Organizations that are looking to develop and implement a succession planning program need to be cognizant that this process is more than just increasing employee training, but establishing systematic cultural change. The findings from assessments conducted by the Denver and Kansas City municipal governments led to the creation of a "workforce readiness" program which provides all interested employees with the opportunity to receive training for career development skills that they need for advancement. This program replaces the bureaucratic mentality of just replacing people in positions when they become vacant, but implementing an ongoing process where individuals have the development capacity to assume greater responsibilities and exercise increased technical proficiency and expanded management roles.

### Seven Step to Succession Planning:

1. Create an organizational strategy;
2. Define the Key Positions;
3. Clarify Performance Metrics;

4. Evaluating Bench Strength;
5. Build the Succession Management Pool;
6. Professional Development; and
7. Promotion.

**Organizational Benefits for Succession Planning:**

1. Identifying the bench strength that is in place will help departments and divisions meet both long-term and emergency leadership, management and non-supervisory needs;
2. It sends a positive message throughout the workforce. Promoting people is good for morale, and promoting from within encourages people to take on responsibility, assume risk and grow through their achievements; and
3. The organization will have a clearer sense of the strengths of internal candidates, enabling more informed selection and promotion decisions.

Gary O'Bannon, Director of Kansas City's Human Resource Department stated, "Succession planning starts when an employee walks in the door... Otherwise, you lose valuable employee development time and your ability to retain potential future leaders."

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**Additional Information**

**Fiscal Note:** Not Available

**Information Source(s):** Governing Magazine; Business of Government; Harvard Business Review

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Analysis Date: May 10, 2021

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