

Chris Christie Out as Trump Transition Team Leader

Twenty-four hours ago, the status of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, embroiled in the continuing Bridgegate controversy, as leader of the Trump Transition Team was suddenly “in question.”

Now, it's certain: He's out. And in his place, President-Elect Donald Trump has turned to a man who has become his closest ally: Vice President-Elect Mike Pence. The change was announced Friday afternoon in a statement from the Trump Transition Team declaring a “new phase” in the White House transition process.

Pence will be directly aided by vice chair Dr. Ben Carson, putting two faith leaders in arguably the most important roles at this infancy stage of the new administration. Christie will stay on as an executive committee member of the transition team, as well, alongside Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), U.S. Army Lt. Gen. (ret.) Michael Flynn, Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.).

“Together this outstanding group of advisers, led by Vice President-elect Mike Pence, will build on the initial work done under the leadership of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie to help prepare a transformative government ready to lead from day one,” Trump said. “The mission of our team will be clear: put together the most highly qualified group of successful leaders who will be able to implement our change agenda in Washington.

Other members of the Transition Team's executive committee include:

- U.S. Rep. Lou Barletta (R-Pa.)

- U.S. Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.)
- Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi
- U.S. Rep. Chris Collins (R-N.Y.)
- Son-in-law Jared Kushner
- U.S. Rep. Tom Marino (R-Pa.)
- Anti-establishment GOP “megadonor” Rebekah Mercer
- Trump campaign finance manager Steven Mnuchin
- U.S. Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.)
- Trump campaign economic adviser Anthony Scaramucci
- Venture capitalist and PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel
- Son Donald Trump Jr.
- Son Eric Trump
- Daughter Ivanka Trump
- RNC Chairman Reince Priebus
- Trump Campaign CEO Stephen K. Bannon

The transition team’s day-to-day operations will be led by Rick Dearborn, who had been serving as Sessions’ chief of staff. He will replace Richard Bagger, who is returning to the private sector.

Dearborn’s own leadership team will consist of:

- Kellyanne Conway, Senior Adviser
- David Bossie, Deputy Executive Director
- Stephen Miller, National Policy Director
- Jason Miller, Communications Director
- Hope Hicks, National Press Secretary
- Dan Scavino, Director of Social Media
- Don McGahn, General Counsel
- Katie Walsh, Senior Adviser

“Together, we will begin the urgent task of rebuilding this nation—specifically jobs, security and opportunity,” Trump said. “This team is going to get to work immediately to make America great again.”

Pence also issued his own statement regarding his new role in

the transition:

“President-elect Trump will bring about fundamental change in Washington, and these are the right people to make that happen. This team of experienced leaders will form the building blocks of our Presidential Transition Team staff leadership roster, and will work with elected officials and tireless volunteers to prepare our government for the transfer of power on Jan. 20.”