COOP Coalition Member Guide

Contents

Introduction to Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)

COOP is defined by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) as an internal effort within individual components of a government to ensure the capability exists to continue essential component functions across a wide range of potential emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies.

In the wake of significant events including (but not limited to) Hurricane Harvey, COVID-19, and the natural disasters nationwide that are increasing in frequency and length, continuity planning has become a vital element in emergency planning. Organizations across the country at all levels including federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal jurisdictions have begun preparing for emergencies by engaging their staff and committing the necessary time and resources for developing effective and realistic plans. The federal government has been the leader in this arena and has required all departments to produce COOPs based on published directives and guidance from the Department of Homeland Security. Specific guidance is referenced below.

- **Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 (CPG 101)** *https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/CPG_101_V2_30NOV2010_FINAL_508.pdf*

- **Continuity Guidance Circular -** https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/Continuity-Guidance-Circular_031218.pdf

- **NFPA 1600 –** *https://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/aboutthecodes/1600/1600-13-pdf.pdf*

To support the strategic goals for operational continuity, organizations across the country are adopting continuity planning as a high priority. Due to the prioritization by high level management, a continuity program is being developed by your organization to ensure the ability to recover and provide vital services to your constituents following a major disruption.

Purpose of a Continuity Plan

Continuity of operations planning ensures the ability of an organization to recover and resume operations following a disruption. It is a basic building block of any emergency planning program and is applicable not only in large-scale disaster events or emergencies, but in common non-emergency workplace disruptions as well. Examples might include:

- Facility issues such as an HVAC problem, plumbing leak, or power outage

- Relocation to new office space or the reorganization of divisional units
- Workforce reduction due to illness or absenteeism, loss of key staff due to a workforce strike, or the inability to hire a sufficient level of staff in a timely manner.
- Crime or theft

It is vital that organizations go through the planning process to develop viable and effective continuity plans to respond to major disasters, as well as maintain operations during smaller localized disruptions. **You can think of your organization's continuity plan as your "extra set of car keys".**

Consider the following questions:
- What type of events could cause a disruption in your workplace?

- Where would or could you go if you must leave your building?

- How would you communicate with important personnel and what would you say?

- What do you do every day that you would consider your most important functions?

- What equipment and resources are needed to complete your functions?

These are all important questions we will cover in the following pages to ensure your organization has the necessary resources to build a strong plan.

COOP Initiative for Your Organization

Your organization has initiated a continuity of operations plan development project to assist all departments with plan development and ongoing plan maintenance. This project is supported by top management within your organization and a core

Planning Team has been assembled to support this overall effort. The long-term success of the project depends upon:

- Continuity of Operations Plans being developed and maintained with a minimal allocation of time and human resources.
- Effective guidance being provided. Many planners will have little or no experience with continuity or emergency planning and will need support.

Continuity of Operations consultation and technical support will be available for all planners via telephone and the internet throughout this planning process.

BOLDplanning.com Help Desk

Phone: 615-469-5558

Email: help@boldplanning.com

Elements of a COOP

The elements of a continuity program are easily identified, and the process of developing a base plan is relatively simple. In general, a continuity program tries to answer basic questions about people, places, and things:

Staff Information

- Who are the key people in your organization?
- How are these people organized into teams?
- What are their individual responsibilities?
- If key staff members are unavailable, which individuals are authorized to assume management responsibilities?

Facility Information

- How many different facilities are used by your organization?

- What resources and equipment are available and necessary at each facility?

- How do you contact and communicate with the facility manager?

- If a certain facility were unavailable, where would staff go to resume critical operations?

Resource Information

- What essential records and systems are required for your organization to provide basic services?

- What physical equipment is necessary to perform mission-essential functions?

- What communications equipment is available during emergencies?

By gathering this data during the initial planning process and following up with routine maintenance, an organization can dramatically improve its preparedness.

Mission Essential Functions

MEFs are functions that cannot be deferred during an emergency or disaster. MEFs are very high level. An agency can begin identifying its MEFs by asking:

- What is our mission?
- What is our purpose?
- Which public goods or services do we provide, and to whom?
- Which of these goods and services absolutely cannot be deferred during an emergency?
- What is the agency required to do by law, executive order, or directive?

An organization should first look to the statutory requirements assigned to it by law. MEFs can also be components of the agency's mission statement or strategic plan. MEFs are typically something unique that the agency or institution of higher education does, such as provide a product or service to the public, another agency, or some other external body. If one division or branch of an agency provides a

product or service to another division or branch within the same agency, the product or service is unlikely to be a MEF. In fact, many of an agency's day-to-day functions support MEFs but are not MEFs themselves.

WHAT IS NOT A MISSION-ESSENTIAL FUNCTION (MEF)?

Some functions are not mission essential, but they support the agency's mission. An agency whose mission is to clear the roads after a snowstorm must maintain its vehicle fleet. But vehicle maintenance is not the agency's mission. The mission, and the mission-essential function, is to clear the roads. Maintaining the vehicle fleet is an important function, but it is one that supports the performance of a MEF. It is a primary business function (PBF). A PBF is a specific supporting activity that an organization must conduct to perform its MEFs. PBFs are typically enablers that make it possible for an organization to perform its mission. Finally, some functions may be part of an agency's mission but are deferrable. If a function can be deferred during an emergency or disaster, it is not a MEF.

- Please review the definition of a mission-essential function (below)
- Please rename the filename to "YYYY-MM-DD_MissionEssentialFunctionsWorksheet_JurisdictionName"
- Add your jurisdiction name to the top right of the worksheet

Components of a Mission Essential Function

Identify
- Enter the name of the department, division, and subdivision of the organizational unit responsible for conducting the essential function
- Use standard case for all text. Do not use ALL CAPS
- Avoid acronyms; please spell out all words in your title and description

Criticality
- Use dropdowns to choose an option in all columns for each essential function

Time
- Use the drop-down to identify the time in which the function must be recovered (AKA recovery time objective or RTO)

Validate
- This column should be completed by the primary continuity planner/planning team chief of the jurisdiction

The Planning Process

Continuity planning is a team effort. It is designed to ensure that *everyone* is

prepared and informed in the case of an emergency and must involve the entire organization to be truly effective.

- **Executive management** – Provides direction and resources that will successfully develop and maintain the plan. Involvement from the beginning is essential.

- **Managers of key units and departments** – Provide details about their specific staff and operational requirements.

- **Facility managers** – Maintain building operations and relocation options.

- **Information technology managers** – Provide detailed disaster recovery programs for IT infrastructure and provide support services to other units during disruptions.

- **Staff members** – Those who have key involvement in day-to-day operations can provide details of Mission Essential Functions to the COOP planner.

Depending on the size and complexity of an organization, the Planning Team could be as small as four or five individuals. However, for medium and large organizations, many individuals will be actively involved in the ongoing planning process. Most organizations can complete their initial plan quickly with the following estimated time commitments over a 3–6-month period:

- **Executive management** – 5 hours

- **Primary continuity planner** – 40 hours

- **Planning Team member** – 15 hours

The actual planning process will consist of four phases:

- **Preparation** – Research and gather existing information within your organization and designate the planning team members.

- **Training and plan development** – Learn the details of a continuity plan and develop the plan through team interaction.

- **Plan review and approval** – Review the draft plan to make sure it is complete and correct before receiving final approval from executive management.

- **Plan maintenance** – Maintain and update the plan over time. To be useful during a disaster or disruption, the continuity plan must be kept up to date. This routine maintenance effort includes testing, training, and exercising of the plan.

Platform Access for Your Organization

Each department will have a primary continuity planner/planning team chief who will act as the primary point of contact for the entire process. Password access will be granted to the planning team chief, who can then grant platform access to other planning team members. In larger organizations with complex departments or remote locations, it may become necessary for each individual business unit to designate a separate planning team chief, request additional platform access, and develop their own unique plan for their operations.

BOLDplanning.com Planning Platform

The centerpiece of your organization's continuity operations planning strategy is the BOLDplanning.com platform. This platform can be accessed through any internet browser and uses the latest internet security protocols to safeguard all your organization's data. You can access your plan through the internet. Your organization's branded web address will use the BOLDplanning.com platform address (i.e., state.boldplanning.com or county.boldplanning.com).

To log onto the platform:

1. Go to your unique website and find the login window in the top left corner
2. Username: Enter the username provided by your project manager
3. Password: Enter the provided password. This is *CASE SENSITIVE*
4. Enter the security code shown in the login window of your computer.
5. Click the login button to begin plan development.

First time users must enter some basic data for security purposes. The platform will prompt you to manage your contact information, customize your username and password, and answer two security questions that will be used to verify your identity should you lose or forget your access information in the future.

Continuity of Operations Planning Training

BOLDplanning offers a comprehensive set of support services to assist organizations with the development of continuity of operations plans. Along with the BOLDplanning.com platform, BOLDplanning provides:

- Full-day continuity of operations training seminars

- Written documentation and guidance in conjunction with the platform

- Telephone and internet support for technical issues or continuity-related questions

The continuity of operations training seminars are hands-on training sessions and are held at on-site facilities or through the BOLD Remote Workshop capability. Workshop instructors will aid participants as they begin entering their specific plan data.

Minimum Standards for Viable Continuity Capability

BOLDplanning's subject matter experts conduct a qualitative and quantitative review of each organization or department's continuity plan and provide feedback on how they can improve each planning element in their continuity plan. By following this feedback and incorporating these improvements, planners can be assured to have a complete and compliant continuity plan that is useful and understandable. If a plan annex receives an "incomplete" grade, the stoplight on the report for this section will be red. If a section "needs improvement", the report will show a yellow light. If the section meets the minimal requirements for satisfactory, the section will show an "excellent" grade which will show a green light.

Incomplete   Needs Improvement   Excellent

Main Plan

General Info Page

General Information provides background and specific information pertinent to your organization and your plan. It has a single screen of drop-down boxes and free-form data entry forms. Some of the drop-down boxes are "pre-filled" for you, and you will not be able to change them.

The General Information screen uses two terms which have specialized meanings within the context of the Plan. These are:

- **Supersession:** A statement identifying whether this is your company's first continuity plan or if it is replacing a previous continuity plan.

- **Devolution:** The transfer or delegation of responsibility for your organization's functions in the event of a disruption of operations.

Minimum Standards:
- Identify the Name of your Organization

- Identify your department head/organization head

- Provide a mission statement for your department/organization

- Provide a supersession statement for your department/organization

- Identify who activates computers at your alternate facilities

Note: You can find this at the bottom of the "General Info" button

Teams and Responsibilities

Organization and teamwork are key to continuity planning success. The following Teams must be found within your continuity plan: an Executive team, Planning Team, and a Continuity Team (separate from the Planning Team).
The **Executive Team** is led by the continuity manager and holds the following responsibilities:

- Establishes continuity as a priority

- Serves as the organization's manager for continuity of operations

- Oversees the overall development and update of continuity plans

- Ensures that organization leadership and continuity personnel are properly trained, and facilities properly equipped

- Briefs senior leadership as required

- Submit the continuity plan for approval

- Develop long term continuity budget and ensure budgetary support recommendations.

The **Planning Team** is led by the primary continuity planner/planning team chief and holds the following responsibilities:

- Manages day to day continuity plan development

- Coordinates with the planning team

- Manages plan development

- Oversee tests, training, exercises, corrective action planning, and long-term planning efforts.

The **Continuity Team** (aka Emergency Relocation Group, ERG) is led by a Continuity Team chief and holds the following responsibilities:

- Participation in tests, training, and exercises

- Prepare office go kits that contain all needed information, supplies, and materials for continuity activation

- Ensure they (and their families) are prepared for an emergency and continuity plan activation

- Report to the continuity facility, or other assigned work area, whenever the continuity plan is activated.

Minimum standards:
- ☐ The department/organization has a Planning Team and a Continuity Team
- ☐ Designate specific personnel to perform on each team within your plan. Each team must have at least two members assigned
- ☐ Ensure the number of personnel on the teams is comparable to the size of your department
- ☐ Provide a clear and complete description of each team member's role and responsibilities
- ☐ An Executive Team should be identified in the Common Data Area's 'Teams' button
- ☐ A Pandemic Team may be identified for your department/organization using the Common Data Area's 'Teams' button

Facilities

"Primary facilities" are the facilities that support your organizations day-to-day operations. This may be one floor in a building, one building, multiple buildings on one campus, or multiple buildings geographically spread out. Identifying these primary facilities will help you identify alternate facilities that can be used for day-to-day operation if the ability to use your primary facility has been disrupted (whether planned or unplanned).

*Considering COVID-19, is your organization conducting business primarily remotely? Do you still have a physical building that employees can use if they are experiencing technical difficulties or have too many distractions at home? Is the office now the secondary location?

Most of your primary facility information should be readily accessible by contacting the facility manager for your organization.

Consider the following when choosing alternate facilities:

- **"First-choice" facilities** – Locations that can easily support the relocation of your organization. Typically, these are additional facilities managed by the organization that may be geographically close and already have supporting services in place.

- **Regional facilities** – In the event of a large-scale event, first-choice facilities may be equally affected and unavailable. For this contingency, regional options should be determined for relocation.

- Remember to avoid **deconfliction**, too many departments/divisions at one alternate, by communicating with other departments prior to approving your organizations continuity plan.

Minimum Standards:
- Provide at least one alternate facility per primary facility and clearly identify which alternate facility serves as the alternate for each primary
- Provide a well-defined list of resources at both primary and alternate facilities; list resources as either pre-positioned or if there is a need to transport resources to the alternate location

- Identify number of staff at the primary facility and the number of staff that will need to relocate to the alternate facilities
- Identify facility managers for primary and alternate facilities.

Mission Essential Functions

The goal of continuity is to continue the organization's essential functions. This enables your organization or department to choose the right people, resources, and planning for continuity, as well as prioritizing resources and focus following an emergency or threat. These are prioritized functions which must be performed under all operational conditions, not the emergency response functions performed during a certain event. Essential functions should be descriptive and not one-word descriptions. Consider the following factors for each function:

- **Length of disruption** – Determine the length of time that can lapse before each function must be resumed. Certain functions may need to be continued within a few hours of the initial disruption. Others may be able to be delayed for days or even weeks after the event to stabilize more critical functions.

- **Prioritization** – Determine how critical each function is relative to the length of disruption above. Additional resources will be allocated to high-priority functions while lower priority functions are put on hold until the situation is stabilized.

- **Required personnel** – Identify the staff required for each function. Give attention to the number of individuals and the type of individuals *(management, technical, administrative, specialized, etc.)* required to perform each function.

- **Required resources** – Identify the resources required to perform each function. It is important to link these resources with each Mission Essential Function.

Minimum Standards:

- Identify at least three mission essential functions
  Note: mission essential functions are conducted during normal operations; they are not actions taken specifically during an event or emergency

response to an event
- Write your functions with a clear, easy to read description
- Include an estimate of personnel and essential records or resources required to complete each function
- Sort the functions by Recovery Time Objective (RTO) Tiers and prioritize those functions within the tiers
- Link interdependencies (people, places, things) for each essential function
- Functions can be the result of the completion of a series of tasks. Avoid entering each task as its own function. Instead, define the function and then list all supporting documents for procedures, etc., by naming them as essential records and linking them to the function

Orders of Succession

Orders of succession are formal, sequential listings of positions (rather than specific names of individuals) that identify who is authorized to assume a particular leadership or management role when the incumbent dies, resigns, or is otherwise unable to perform the functions and duties of his/her position.

- Organizations should establish and document, in writing, orders of succession in advance and in accordance with applicable laws to ensure there is an *orderly and predefined* transition of leadership during any change in normal operations. In some cases, organizations may have the latitude to develop orders of succession, while in other cases, succession is prescribed by statute, order, or directive.

An organization's legal department or equivalent should develop and review the orders of succession to ensure legal sufficiency. Lawyers can also address legal issues related to rules and procedures officials must follow regarding succession; when succession occurs; the method of notification; and any other limits. Orders of succession include, but are not limited to, leadership, elected officials, and key managers. Establishing an order of succession for elected officials or organization heads ensures a designated official is available to serve as the acting official until appointed by an appropriate authority, replaced by a new permanently appointed official, or otherwise relieved. Organizations should include at least three positions permitted to succeed to the identified leadership position, if possible. In addition, organizations should consider identifying one position within the orders of succession that is typically working in a location that is not in direct proximity to the other listed positions.

Minimum standards:

- Identify the Order of Succession for the department head
- Identify the succession line for the primary continuity planner
- Identify successions for all leadership positions in your organization
- Ensure each succession line is three-deep.

Delegations of Authority

Delegations of authority ensure the orderly and predetermined transition of responsibilities within an organization and are related to, but distinct from, orders of succession. A written delegation of authority provides the recipients with the legal authorization to act on behalf of the organization head or other officials for specified purposes and to carry out specific duties. Delegations of authority will generally specify a particular function that an individual is authorized to perform and includes restrictions and limitations associated with that authority. Delegations of authority are an essential part of an organization's continuity program and should have sufficient breadth to ensure the organization can perform its essential functions.

An organization's legal department or equivalent should develop and review the delegations of authority to ensure legal sufficiency. Delegations of authority are frequently tied to specific positions, but since many delegations require specific training, qualifications, and certification, organizations must also associate some delegations of authority with specific individuals (e.g., delegations for committing funds, contracting, and technical direction). Organizations should ensure delegations of authority are identified as essential records, available during a continuity activation, and updated on a regular basis.

Minimum standards:

- Identify Acting Agents and Delegated Agents for the Delegations of Authority that are pre-loaded in the system. If they do not apply, you may delete them.
- Ensure each list of delegated agents is three-deep.
- Include triggering events by clicking on 'Edit Delegation.' Emergency authorities will be delegated following a set event, such as a declaration of emergency or COOP plan implementation. A common triggering event is: "Incapacitation or unavailability of Acting Agent."
- Include limitations to the delegated authority, if there are any, by clicking 'Edit Delegation.' A common entry for limitations is: "Same as Acting Agent."

- Recommendation: To strengthen your plan, add more Delegations of Authority relevant to your organization.
- Recommendation: HR departments understand and can provide guidance on pay, leave, telework…etc. If applicable, consider adding personnel from HR into your Delegations of Authority.

Alert Notification Procedures

The status and operations of an organization is important to external stakeholders. The organization should develop processes to communicate the organization's operating status to staff and stakeholders; options include establishing a 1-800 hotline or website, announcing via radio or television broadcast, or disseminating via email.

Personnel accountability is a critical function for all organizations. Organizations need the means and processes in place to contact and account for employees. Organizations should establish procedures to contact all staff, including contractors, in the event of an emergency to communicate and coordinate activities, provide alerts and notifications, and communicate how, and the extent by which, employees are expected to remain in contact with the organization during an emergency.

Organizations are responsible for supporting noncontinuity personnel who may be affected by an emergency that causes a continuity plan activation. Organizations should develop a strategy to utilize and support noncontinuity personnel during continuity plan activations and operations, which includes the ability to communicate and coordinate with non-continuity personnel and provide guidance on the roles and responsibilities during a continuity plan activation and operations.

Minimum standards:
- Identify the procedure to follow to notify staff that the continuity plan is being activated - this information comes included in your plan template
- Identify how notifications to all staff will be handled
- Identify how notifications to stakeholders outside of the organization will be handled
- Describe the process of how the messages will be sent and by whom
- Describe the process of how personnel can respond to notifications
- Identify all communication methods that may be used for notifications
  Ex: phone call trees, websites, phone call-out systems…etc.

IMPORTANT: distinguishing between an alert and a notification:

- Alert: a warning of a potential need to activate the continuity plan

- Notification: the message that the continuity plan is being activated; notifications sent to all required people within the organization.

Essential Records/Resources

Information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity plan activation are all categorized as essential records. Essential records are those records an organization needs to meet operational responsibilities under national security emergencies or other emergency conditions (emergency operating records) or to protect the legal and financial rights of the government and those affected by government activities (legal and financial rights records). Essential records were previously referred to as vital records. Emergency operating records are essential to the continued functioning or recovery of an organization. Legal and financial rights records are critical to carrying out an organization's essential legal and financial functions and vital to the protection of the legal and financial rights of individuals who are directly affected by that organization's activities.

Minimum standards:
- Ensure your plan identifies a valid number of Essential Records and Resources comparable to the size/complexity of your organization.
  Note: At least three Essential Records and Resources are recommended
- At a minimum, establish:
  - Name of essential record or resource
  - Description of the essential record or resource (what it is and how it is used)
  - Description of how the essential record or resource is protected (maintaining/backing up) and who is responsible for this process

Note: Consider paper records and other types of unique resources that are difficult to replace. Essential records are not just electronic documents; they could also include maps, manuals, or other types of printed materials as well as unique and hard to replace equipment.

Drive Away or Go Kits

Contain supplies, equipment, and documentation necessary for your alternate facilities to be sustained for up to thirty days. These portable kits are transported by team members during relocation to an alternate site. The pre-loaded list will help you get started.

Minimum standards:

- ☐ Ensure the pre-loaded kits are modified to meet the requirements of your organization.
- ☐ Ensure you update the list with additional items and quantities needed. Note: Hide the system's basic kit templates your organization will not be utilizing.

FEMA Drive-Away Kit Sample

Identification and charge cards ● Government identification card ● Driver's license ● Government travel card ● Health insurance card ● Personal charge card	Communication equipment ● Laptop Computer ● Government cell phone ● Personal cell phone
Hand-carried vital records	Chargers/extra batteries for phones/GPS
Directions to Alternate Facility	Bottled water and non-perishable food
Maps of surrounding area	Medical needs ● Emergency contact information for employees ● Over-the-counter medications
Continuity plan	Business and personal contact numbers

Communications

During an emergency, the ability of a department or agency to execute its essential functions at its primary or alternate location depends on the availability of communications systems. These systems support connectivity among key government leadership, internal elements, other organizations, and the public under all conditions.

The success of continuity programs is dependent on the availability of and access to communications systems, as well as information technology systems, with sufficient resiliency, redundancy, and accessibility available to perform essential functions and provide critical services during a disruption.

Special focus should be placed on resources used for communicating with staff, related support agencies, the public, and local emergency responders. Please identify existing communications resources and alternate methods, as well as internal and external procedures for alert notification.

Minimum standards:
- Identify several modes of communication
  Ex: cell phones, social media, SMS, email
- Clearly describe how each mode of communication is used during normal operations, or how it is intended to be used during a continuity event
- State whether each mode is internal use, external use, mobile capable, and/or secure
- Determine the needed quantities
- Identify the priority for each entry

Security and Access Controls

Your plan should clearly describe the Access Controls of each facility within your plan and the security measures for each facility. This section should include who has master control access. Ensure there is an order of succession and delegation of authority for this process.

Minimum standards:

- Identify the measures that limit personnel and non-personnel from entering or moving throughout each facility.
- List the measures currently in place; guards, metal detectors, locked doors and file cabinets, key-card entries...etc.
- Recommendation: Add cyber security comments to strengthen your plan. Note: If you have information regarding the security of your facilities in an existing document, you may upload it to the File Archives and reference it here.

Family Disaster Plan

The system provides a Family Disaster Plan based on FEMA's suggested best practices for family preparedness. It is the responsibility of each person within your organization to share and discuss this information with their family in advance of disaster events.

Family Disaster Plans are pre-written and there are no minimum standards to a green in this section

A Family Disaster Plan assists in families being prepared for emergencies any time of day, no matter where they are (work, home, school, etc.). FEMA's *https://www.ready.gov/plan* has resources for creating Family Disaster Plans, and getting kids involved.

The steps identified on *ready.gov/plan* include:

1. Put a plan together by discussing the questions below with your family, friends, or household to start your emergency plan.
2. Consider specific needs in your household.
3. Fill out a Family Emergency Plan
4. Practice your plan with your family/household

A Family Disaster Plan includes evacuation plans, as well as emergency contacts both in the area and outside of the area.

Devolution

The capability of transferring authority and responsibility from an agency's primary operating staff and facilities to other employees and facilities. This addresses disasters that render an agency's leadership and staff unavailable or incapable of performing essential functions from either its primary or continuity facilities.

FEMA Devolution Plan template:
https://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/org/ncp/dev_template.pdf

Minimum standards:
- Select and identify an organization or department (other than your own) for Devolution.

Note: This is found at the bottom of the General Information page.

Test, Training, and Exercises/Plan Maintenance

Test, Training, and Exercises (TT&E) is beneficial to your COOP plan because it verifies essential functions can continue as planned, provides the framework for promoting consistency and uniformity in job performance, and ensures TT&E events support the common overall goal of mission readiness.

Minimum standards:

- Provide a compilation of TT&E events that have taken place to date.
- Provide a compilation of planning events that have taken place to date.
- Provide a compilation of real-world events your organization has responded to and recovered from.
- Schedule system reminders of TT&E/Plan Maintenance for future accuracy and preparedness.

Facility Evacuation

The facility evacuation section should include evacuation plans for buildings, floor-to-floor, with multiple exits. Facility evacuation content can include maps and emergency evacuation plans.

FEMA's *Planning Considerations: Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Guidance for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Partners* is a good guideline for your organization/department to utilize when writing facility evacuation plans:

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/planning-considerations-evacuation-and-shelter-in-place.pdf

Minimum standards:
- Provide documentation of the evacuation routes for each of your facilities mentioned within your plan. The documents can be uploaded and maintained within the File Archives but should be referenced here.
- Recommendation: Evacuation procedures for alternate facilities are not required, but if added, will strengthen your plan.

Contacts

The most important aspect of a continuity plan is related to your staff and being able to communicate with everyone during a disruption.

For the individuals identified for your COOP Team, you will need the following information:

1. Name *(first, last)*

2. Department/division/subdivision

3. Job title

4. Primary work address

5. Work, home and cellphone, pager, and fax numbers

6. Work e-mail address *(if possible, also a personal e-mail address)*

7. Comments – You can add details to the individual's contact information. (For example: *Nurse, or CPR trainer, lives across the street from the main office*, or other details that may be helpful to know at the time of an emergency or during the recovery process.)

Consider the following to ensure individuals are in the appropriate category:

- **Key staff** – Members that need to respond immediately to support the recovery process.

- **Staff** – All other staff members within your functional unit. These employees will not be required to respond immediately; however, they must be made aware of the situation and any changes to the job location, duties, and functions.

- **Non-staff** – Individuals who may not be employed directly by your department but would be contacted in the event of continuity activation *(i.e., security personnel).*

- **Vendor/other** – Vendors may include the armored car service for financial deposits, the locksmith, and others that are relevant to your department's activities.

- **Facilities contact** – Your building contact and/or local contact along with the 24-hour Facilities Support Center number.

Minimum standards:
- Provide a list of personnel who would be involved during your organization's continuity event.
- Ensure you enter at least three methods of contact for personnel into the Contact's database; at a minimum: work phone number, work email, and work or personal cell phone number.
- Provide "non-staff" contacts which may be needed to assist during a continuity event. For example: IT personnel, Public Works personnel…etc.
- Recommendation: include vendors which may be needed to support the completion of essential functions during a continuity event.

Pandemic Planning

Your plan should identify different pandemic planning strategies, such as action items for Preparedness, Response, Recovery, and Mitigation. Your plan should also describe the risk for a pandemic, as well as plan maintenance and testing.

Minimum standards:
- Identify "Pandemic" as a risk in your Hazards & Risks button. This will provide a risk table in Section 2.4 of the Pandemic Annex.
- In the Pandemic risk in the Hazards & Risks button, list action items for pandemic preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- In the Common Data Area, identify a Pandemic Team chief in the Orders of Succession button and a Pandemic Team in the Teams button. This will populate the Pandemic Team chief info in Section 6, and a full Pandemic Team in the table below.
- Tag all pandemic events such as activations and exercises related to pandemics in the TT&E button, this will populate the final section of the pandemic annex.
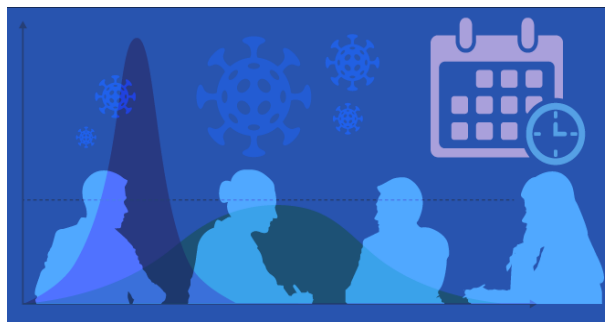
Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a process to identify potential hazards and analyze what could happen if a hazard occurs. Your plan should classify various types of events that could occur and possibly impact your organization's ability to operate.

Natural hazard examples: hurricanes, tornados, floods

Man-made hazard examples: workplace accidents, entrapments, labor strikes

Technological hazard examples: loss of connectivity, cyber-attack

Utilize for more guidelines and examples: *https://www.ready.gov/risk-assessment* and *https://www.fema.gov/pdf/plan/prevent/rms/155/e155_unit_iii.pdf*

Minimum standards:
- Identify several types of Hazards/Risks, i.e., natural, man-made, technological...etc.
- Identify each Hazard/Risk type.
- Describe each Hazard/Risk
- Identify potential impacts, including financial impacts.
- Sort Hazards/Risks by risk ranking.

3x3 RISK MATRIX

LIKELIHOOD ↓ / SEVERITY →	1	2	3
1	LOW – 1 –	LOW – 2 –	MEDIUM – 3 –
2	LOW – 2 –	MEDIUM – 4 –	HIGH – 6 –
3	MEDIUM – 3 –	HIGH – 6 –	HIGH – 9 –

Risk Specific Action List

For each identified Hazards/Risks, your plan should have a list of "Actions" that your organization can take to help manage and minimize the effects of the event if it were to occur.

Minimum standards:

- Identify Preparedness, (Pre-Event), Response (During Event), Recovery (Post-Event), and Mitigation (between Post-Event and Pre-(next)Event) actions for each Hazard/Risk.
- Please include one or more action for each phase.
- Identify the responsible departments/organizations for follow up throughout the year.
- Within those actions, clearing state any historical lessons learned or corrective action plans published.
- Document progress made on corrective actions (through TT&Es, real world events, etc.)
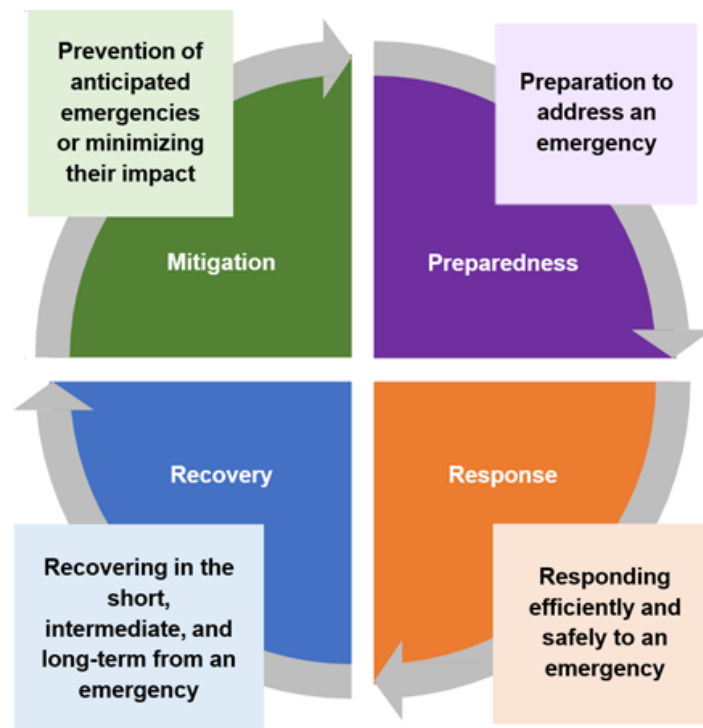
Annual Maintenance Guidelines

BOLDplanning recommends 6 months as a good interval to catch changes in personnel, updates to MOUs/MOAs…etc.

According to FEMA, organizations should do the following annually:

- Review signed MOA/MOUs for continuity facilities.
- Re-evaluate all alternate locations.
- Review, rotate, or cycle essential records.
- Assess continuity TT&E programs and continuity plans and programs.
- Have a point of contact where individuals within the organization can make comments or suggestions for the continuity plan year-round, and that can be addressed when the annual review process begins.

FEMA also recommends updating your plan under the following conditions:

- Whenever there is a significant organizational or procedural change that will directly affect your COOP.
- Notifications of other events that will impact continuity processes or procedures.
- In the aftermath of a real event in which your plan was activated and correct actions were identified as normal operations resumed.

To prepare for the COOP training session, the COOP Planning Team chiefs should identify critical department staff and instruct them to gather data about their operations. Data for the following elements should be brought to the training session:

Training Checklist

You will need the following items for the continuity of operations training session:

Contact information

Before you arrive, organize your contacts into the key staff, staff, non-staff, vendor, and facilities contacts as identified in the Data Collection section of this document.

- Name *(first, last)*
- Department/division
- Job title
- Primary work location address
- Work, home and cellphone, pager, and fax numbers
- E-mail address *(if possible, also a personal e-mail address)*
- Comments: You can add details to the individual's contact information e.g., Nurse, CPR trainer, lives across the street from the main office, or other details that may be helpful to know at the time of an emergency or during the recovery process.

Mission Essential Functions

- Your organization's essential functions
- Names of employees responsible for each function *(names or job titles)*
- Time frame during which each function must be completed *(for example, timesheets must be turned in every Friday for payroll)*

Facility information

- Building address and number of your department's employees working there
- Facility Manager contact information

- Facility resources aka business equipment needs *(for example, two computers, copy and fax machine, landline phone, etc.)*

Resource Information

- Essential records, resources, and systems

- Required equipment and resources

- Relocation kit items

- Communications equipment

Definitions

Alternate Facility: A location other than an organization's normal facility used to conduct mission essential functions in the event of COOP activation.

Authorities: Authorities are the laws, rules, and regulations that are mentioned in your continuity plan, or must be included in your plan. They should be listed in the back of your plan for availability when requested.

Communication: The imparting or exchanging of information.

Communication methods: Standard methods of communication are speaking, writing by a sender, and listening or reading by the receiver.

Communication equipment: Communications equipment include the following technologies: Bluetooth devices, infrared devices, modem (over phone line), network card (using Ethernet), smartphone, wi-fi devices, radios, and satellites, etc.

Continuity of Government (COG): All measures that may be taken to ensure the continuity of essential functions of governments in the event of emergency conditions, including line of succession for key decision makers.

Continuity of Operations Plans/Planning (COOP): Organization's efforts to ensure continuance of essential functions across a wide range of potential emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies.

Continuity Team: Members of the Continuity Team are responsible for executing the

necessary procedures and responsibilities for re-establishing and recovering the operations of the organization's essential functions as identified in Annex C.

Delegation of Authority: A statement provided to an agency head by the senior agency executive that delegates authority and responsibility. Many agencies require a written delegation of authority to be given to the agency head prior to their assuming command of larger incidents.

Delegation of Authority Triggering Event: A triggering event is a pre-determined event that, should it occur, would activate the delegations of authority within your organization's continuity program.

Delegation of Authority Limitations: Delegations of Authority limitations are limitations that a delegation of authority is held to when activated; it serves as a form of accountability in the middle of a day-to-day disruption of operations.

Drive-away kit: A drive-away kit consists of things that you may need on hand if you need to evacuate your home or place of work quickly. It can include cash, medications, extra clothes, batteries, flashlights, money, important documents, phone numbers, and other things that you would need if you could not return home for more than 24 hours.

Essential records: Records, documents, or other information that, if damaged or destroyed, would cause considerable inconvenience, or require replacement or re-creation at considerable expense. These are often records or documents, which, for legal, regulatory, or operational reasons, cannot be irretrievably lost or damaged without materially impairing the organization's ability to continue operations.

Hazards/Risk Assessment: Hazard/risk assessment is the thorough process organizations use to identify and assess hazards, risks, and situations their organizations and employees may be threatened by.

Mission Essential Functions: An organization's prioritized functions that must be performed under all operational conditions. COOPs are created to ensure that these functions can continue to be performed even following a major disaster.

Orders of Succession: The sequence in which one person assumes the roles and responsibilities of a particular function within the organization in the event the usual leadership is unavailable to perform those duties.

Planning Team: Members of the Planning Team are responsible for scheduling, conducting, and participating in continuity meetings, trainings, and exercises; establishing a framework for the organization's continuity plan design and strategy; reviewing the accuracy of the personnel information contained within the plan; and developing an ongoing process for reviewing and updating the plan.

Primary Facility: An organization's normal facility used to conduct day-to-day operations.

References: References are the documents/organizations/information that is included in your plan that did not come from internally within your organization. Most commonly in a COOP, your references will come from FEMA, your state emergency management agency, your governing jurisdiction, etc.

Security Access and Control: Access to the security systems in place for your organizations facilities, and any manual redundancies that may be activated should the primary form of security be disrupted. There should only be a handful of individuals within your organization with this information.