

CONTINUITY of OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP) NON-PROFIT TEMPLATE

Protecting and Planning for Your Organization, Staff, Clients and Volunteers

Introduction and Overview

Natural, man-made and technological disasters are occurring with greater frequency and larger impact than ever before. Disasters can be large in scale and scope (e.g. hurricane, winter storm, terrorist attack, civil disturbance), or localized emergencies affecting a single building, block or neighborhood (e.g. building fire, active shooter incident, hazardous material exposure). Disasters can cause significant injury or death to employees, customers, or the public, disrupt or close down operations, and/or cause physical, technological or environmental damage. Non-profits serve the public every day, and when disasters strike, those services and resources are often needed more than ever. Without proper planning, a disaster will most likely impact an organization's ability to perform its mission and disrupt vital services to the community.

Purpose of a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a tool which allows for the planning and preparation required to minimize the adverse impacts of a disaster and ensure continued performance of mission essential functions. This includes reducing loss of life, minimizing damage, ensuring succession of key leadership, reduce or mitigating disruptions to operations, protecting essential assets and achieving timely recovery and resumption of regular organizational operations.

Core Considerations

A COOP must be able to be implemented at any time, with or without warning. The goal is to ensure the safety and security of all present and achieve full operational capability of mission essential functions within 12 hours with the ability to sustain modified operations for up to 30 days.

When developing, testing and exercising the COOP, consider and plan for the inevitability of change – to staffing, facilities, technology and other factors – which will impact the successful implementation of planning efforts.

Organizational Overview

ORGANIZATIONAL DETAILS	
Organization Name	
Primary Address	
City, State, Zip	
Main Telephone Number	
Secondary Address	
City, State, Zip	
Main Telephone Number	

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION - DIAL 911 IN AN EMERGENCY

Police (Non-Emergency)	
Fire (Non-Emergency)	
Emergency Manager	
Electricity Provider	
Gas Provider	
Water Provider	
Internet Provider	
Casualty Insurance Provider	
Worker's Comp Insurance Provider	
Poison Information Center	
Rape/Victim Services	
Other (Building Management, Payroll, Bank, etc.)	
Other	
Other	

Core Mission

Enter organizational mission below:

ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION

Incident Management Team

Identify an incident management team inclusive of organizational leadership and key staff with responsibilities including operations, programs, security, human resources, finance, legal and information technology. This team should collectively have the resources and knowledge to develop, maintain and implement a COOP, including regularly testing, training and evaluation of the plan.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM				
Name	Position	Email Address	Cell Phone #	Alternate Contact Info

Plan to coordinate with building management (if applicable), neighboring businesses, and other strategic partners in and outside of the region that could support continued operations in a regional disaster.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT TEAM			
Name	Organization	Email Address	Cell Phone #

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS MATRIX			
Priority	Essential/Critical Functions	Staff Responsible (note Succession in next table)	Resources Needed to Sustain / Reactive Quickly
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

2. Orders of Succession

Who's in charge? Identify a list of individuals to sequentially assume responsibility if the primary staff person is not able to perform his/her duties. Identify orders of succession up to three deep for key positions, and ensure that those identified are trained and prepared to perform these duties in an emergency.

ORDERS OF SUCCESSION	
Position Title	Successors
	1.
	2.
	3.
	1.
	2.
	3.
	1.
	2.
	3.
	1.
	2.
	3.
	1.
	2.
	3.

3. Delegation of Authority

Who is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the agency head and other key leaders for specific purposes during an emergency? Designations of authority should document the legal authority for making key decisions, identify the programs and administrative authorities needed for effective operations, and establish capabilities to restore authorities upon termination of the event. Examples includes approving emergency policy changes, authorizing the commitment of resources, making personnel decisions, and signing contracts. Generally, pre-determined designations of authority will take effect when normal channels of direction are disrupted and terminate when these channels have resumed. Identifying this prior to an event is critical to ensure the continued operation of the organization and its essential functions.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY			
Area of Authority	Designated Authority	Conditions	Responsibilities & Limitations
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	1.		
	2.		

	3.		
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		

4. Alternate Facilities

Alternate facilities are locations, other than the normal facility, used to carry out essential functions in an emergency situation. Alternate facilities should provide:

- Sufficient space and equipment
- Capability to perform essential functions within 12 hours, for up to 30 days
- Logistical support and infrastructure systems
- Communications and information technology
- Computer equipment and software
- Appropriate distance from original location (Note: this may vary depending upon the type of incident that caused activation of the COOP)

In addition to the above considerations, consider the possibility of relocating within the organization (if possible) and /or allowing employees to work remotely with appropriate access to phone, email, internet and technology. Organizations should also consider pre-positioning minimum essential equipment and supplies at the alternate facility(ies).

ALTERNATE FACILITIES			
Facility Name			
Street Address			
City, State, Zip			
Telephone Number			
Point of Contact Name			
Telephone #			
E-Mail Address			
SITE DETAILS			
Staffing Capacity			
Equipment/Supplies In Place			
Additional Equipment/Supplies Needed			
Information Technology Systems			
Anticipated Set-Up Time			
Other:			
Notes:			

5. Continuity Communications

Continuity communications provide the capability to perform essential functions until normal operations can be resumed. This includes the equipment, resources and access needed to:

- Support essential functions
- Communicate internally (staff, board, volunteers)
- Connect externally with emergency management, other organizations, agencies, clients and the public (as needed)
- Ensure access to data, systems and services

In the event of system failures, include as a COOP addendum a paper copy containing multiple forms of contact for key stakeholders. Consider and plan for a multi-pronged approach to post-event communication (email, phone, text, social media, website, etc.)

6. Vital Records Management

Effective vital records management provides for the identification, protection and availability of files, records and databases which are necessary to perform essential functions and to resume normal operations after the emergency ceases. In an emergency, power and internet outages may affect access to electronic files and databases. As such, the following documents should be accessible via hard copy and electronically:

- Emergency operations records:
 - Emergency Response Plan*
 - Continuity of Operations Plan*
 - Crisis Communication Plan*
- Organizational records:
 - Certificate of Incorporation*
 - Proof of non-profit status / tax exemption*
 - Bylaws*
 - Deed(s) / lease(s)*
 - Letterhead*
 - Emergency phone numbers*
- Legal/financial records:
 - Personnel
 - Payroll
 - Retirement
 - Insurance policies*
 - Contracts

Items marked with an * should be maintained in hard copy in a fireproof safe and stored in a portable digital storage device kept in a secure off-site location.

Cyber security and data back-up should be an ongoing function to ensure the protection and integrity of data. Effective daily data management and back-up can make the difference in continuity and restoration when disaster strikes.

7. Human Resources

People (staff and volunteers) are the greatest asset in recovering from a disaster. Organizations that promote personal and family preparedness among employees and volunteers ensure the organization's greatest assets are protected. This can be accomplished through encouraging and supporting personal go-bags in the workplace, emergency preparedness training, and promoting all-hazards preparedness sites such as www.HELPNJNOW.org, www.READYNJ.gov and www.READY.gov.

Educate employees about all emergency plans and include them in the testing of this COOP and other plans. Develop a communication plan to disseminate information to staff and volunteers. Consider potential service interruptions and access

issues in planning for post-emergency communication. Maintain a log of all employees, volunteers and visitors that are onsite at any given time and include the reconciliation of this log with those accounted for post-disaster.

Address the health, safety, and emotional well-being of employees and their families by planning for appropriate care through an Employee Assistance Program and/or other resources. Ensure continuity of payroll, insurance and other essential resources to ensure appropriate staffing throughout the disaster and once normal operations resume. Maintain ongoing communication with staff about the status of operations.

8. Tests, Training and Exercises

The key to a successful enactment of this Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) hinges on the ability of training, tests and exercises to familiarize staff members with their roles and responsibilities during an emergency, ensure that systems and equipment are maintained in a constant state of readiness, and validate certain aspects of the COOP. It is recommended that employees are trained on their role within the plan within 60 days of plan adoption or hire for new employees. The plan is best exercised through a full-scale activation scheduled at least once each year. This is essential to demonstrating and improving the ability of the organization to execute its COOP. It also serves to validate or to identify improvements to the COOP’s policies, procedures, systems, and locations. Periodic testing and exercising can also help to ensure that equipment and procedures are maintained in a constant state of readiness. Be creative when it comes to COOP readiness and include snow days, power outages, server crashes, and other ad-hoc opportunities to assess preparedness and plan effectiveness. Following any test, exercise or activation, review lessons learned, incorporate appropriate adjustments to the plan, and educate staff about changes that affect their role / responsibilities.

TEST, TRAINING AND EXERCISE LOG		
Type of Training	Training Date	Lessons Learned and Recommendations

9. Devolution

The capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from an agency’s primary operating staff and facilities to other employees and facilities and to sustain that operational capability for an extended period.

10. Reconstitution

The process by which an organization’s personnel resume normal agency operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility:

- Once it is safe and prudent, provide instruction to staff for resumption of normal operations
- Supervise an orderly return to normal operations at primary or alternate facility
- Provide updates to other key stakeholders (partners, clients, funders, regulating agencies, etc.)
- Conduct an After Action Review and make appropriate adjustments to COOP

Additional COOP Resources

FEMA Continuity of Operations (COOP) Programs: <http://www.fema.gov/government/coop/index.shtm>
 FEMA Training/EMI Independent Study (IS) Program: <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/>
 FEMA COOP document collection: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/resources-documents/collections/343>