

Final

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)

Resource Guide



*A Resource Guide to Support State, County/Local and
Tribal Terrority Continuity Planning*

**Prepared By the New York State
Office of Emergency Management**

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Foreword

History has shown the importance of continuity planning in both the private and public sectors. As a result, this resource guide is one part of New York State’s effort to provide guidance to the public sector about what Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) is. This guidance document is meant to be a resource for all state/local agencies and tribal territories. It is intended to be utilized in conjunction with the [Planning Guide and Outline](#), the [COOP Self-Evaluation Checklist](#) and an [optional block of instruction](#) provided by the New York State Office of Emergency Management.

The Format of This Resource Guide

Designed to encourage agencies and organizations to utilize the “Ten Step Planning Process” to address their continuity planning needs, the structure follows a comprehensive approach to continuity preparedness. This format is intended to assist the reader with developing plans that are consistent with sound methodologies, and also serves as a viable planning tool for identifying agency/organization emergency preparedness before, during and after the emergency.

Leadership’s support and guidance is vital to the success of any agency’s/organization’s continuity program. Since every agency/organization is unique, no single plan template or “boiler plate” will fit every agency/organization’s needs. Therefore, this document suggests common planning elements and best practices for implementing agency/organization continuity efforts. For example, the position of a **Continuity Program Manager**, assigned to coordinate all COOP activities under the direction and guidance of leadership, is one example of the recommendations included in this document for agencies/organizations to consider when engaged in a continuity planning program.

This guidance includes a blend of several best practices from noteworthy continuity methodologies such as NFPA 1600 (Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity), DHS/FEMA and the private sector. Upon review, you will not find this guidance to be a “boiler-plate,” needing only a change in the agency name. Rather, it should be a viable planning tool to support agency/organization emergency preparedness and provides a solid foundation to start from. Sample or “starter” language is *italicized* and is intended to, in conjunction with the “Reader’s Tip,” aid you in the development of each individual section of your COOP.

Moving Forward

There are a variety of scenarios that may require an agency/organization to enter a continuity environment. Some examples of the scenarios may be a pipe bursting and flooding part of an office space, or a computer virus compromising the entire network. These situations may occur on-duty hours or off duty hours, and typically does not necessarily threaten the health, safety, and welfare of the employees. As a result, a plan must be flexible and can be used in a variety of situations.

An effective COOP is not written in a vacuum. The objective of a COOP is to improve the organizational resilience of your agency/organization by identifying and assessing the functions that are most vulnerable to an internal or external hazard/threat. As you develop your COOP, keep in mind the “Ten Step Planning

Process” and the “Ten Critical Elements of an Effective COOP” that are discussed in this guide. If planners follow this practice, they can be confident that the COOP will have both a commonality with other plans in the agency/organization, and the critical components of not only an effective COOP, but a dependable continuity program.

Ten Step Planning Process

- Identify a planning team
- Conduct a Hazard/Risk Assessment
- Perform Prevention & Mitigation
- Assess Capability
- Draft a Response Plan
- Draft a Recovery Plan
- Involve the entire organization
- Exercise to Test the Plan
- Plan Approval by Leadership
- Update the Plan Accordingly

Ten Critical Elements of an Effective COOP

- Primary/Alternate Facility Overview
- Mission Essential Functions
- Continuity of Communications
- Business Process Analysis
- Risk Assessment and Mitigation
- Business Impact Analysis
- Lines of Succession, Devolution, Delegation of Authority
- Testing, Training and Exercises
- Alert, Notification and Plan Activation
- Critical Recovery Tasks and Reconstitution

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2. Executive Summary/Policy

Reader's Tip: It's important to note, that a COOP is merely a by-product of a larger organizational continuity program. A continuity program, not just a plan, is vital to the success of an organization's efforts to maintain its functions. Top-down support is required for any continuity planning program to ensure the entire organization actively participates, maintains and funds the organization's program. After reading this section, the reader should walk away with a sound understanding of where the agency/organization executives stand when it comes to continuity planning.

The ability for an agency/organization to function is vital to the success of its operation and to county/state government. There are many types of emergencies that could occur that may have a negative impact on agency/organization operations. This plan results from the recognition on the part of the agency/organization that a comprehensive plan is needed to enhance the agency's ability to operate in an emergency or disaster situation. This plan represents an integral part of a statewide/countywide emergency management and continuity of government program and contributes to its effectiveness.

The development of this plan included an identification of potential hazards that could affect agency/organization operations and an assessment of the capabilities and mechanism that the agency will use to recover from those hazards. This plan only applies to events that warrant the agency/organization entering and operating in a continuity environment.

COOP and COG

- **COOP and COG Planning are ongoing process supported by senior management and funded to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to identify the impact of potential losses, maintain viable recovery strategies and recovery plans, and ensure the continuity of services through personnel training, plan testing/exercising, and maintenance. COOP and COG are interrelated to organizational resilience, which allows and organization to be "hardened" or less likely to have to enter a "continuity environment".**

This COOP is an integral part of the jurisdiction's Continuity of Government (COG) Plan. The COG Plan identifies how the jurisdiction, as a whole, can continue to manage its functions and mission from an Executive, Judicial and Legislative perspective. Each agency/organization has its own version of a COOP, which serve as an annex to the jurisdiction's COG plan. This COOP serves as the element for the agency/organization to continue its functions under the overall umbrella of the COG plan.

Comprehensive Approach

*Dealing with emergencies and disasters is an ongoing and complex endeavor. Thorough implementation of **Preparedness** measures, including effective planning is the key to successfully applying timely and effective **Response** mechanisms during an actual emergency. Further, provisions for short and long term **Recovery** after the occurrence is essential in ensuring that the agency can maintain its obligation to the state/county, as well as the staff that it employs.*

*This process is called **Comprehensive Emergency Management** to emphasize the interrelationship of activities, functions, and expertise necessary to deal with emergencies.*

Management Responsibilities and Authority

Reader's Tip: Consider appointing a Continuity Program Manager to drive planning efforts. A Continuity Program Manager should be appointed by the leadership and authorized to develop, implement, administer, evaluate, and maintain the program. The Continuity Program Manager (CPM) can lead the organization's efforts in the preparedness stages, and lead the agency's/organization's efforts in response to an actual emergency.

It is the policy of this agency/organization that all leaders and department heads will support the COOP effort.

*The plan outlines the strategies and responsibilities for each of the agency's/organization's sections or departments. Assignments are made within the framework of the present capability and existing organizational responsibilities. The primary responsibility for responding to the emergency within the agency/organization rests with the agency/organization and the agency's /organization's leadership. In addition, the agency/organization director has the authority to direct and coordinate emergency operations within the agency/organization. This authority has been delegated to the **Agency's/Organization's Continuity Program Manager** who will serve as the coordinator of all COOP activities of the agency.*

(Applicable to State Agencies only) *New York State is obligated to provide assistance to county and local governments in response to a disaster after local resources have been fully committed and the county is unable to cope with the disaster. Therefore, the agency/organization must also ensure that it is prepared to respond to an emergency as part of the collective state disaster response.*

(Applicable to Local Agencies only) *The County is obligated to provide assistance to local governments in response to a disaster after local resources have been fully committed and the local municipality is unable to cope with the disaster. Therefore, the agency/organization must also ensure that it is prepared to respond to an emergency as part of the collective county disaster response*

Section I – General Considerations & Planning Guidelines

1. Introduction

Reader's Tip: This section introduces the reader to the document, explains why this plan is being written, the structure of the plan (i.e. supporting documents) and how the plan has been/will be introduced to the agency/organization. A brief background and overview referencing the leadership's direction and guidance on preparedness, response and recovery should be included in this section. It's important to address the complexities of a continuity environment and highlight the variety of emergencies and disasters that may impact your agency/organization. Addressing all this upfront will allow the reader to better understand the scope of your COOP.

Agency/organization operations may be impacted by a variety of emergencies or disaster situations. Some emergency situations may be insignificant in nature, requiring little action to mitigate, while other emergencies may have a significant impact on the agency/organization and may include the loss of life.

The origin of the hazards may be internal or external and may have a substantial impact on the agency/organization as well as the local community and support vendors. The agency/organization has identified the required elements to effectively prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency or disaster situation and to ensure that the agency can maintain its function in government. This plan's supporting documentation can be found in the attachments located in the back of the plan. The socialization of this plan is done as part of our agency's/organization's ongoing continuity program.

2. Purpose

Reader's Tip: This section explains what the purpose of this plan is. This section should provide an overview of the measures taken to prevent and mitigate the interruption of the Mission Essential Functions (MEFs), along with a brief introduction, of the general organizational response structure for operating in a continuity environment. It is important for the reader to take away from this section two things, an understanding of the expected conditions under which the COOP is applicable, and the outcome the leadership expects to achieve if and when the COOP is activated.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the agency/organization to respond to and recover from an internal or external emergency that may impact the ability of the agency to conduct operations. This plan establishes a concept of operations, strategies and tactics to guide agency preparedness, response and recovery activities to ensure uninterrupted agency operations.

The objectives of the plan are:

- To identify, assess and prioritize agency/organization vulnerabilities to emergencies or disasters and the resources available to prevent or mitigate, respond to, and recover from them.*
- To identify, assess and prioritize Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) of the agency/organization.*

- To ensure that systems or processes are in place to ensure the continuous delivery or minimal interruptions of the MEFs.
- To outline short, medium and long range measures to improve the agency's/organization's capability to respond to and recover from an emergency.
- To provide for the efficient utilization of all available resources during an emergency.
- To ensure the continuity of operations of the agency/organization in times of emergency or disaster situations.

3. Scope

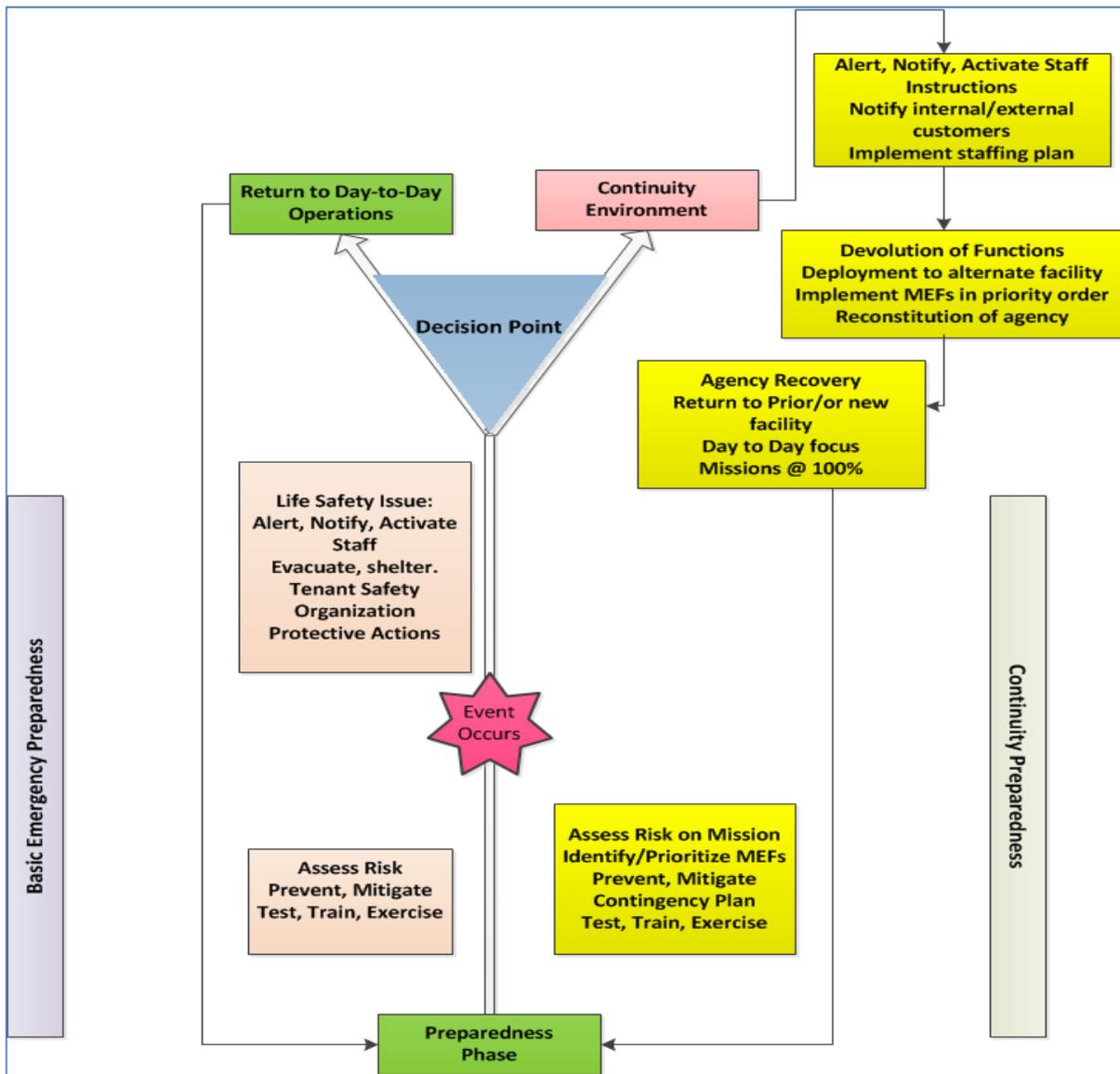
Reader's Tip: This section explains what this plan does and does not apply to. This is key to ensuring that employees know what plan to implement, and when. In addition to indicating what the plan is used for, it's critical that the resources and activities necessary for supporting the areas of preparedness, response, and recovery are addressed. The relationship and distinction between the COOP and the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) should also be identified in this section.

This continuity plan applies to the functions, operations, and resources necessary to ensure the continuation of agency's/organization's essential functions in the event its normal operations at the primary operating facility are disrupted. This plan does not apply to the actions occupants should take to ensure their safety if an emergency threatening employee safety should occur, for guidance on those actions the OEP should be referenced. This plan applies to all of the agency/organization personnel at the facility location. The agency/organization staff should be familiar with the continuity policies and procedures and their respective continuity roles and responsibilities. This document ensures the agency/organization is capable of conducting its mission essential function under all threats and conditions, with or without warning.

The Agency's/Organization's Continuity of Operations Plan outlines overall agency policies and activities in three areas:

- Agency/Organization **Preparedness** efforts focus on identifying risks, mission-critical agency/organization business processes and systems, potential continuity problems affecting the agency/organization, and steps taken to prevent or mitigate those problems.
- **Response** involves measures to recognize and respond to an emergency, provide for a warning system, identify protective actions, and to ensure that mission-critical agency/organization activities are carried out.
- **Recovery** efforts include short and long-term strategies to restore agency/organization operations following an emergency, including identifying ways to prevent/mitigate a hazards impact on the agency.

There Comes a Point



Reader's Tip: There comes a point during an emergency when a decision must be made to “Return to Day-to-Day Operations” or to enter into a “Continuity Environment”. The OEP focuses on reducing the threat to personnel, property and other assets within the facility. Whereas COOP focuses reducing the impact the threat will have on the mission essential functions. The diagram above provides an accurate depiction of the distinction of the COOP and OEP.

4. Situation

Reader's Tip: This section outlines the potential scenarios and impacts the risks may have on the agency's/organization's ability to continue to operate. Entering into a continuity environment can be stressful and may require long hours, possible relocation, along with other activities that are stressful in nature. This section should paint the picture of what to expect in a continuity environment. After reading this section the reader should understand why a COOP is necessary in their agency/organization.

- *A hazard may be natural, technological or human-caused and may come from an internal or external source. The occurrence of such hazards may have a severe impact on the agency/organization, the facility, the system operations and the staff that may be called upon to support agency/organization operations.*
- *Some emergencies may warrant the employees to take some sort of protective action, such as sheltering in place or evacuating.*
- *In some cases, portions of or the entire agency/organization facility may be inhabitable, requiring the use of an alternate facility.*
- *There may be disruptions in utility services including electric, gas, telecommunications, water and cable.*
- *Vendors, agencies and other parties that the agency/organization normally deals with may also be responding to the emergency, and may be experiencing some disruption in their agency operations as well.*

5. Planning Assumptions

Reader's Tip: Planning assumptions are the technical basis to plan for, which are drawn from the Situation section above. At a minimum, the planning assumptions should outline what was identified as “true” or a “fact” during the planning process and what the agency/organization can expect to experience when in a continuity environment. After reading this section, the reader should have a greater understanding of what they may encounter and the scenarios they will have to plan for.

- *Vital agency/organization functions will need to be carried out regardless of the extent of damage or impact of the emergency.*
- *Essential functions that are impacted will need to be recovered in order of priority. As such, some functions may come back online right away, while others may have to wait.*
- *The agency/organization has completed an assessment of its business processes and has identified the required elements that are necessary to ensure continuity of operations at a remote location.*
- *The agency/organization has taken steps to identify an alternate facility.*
- *In a widespread community disaster, employees may need to take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety and security of their families prior to returning to work. This could have a negative impact on staff assignments.*

- *There may be a need to devolve or delegate functions until such a time that the agency/organization can reconstitute its functions.*

6. Concept of Operations

Reader's Tip: The Concept of Operations is defined as the anticipated sequence of events in response to a situation that requires the agency/organization to enter a continuity environment. It offers a clear understanding of how an agency enters and exits a continuity environment. The concept of a Continuity Program Manager is discussed throughout this guidance. If your agency/organization chooses to use a Continuity Program Manager, then the role and the connection to the Crisis Management Team (CMT) should be introduced here.

The concept of operations in entering a continuity environment in the agency/organization is as follows:

- *An event with warning or without warning occurs that warrants consideration to enter a continuity environment. This event can happen on-duty or non-duty hours.*
- *The agency/organization Executive Leadership/Continuity Program Manger determines if the event warrants activation of their COOP.*
- *When the decision is made to enter a continuity environment, the Continuity Planning Team will transition into their roles as the Crisis Management Team.*
- *The decision to enter a continuity environment is communicated to all internal and external stakeholders, customers, and to county/state leadership.*
- *The decision is made by leadership to devolve function(s) from the agency/organization staff to other staff within the agency/organization at a separate facility that is not impacted by the immediate threat.*
- *Staff deploy to an alternate facility and/or telework as warranted.*
- *Upon arrival at the alternate facility staff assess needs, check-in, and begin addressing their mission essential functions in order or priority.*
- *Reconstitution is pursued by staff upon being situated in their new location, and is attained when all the agency/organization functions begin coming online.*
- *Demobilization/recovery occurs when the primary (original) facility is habitable, or a new (complete) office location or accommodation is established.*

SAMPLE Decision Matrix for Continuity Plan Implementation		
	Duty Hours	Non-Duty Hours
Event With Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the risk going to impact the facility or surrounding area? • Is the risk aimed at organization personnel? • Are the employees unsafe remaining in the facility and/or the area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the risk going to impact the facility or surrounding area? • Who should be notified of the risk? • Is it safe for employees to return to work the next day?
Event Without Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the facility affected? • Are personnel affected? • Have personnel safely evacuated or are they sheltering in place? • What are the instructions from first responders? • How soon must the organization be operational? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the facility affected? • What are the instructions from first responders? • How soon must the organization be operational?

Decision Matrix (Modified from Continuity of Operations Plan Template for Federal Departments and Agencies, April 2013)

7. Authority

Reader’s Tip: This section of the plan should outline the authority to undertake this planning effort (i.e. State Laws, State/Local Executive Orders, or Federal Directives such as HSPD-20, etc.).

8. Plan Maintenance and Distribution

Reader’s Tip: The COOP should be reviewed and updated as necessary, but at a minimum of once a year. Plan updates should also be based upon experiences and lessons-learned from exercises and real-world events, and should include administrative changes in government. This section of the plan should identify who will be responsible for the annual updates and when will they be conducted. A process for updating should be determined and explained in this section.

Section II – Preparedness

1. Overview

Reader’s Tip: This section of the plan outlines the measures the agency/organization has taken to adequately prepare for sustaining its functions. In doing so, planners should include a link to the OEP, and the steps the agency has taken to manage its risk. The planning process and the basic tenets of continuity planning should be introduced (i.e. MEF’s). At the end of this section, the reader should walk away with a basic outline and foundational understanding of the measures that have been taken to adequately manage risk and increase organizational resilience.

2. Occupant Emergency Plans (OEP)

Reader’s Tip: An OEP describes the actions that occupants should take to ensure their safety if a fire or other emergency situation occurs. Written OEPs are required in facilities of 11 employees or more, and should have a direct linkage into this COOP. If an OEP does not exist for your agency/organization, recommend the development of one. It’s important for the reader to take away from this section the understanding that an OEP and a COOP are “stand-alone” documents that can be activated both concurrently and separately.

Key Distinctions between a COOP & OEP

Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP)

- An OEP is a building-level emergency response plan designed to protect inhabitants
- Focused on minimizing the risk to personnel, property, and other facility assets
- Intended to focus on facility-specific response procedures for occupants to follow (i.e. evacuation procedure)

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

- A COOP is focused on the business functions of the agency/organization
- The primary goal of the COOP is to ensure the Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) continue to be performed in the face of all emergencies
- The COOP, while a stand-alone document, should serve as the roadmap for implementation of the Continuity Program

Certain emergencies may require the evacuation of a facility with little or no notice. Each agency/organization should have an evacuation plan consistent with generally accepted standards (29 CFR 1910.38). The plan is generally maintained by the Tenant Safety Organization (TSO) and is tested and updated regularly. The COOP is not an evacuation plan, but rather a “stand-alone” document for deliberate and preplanned activities should the decision to transition to a COOP environment present itself. Specifics on the evacuation procedures can be found in the agency’s Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP).

3. Continuity Plan / Continuity Program Management

Reader's Tip: In this section of the plan, introduce program management methodologies that are applicable to your agency/organization. At the end of this section, the reader should have a sound understanding the manner in which the continuity program will be managed, how the COOP plan was developed, and the organizational structure of the agency/organization while operating in a continuity environment.

- A. Continuity Program Manager (CPM): The team leader that fosters the efforts in the agency/organization. The plan should include policy/roles such as:
 - The responsibility for the coordination (i.e. test, training, exercising) of all continuity program activities under the direction of the leadership.
 - The identification of the position by leadership.
 - The mission to develop, implement, administer, evaluate, maintain and report on the program.
 - The delegated authority to lead the organization's efforts in preparedness, response, and recovery.

- B. Continuity Planning Team (CPT): The team that develops and maintains the agency/organization's COOP and continuity program.
 - Establish a team that suits the agency's/organizations needs and utilizes a sound planning process to develop, test, update and implement your plan.
 - Attempt to establish a team that is cross-organizational, comprised of supervisory-level team members from each organizational segment in the agency.
 - Explain how the team will work to represent each business unit and plan for the continuance of the missions the unit is responsible for.

- C. Crisis Management Teams (CMT): If you establish a planning team, use that same team to manage a continuity environment. Formally recognize the CMT in the COOP.
 - Identify that the agency's/organization's Continuity Planning Teams will assume the role as Crisis Management Team for the agency/organization during an event.

4. Facility Overview

Reader's Tip: This facility overview addresses the resiliency of the building to both internal and external hazards. It includes a brief description of how the facility is used on a daily basis to support all duties associated with the primary mission of the organization. Identify any risk assessments that have been conducted on the facility. Additionally, this section identifies who maintains the facility and reference redundant systems for continuity of operations. Included in the redundant systems are the backup power generation and any auxiliary systems that maybe included such as, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.

Each facility should be assessed as part of the continuity planning process to help understand the organization's resilience. Briefly describe the facility, and its capabilities/gaps and how it is used on a daily basis. Within this section, a facility risk assessment should be referenced. If vulnerabilities are identified during the assessment then courses of action to address those vulnerabilities should be addressed through targeted capital programming. At the end of this section, the reader should be intimately familiar with the constraints and capabilities of your agency/organization.

This facility has the ability to shelter occupants in-place should the need arise. The facility is secure, and is able to support a lock down if needed in a relatively short time. Additionally, several emergency exits should be available to evacuate occupants from the building, and there are provisions to shut down the air intake system.

The implementation of an OEP may lead to COOP activation. In the event that the primary location is rendered inoperable, a designated alternate facility has been identified and is located at 123 Main Street, Empire, New York. This location is able to support all mission essential functions within the appropriate period of time.

5. Alternate Facility

Reader's Tip: Alternate facilities can be key to an organization's resilience in a continuity environment. Stakeholder partnerships or cooperatives are good to consider in an effort to find operating space, if feasible. A risk assessment should be done on any potential alternate facility, at the very least to ensure the alternate facility is NOT subject to the same risk (i.e., flooding) as the primary facility. Multiple alternate sites and shift work may be necessary to accommodate all employees. Be creative in identifying alternate facilities.

The agency/organization has identified an alternate facility to operate from in the event that the primary facility is damaged or destroyed. The facility was procured through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the owner, in accordance OGS contract policies, and is only accessible in the event of an emergency. The facility is located at 123 Main Street, Empire, New York.

The alternate facility only has enough workspace to support 50% percent of the staff all at one time. Therefore, the agency will operate two shifts: 7:00 am – 3:15 pm; and 4:00 pm – 12:00 am. Staffing assignments were made based on hierarchy in the organization. Upon deployment to the alternate facility, each staff member will:

- Confirm the assignment with their supervision.
- Bring their go-kits with them, if practical.
- Be provided the opportunity to go home and bring any needed supplies to better support their activities at the alternate site.
- Check in at the alternate site with their supervision.
- Assume control of functions (if devolved) or delegated.
- Work towards maintaining essential functions in priority.
- Provide status reports at least twice per shift.

Reader's Tip: By definition, alternate facilities are locations other than the primary facility, used to carry out essential functions by relocating specific members following activation of the continuity plan.¹ Securing an alternate work site can be a major challenge. The following is a series of concepts and questions to consider when selecting alternate work provisions.

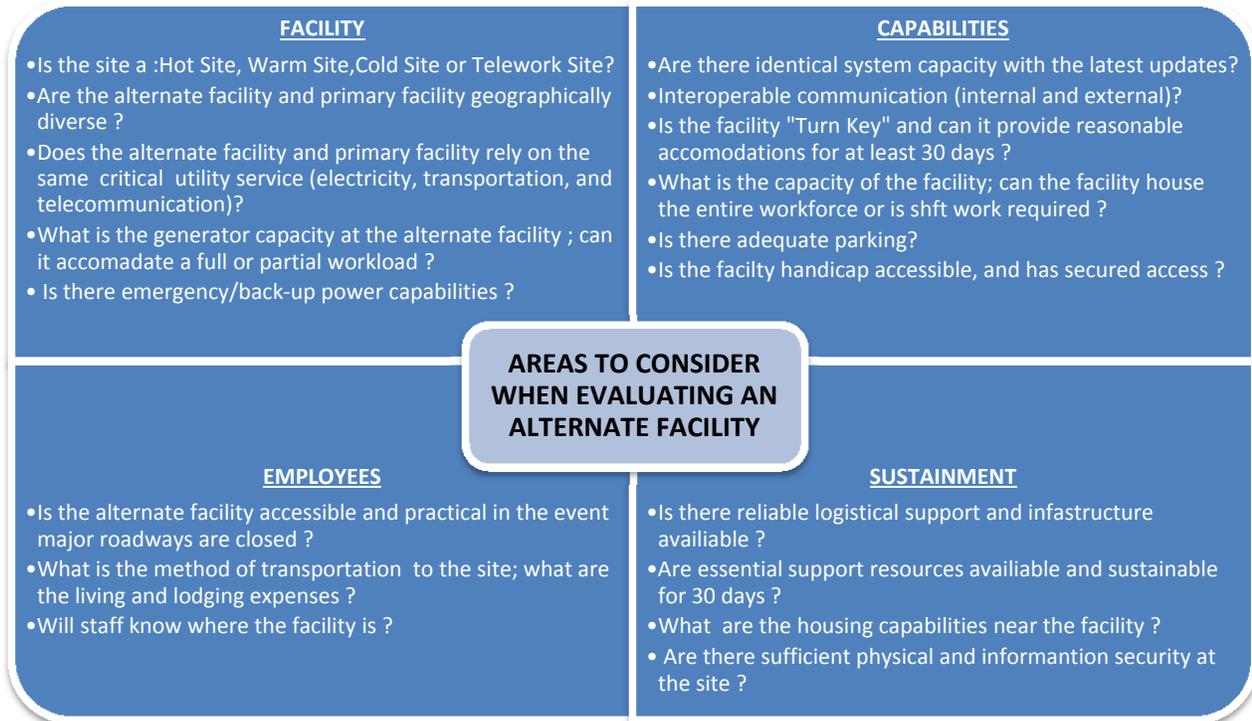
Alternate Worksite Key Definitions:

- **Hot Site:** A continuity facility that already has in place the computer, telecommunications, other information technology, infrastructure, and personnel required to recover essential functions.
- **Warm Site:** A continuity facility that is equipped with some computer, telecommunications, other information technology, and environmental infrastructure, which is capable of providing backup after additional personnel, equipment, supplies, software, or customization are provided.
- **Cold Site:** A facility that is not staffed on a day-to-day basis by personnel from primary operating facility. Organizations may be required to pre-install telecommunication equipment and IT infrastructure upon selection/purchase and deploy designated IT essential personnel to the facility to activate equipment/systems before it can be used.
- **Telework:** Is a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of their position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work.

¹ Continuity Guidance Circular 2 (CGC 2); FEMA, October 2013

Some Things to Consider

The process of choosing an alternate facility is comprehensive and collaborative. When identifying and preparing alternate facilities, organizations should consider the existing infrastructure such as regional offices first; maximizing the existing infrastructure may serve as a financially prudent and effective alternative to outfitting an independent building for a continuity facility.



It's About Preserving, Protecting, and Supporting the Continuance of MEFs

Completed properly, all functions outlined in the remainder of this section should help facilitate an effective response. The diagram on the next page is a depiction of the relationship between preparedness and response. The ability for an agency/organization to ensure the continuation of their MEFs is proportionate to their capability to integrate a Risk Assessment, Business Process Analysis, and Business Impact Analysis into their preparedness measures. A good COOP should be able to demonstrate to the reader the relationship and the steps that were taken to preserve, protect, and support the continuance of the agency's/organization's MEFs.



Paragraphs 6-10 in the Preparedness Section outlines four critical components of your COOP:

1. Identifying your Mission Essential Functions (MEFs)
2. Completing a Business Process Analysis: This will assist you with outlining the steps necessary to complete an MEF from start to finish.
3. Completing a Risk Assessment: This will allow you to identify and rank the hazards your agency/organization may face.
4. Completing a Business Impact Analysis: This will assist you with identifying a reasonable recovery time and allowable data loss for each MEF.

6. Mission Essential Functions

Reader's Tip: What is an essential function? There is conflicting guidance on identifying Mission Essential Functions (MEFs). Some guidance suggests that an entity should identify all of its functions, and then alternately identify which missions are “essential.” Other guidance suggests that organizations identify only those functions that are “essential” to the organization. Regardless of the starting point, the following may aid in truly identifying an essential function. As a goal, guidance suggests that organizations should plan to resume their MEFs within 12 hours, and plan to sustain them for a duration of 30 days or greater. However, agencies should consider for themselves their own acceptable downtime.

The agency/organization defined its MEFs from the following perspective: Mission Essential Functions are those functions that directly support the organization's capability to maintain its:

- Statutory obligations codified in State or local law.
- Capability to respond in support of a county or state disaster response
- Ability to maintain its presence in the “government marketplace”.

The agency’s/organization’s MEFs were identified by each section/department. Department leaders then approved the MEFs in order of priority. Senior leadership approved the consolidated and prioritized agency/organization list of functions before the list was solidified. Senior leadership identified the priority of MEFs across all other departments/sections for the entire organization through the BIA.

Below is a chart of the agency/organization MEFs that were prepared during the planning process. Attachment 1 includes all of the MEFs, in priority, for the agency/organization.

Essential Functions <i>day-to-day operations</i>	Down Time of Functions		Resources used to perform this function
	Recovery Time Object (RTO) (operations)	Recovery Point Objective(RPO) (data)	i.e. P Network drive, special software,

7. Business Process Analysis (BPA)

Reader’s Tip: A business Process Analysis (BPA) is a process in which the steps to implement an MEF are identified from start to finish. Completing this process gives insight into what is needed to perform each MEF. The BPA outlines, in detail, the “inputs” that are required to conduct each individual MEF. Completing the BPA helps validate the input by ensuring that nothing critical is missing or overlooked. This is intended to help maintain the organization’s MEF. A BPA Worksheet is available in Attachment 2 of this guide for use.

NOTE: Populating the tables in Attachment 1 will give you an accurate picture of the elements necessary to conduct your Mission Essential Functions. However, the Business Process Analysis Worksheet found in Attachment 1 will provide you with a more in-depth analysis of inputs and outputs for each agency MEF. Choose either method for assessing MEFs.

A business process analysis (BPA) is a process in which the steps to implement an MEF are identified from start to finish. This process has been done for each MEF, and known dependencies/interdependencies were identified. Logistical support and reliance, such as technology, were identified in this process and were tabulated in the corresponding worksheets.

Reader’s Tip: Most organizations are almost completely dependent on technology. Consider all the technology your organization uses, and what data (paper or electronic) you need to perform your function in an alternate location. Technology and vital records could be linked to MEFs. In many cases, most IT departments have an “IT/DR” plan, or a Disaster Recovery Plan. These plans are from a technology standpoint, designed to recover servers, data, etc. Any agency/organization COOP should link to the IT/DR plan in place in the agency/organization. IT redundancy, data back-up (frequency/type), and mirrored capability would be a key provision. If an IT/DR plan is not in place, this is a pivotal gap in preparedness. Regardless, consider off-site document storage, cloud computing, flash drives, and CDs for retaining data for use during a continuity environment.

A. Mission Critical Systems, Files, Vital Records and Databases

An in-depth review of the computer systems, capabilities, and the ability to support the MEFs of the agency in a time of emergency has been completed. The review considered the systems required to meet the sectional (programmatic) demands, as well as the base systems that support the operational systems of the agency.

i. Application/Technology

Included is a review of standard and non-standard software that the agency/organization relies upon. These are applications or technologies that are critical to the emergency response and restoration of operation functionality of the agency.

Applications/Technology		IT point of contact	Recovery Time Object (RTO)	Recovery Time Capabilities (RTC)
1	NY Respond	John Smith	XXX	XXXX
2				

a. Key Non-Standard Software

Software that is not used on a daily basis, but could be utilized in the response of an emergency or in support of a mission essential function

Non-standard Software Name		Users	Location of Installation Media
1	HURREVAC	John Smith	Network

B. Mission Essential Files, Vital Records, and Logistical Support for Technology

Agency/organization, department, and sections have conducted a comprehensive review of vital records and files that would be needed to support agency continuity. The review considered whether or not the file, record or database is:

- *Hardcopy or electronic.*
- *Available at another location or through another server or provider.*
- *Is a back-up; either on disk or at one of the regional offices done regularly.*
- *Staged at an alternate facility, such as the agency warehouse.*
- *Web-based storage via portal or a contracted service provider.*

i. Mission Essential Vital Records

These are records that are either computerized or hardcopy and are essential to the continuation of business following and incident (ex. Healthcare records, operational records, vital statistics, etc.)

Description of vital record		Placement at primary location	Backup available? Location?
1	Plans, Procedures/Operational Checklist	Planning Section	Online
2			

ii. Dependencies, Interdependencies, and Contracts

Reader’s Tip: Identify what organization(s) your agency/organization relies upon, and what organizations relies upon your organization, and for what function.

Agencies/organizations that are affected by the organization’s decision to move to a continuity environment.

Agency / Department		Data from	Contact Name / Number
1	General Services	HR Information	John Smith
2	Comptroller’s Office	Payroll	Sue Smith
3	ITS	IT Infrastructure	Joe Jones

iii. Internal/External Contacts, Vendors & Suppliers

Vendors that need to know that the agency/organization is now in a continuity environment; reason may include suspension or initiation services.

Vendor – Supplier – External Contact		Contact Information
1	Waste Management	(555)522-5555

2	Joe's Café Services	(555)522-5555
3	Office Max	(555)522-5555

8. Resource Requirements and Outstanding Logistical Support

Reader's Tip: In the aftermath of a disaster, resources may be scarce and the restoration of day-to-day operations may not be immediate. Consider the additional resources you may need to maintain your functions. Simple items, such as paper, pens, printers or charging devices can mean the difference in a continuity environment. Whether you intend on having a turn-key alternate site or not, consider how you would obtain needed resources in a continuity environment. If an alternate site has not been identified, determine what sourcing options are available to acquire space.

Sound planning and analysis will assist with executing the priorities and allocation of resources during a disaster or disruption of services. The agency/organization has vendors on contract for needed supplies and critical resources. Needed items will be requested through purchasing following emergency procurement guidelines.

The resources needed to effectively enter and maintain a continuity environment have been identified in the following pages. These items include critical files, records, data, and shared office space. While no plan can identify every exhaustive item, the agency has used due diligence in the planning process. The agency possesses several means to obtain logistical support, including stand-by contracts, emergency purchases, or requesting assistance through traditional means. All resource needs will be processed up through each section in the agency, for approval and action.

A. Logistical Support - Equipment Requirements

The following is a list of all standard and non-standard equipment and hardware needed and the number necessary to perform essential functions. The quantity of computers represents one per person.

Equipment Needed		Quantity	Department
1	Computers	86	Exec, Planning, Logs
2	Color Printer	3	Operations

B. Mission Critical (Emergency) Go-Kits

Reader's Tip: Emergency Go-Kits are a simple, low cost means to support continuity and organizational resilience. The Go-Kits could contain each section's mission critical files, active records and necessary correspondence. Kits can be easily updated on a schedule, be readily available, and provide portability in times of need. When possible, data could be stored on CD, flash drive or other media on a set schedule as well.

If evacuation or devolution to the alternate facility is deemed necessary, each section should bring their Go-Kit to the alternate facility and make the necessary preparations and staff assignments to utilize the contents of the go-kits.

Section	Alternate Location	Contact Info @ Location
Planning	123 Main St. Empire, NY	(518) 867-5309
Operations	123 Main St. Empire, NY	(518) 867-5308

9. Risk Assessment and Mitigation

Reader’s Tip: Risk assessment methodologies vary from the simple to the complex. It’s important to note that both federal and state guidance is available to assist with conducting a risk assessment.

A risk assessment determines what may occur, and what impact the occurrence of that risk could have on agency/organization operations. The assessment may then guide planning teams to prevent the risk (if feasible), or mitigate the risk’s (lessen the effects) impact on the MEFs. The risk assessment should identify internal and external hazards that can impact agency/organization operations, and successfully outline what business functions will be affected by the occurrence of that risk. Not everything is preventable. Therefore, at some point, the organization must determine its acceptable level of risk.

Conducting a risk assessment is a vital step towards the creation of a successful COOP. A risk assessment is defined as “a product or process which collects information and assigns values to risks for the purpose of informing priorities, developing or preparing courses of action, and information decision making.”²

Throughout the risk assessment process, the agency/organization has identified and ranked its hazards, and the likelihood of their occurrence and the impact on the facility, the people and its mission.

The agency/organization conducted a risk assessment through both a qualitative and quantitative assessment structure; the scope of the analysis included:

- a) Identifying and ranking potential internal and external hazards, including natural, technological, and human-caused hazards threats to the organization.
- b) Identifying the probable impact of each of those hazards.
- c) Identify steps to prevent/mitigate risk
- d) Evaluate the impact significance if the hazard does occur
- e) Incorporate the expertise and community knowledge of local response agencies
- f) Have you contacted your NYS Office of Emergency Management for assistance and guidance with your risk assessment? <http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/oem/about/>

² Continuity Guidance Circular 2 (CGC 2); FEMA, October 2013

10. Business Impact Analysis

Reader's Tip: The Business Impact Analysis (BIA) is about impact! It's about determining what keeps the agency/organization MEFs running and what can wait until later. If the BPA is the process in which the steps to implement an MEF are identified from start to finish, the BIA analyzes, identifies and quantifies the impact a loss of an MEF may have on the agency/organization.

In a continuity environment timing is everything. As a goal, guidance suggests that organizations should plan to resume their MEFs within 12 hours, and plan to sustain them for a duration of 30 days or greater, but completing a BIA will specify for the agency/organization how quickly how MEFs will have to return to operations upon entering a continuity environment. BIA Worksheets are available to assist you throughout the process.

At the end of the BIA the reader should walk away knowing the acceptable downtime and the amount of data that can be lost for each MEF.

11. Succession, Delegation of Authority and Devolution

Reader's Tip: Lines of succession should be identified for each critical staff position and include layers of succession at least three people "deep". This ensures that persons can perform the absence of others.

Devolution is the turnover of your agency's/organization's MEFs from the location they are being conducted to another part of the agency/organization. This transfer assumes that your agency/organization cannot continue its MEFs and transfers those MEFs to another part of the organization. For example, devolution would encompass a transfer of MEFs from a headquarters office to a regional office within the same agency. Devolution is internal to the agency.

Delegation of Authority (DOA) is inherently different. A delegation of authority provides specified individuals with the legal authorization to act on behalf of the previous incumbent for a specified purpose or duties. Delegation of Authority would be a transfer of your MEFs to an external agency/organization to assume that role. DOAs should be in place to include the trigger for doing so, the allotted time, the expectations, and the transfer of that authority back to you or your organization when your agency/location reconstitutes. DOAs between two different agencies should be in writing and reviewed by agency counsels.

By nature, the actions of succession, devolution and delegation of authority may be a stressful and vulnerable period of time for an agency/organization. Succession and delegation is a vital part of this COOP that required preparation and planning. Pre-determined successions and delegations have been outlined; the appropriate individual(s), prerequisite training and legal authority for decision making have been taken into consideration.

13. Test, Training and Exercises

Reader's Tip: Testing, training and exercising are a critical step in validating the efforts outlined in the COOP. Further, staff needs to be trained in their roles, responsibilities, and the lines of communication in a COOP environment. Gaps identified should be addressed in advance of real-time COOP implementation. After reading this section, readers should have a sound understanding of the agency's/organization's policy on tests, training, and exercises. In addition, this section should highlight the agency's/organization's commitment to readiness, accountability and marked improvement by outlining the agency's/organization's Corrective Action Program (CAP).

Training/Awareness of Emergency Preparedness Plans, Policies and Protocols

1. *The leadership has the responsibility to ensure that members of the response organization and all agency employees have received training relative to their position and function during an emergency.*
2. *Training will be provided to employees to support agency/organization emergency preparedness and continuity of operations. The training shall be coordinated with the appropriate section/department head to ensure a minimal interruption of normal work duties.*
3. *The training is to be conducted at least annually and will include:*
 - *Information on the characteristics of hazards and their consequences on the agency as a whole.*
 - *An overview of the planning efforts that have been done by the agency and familiarizing staff with the plan.*
 - *Include Incident Command System (ICS) training, focusing on individual roles.*
 - *The policies and mechanisms that will be employed in maintaining the operations of the agency, including utilizing an alternate facility.*
 - *Include periodic exercises and drills to evaluate capabilities and the level of agency preparedness.*
 - *What is expected of each employee and provide references on emergency preparedness for them and their families.*

14. Key Recovery Staff

The Key Recovery staff should be designated positions and personnel that have been trained specifically in how to recover critical business functions while operating in a COOP environment

Key recovery staff has been identified to perform or support recovery of the agency.

Role-Responsibilities	Name / Position	Name and # of Secondary Contact
Continuity Program Manager (CPM)	Bill – Planning Chief	Mike – Deputy Plans Chief
Continuity Planning/Crisis Mgt. Team	Section heads	Front line supervisors
Deputy Commissioner	Executive Lead in CPT/CPMT	John - Director of Operations

Section III - Response

1. Plan Activation and Alert, Notification

Plan Activation

Reader's Tip: This section should indicate when this COOP is implemented. Several triggers may exist in doing so, ranging from internal (non-life threatening) to an internal/external high impact emergencies. Note that COOP activation may follow OEP implementation. For example, a fire in the building warrants an evacuation of employees. Once outside the agency facility at a muster location, if the decision is made that the building is inhabitable, then the COOP would be activated from that point.

The following table contains a list of example triggers that describe plan activation and escalation. Outlined within this list are the scenarios / timeframes, decision makers, and COOP activation indicators.

Scenario / Timeframe	Decision Maker	COOP Activation
Complete loss of a building or access to the building	Agency/Organization Executive	Yes
Loss of workspace for >4 hours	Agency/Organization Executive, Section Heads	Possibly
Loss of the phone/IT system >12 hours	Agency/Organization Executive, ITS Staff	Yes
Loss of >40% of staff	Agency/Organization Executive	Yes
Any incident deemed by the Agency Executive	Agency/Organization Executive	Yes

In an emergency situation, once an alert has been reported in regard to a threat, hazard or incident and staff have been evacuated, sheltered in place or instructed to stay at home, the agency/organization Executive makes the decision to return to normal day-to-day operations or activate the agency's/organization's continuity plan. The Continuity Program Manager (CPM) will be directed by the agency/organization Executive to implement the continuity plan, who in turn will activate the CMT

In either case, the Continuity Program Manager (CPM) will be activating and implementing the continuity plan and Crisis Management Team.

Alert and Notification

Reader's Tip: Emergency notifications should be developed for on and off-hours, and should have redundancy in place. Some agencies/organizations have set up 800 numbers, blast dial-out notifications, and have used NY-Alert.

Agency/organization staff will need to be notified of a potential or actual hazard (internal or external). An emergency situation calls for either an immediate (building fire) or delayed (IT system outage) response. During regular office hours, staff will be notified via the emergency notification system per standard operating procedures. However, off-hours employees may still need to be contacted to inform/update them on a situation that will impact their ability to report to their work location as normal on the next business day.

Identified on the following table are the method(s) that will be utilized to notify all employees in a timely and consistent manner.

	Name
Primary (on-site)	Public Address System, Email and verbal to employees
Primary (off-site)	Email, NY-Alert notification from agency to employees
Secondary	Phone call tree starting with Supervisory Staff
Tertiary	PIO/Press release to media; Agency website.

Listed below are the people who are **tasked with performing** the actual outreach:

	Name
Primary	Executive Staff
Secondary	Continuity/Crisis Management Team Staff
Tertiary	Department/Section heads, front line supervisors.

On the following table is a list of people who shall be contacted when an agency/organization location has gone into a COOP/continuity environment and must relocate.

Location going into a continuity of operations situation:	Entity/persons to be informed:
Agency Headquarters	Leadership, agency personnel, internal and external stakeholders, vendors and customers.
Any Regional Office	County agency peers within that region, as applicable.

Agency Operations Center	All of the above listed points of contact.
All Locations	Local service providers (e.g., water, sewer, maintenance, telecommunications, etc.); local emergency response agencies; other entities/agencies within the facility.

2. Critical Recovery Tasks

Reader's Tip: The recovery tasks should be consistent with the concept of operations as noted in Section I. In addition, the critical tasks need to be succinct, in order, and specific to the steps the agency/organization has taken in the planning stages. After reading this section, readers should walk away with an understanding of the complete operating picture, the order of priority/restoration of the MEFs, the defined actions of leadership, and the positions that may be devolved or delegated.

Below is the list of critical tasks that may be required for recovery of essential functions.

Critical COOP response and recovery tasks	
1	Recognize the need to activate COOP.
2	Coordinate decision to activate COOP.
3	Activate Crisis Management Team.
4	Notify employees, internal and external stakeholders.
5	Devolve functions to external points of contact.
6	Mobilize and deploy staff to alternate site.
7	Activate alternate site, implement telework protocols.
8	Account for staff at alternate work site; check in, brief, assess status
9	Assess status of devolved functions.
10	Begin process of restoring mission critical functions for each section
11	Reconstitute agency at alternate site.
12	Assess effectiveness; request assistance to remedy challenges
13	Conduct outreach to internal and external stakeholders.
14	Stand-by for notification on return to normal status

3. Assignment of Responsibilities

Reader's Tip: The concept of a Continuity Program Manager is proposed guidance developed from best practices and not a requirement. However, the Assignment and Responsibilities outlined in this section relies upon the presence of a Continuity Program Manager.

As leadership, the Agency/Organization Executive has the primary responsibility for the agency's mission and functions. The Agency/Organization Executive sets the policy for the agency's emergency preparedness program and provides support for the Continuity Program Manager (CPM) to guide, direct and implement the continuity program.

The Continuity Program Manager (CPM) has the delegated authority to take the lead on the emergency preparedness program for the agency. The CPM serves as the managerial support for the agency executive in coordinating emergency preparedness and COOP-related functions with the Crisis Management Team (CMT). The CMT establishes and manages the positions as noted in the Emergency Response Organization section. This includes the following: activating the agency's response organization and initiating agency response/COOP activities; coordinating with other sections to facilitate agency continuity; activating the alternate facility, and coordination between the agency executive and internal and external entities.

The scope of managing the continuity event is beyond the scope of the Tenant Safety Organization (TSO). The TSO implements the OEP and provides support for emergency preparedness and response activities. The TSO group includes employees who have volunteered as Floor Wardens, Floor Marshalls/Searchers, Evacuation Aides and Stairway/Elevator Monitors to support emergency preparedness activities. In addition, the TSO will provide support for other emergency responses involving protective actions, including lockdown/lockout or in-place sheltering.

4. Emergency Response Organization

Reader's Tip: Activating and implementing a COOP will likely during a crisis. Before an emergency, the planning team prepares for such an event through the planning process. In response to an emergency, the Agency/Organization Continuity Planning Team becomes operational and assumes the role of the Crisis Management Team. This concept is ideal as it provides the best insight, background and understanding of the agency's/organization's COOP efforts. Further, the Continuity/Crisis Management Team should fulfill the roles of Incident Command System (ICS) positions to manage the crisis following sound incident management principles and practices. It is recommended that each agency/organization organize and establish an ICS response structure that is staffed by a group of employees from within the agency/organization. The highest ranking official or designee will have the responsibility for managing an emergency situation.

The Incident Command System (ICS) response structure will be implemented in response to an emergency situation. When the agency/organization enters into a COOP/continuity environment, ICS allows for flexibility in its application so that its structure can be modified to a particular situation. The ICS model consists of five management functions, which includes both the command staff and section/department leaders. In addition, Agency/organization employees will be notified of their assignments and integrated into their particular lines of succession for each staff position.

Reader's Tip: Similar to the concept of a Continuity Program Manager, the Crisis Management Team and COOP/ICS is proposed guidance developed from best practices.

The ICS functions for the agency/organization are as follows below. During an emergency, the Agency's/Organization's Continuity Planning Team operationalizes and becomes the Crisis Management Team for the agency. The roles are as follows:

- Agency Administrator/Incident Command: First Deputy Director – The executive staff member will provide the oversight of the continuity response, and work with other executive staff to ensure COOP efforts are being managed appropriately across the organization.
- Information: Agency Public Affairs Office – The Public Affairs staff will be responsible for addressing media inquiries, correspondence with other agencies, stakeholders, and all internal and external partners.

- **Operations:** Continuity Program Manager – The CPM will ensure staff efforts are driving towards the continuance of mission essential functions.
- **Planning:** Members of Continuity Planning Team – Provide status reports, updates, and briefings to leadership on the status of continuity efforts.
- **Logistics:** Members of Continuity Planning Team - Provide operational support to the response for acquisition of equipment, supplies, materiel, and transportation of staff/resources.
- **Finance and Administration:** Finance/procurement staff – Process requests for purchases, procure necessary items, and ensure funding sources are intact.

5. Agency Emergency Response Levels

Reader's Tip: While not required, emergency response levels help delineate the level of response the organization will implement based on the situation. Not all situations warrant a full COOP activation. However, some incidents may warrant plan implementation, but to a lesser extent. Response levels help identify a scalable response to address the disruption, from the simple to the complex. Below is an example of an agency response structure. Each organization is unique and as a result, might not fit into this proposed response framework. At a minimum, the agency/organization should have a flexible and scalable response method that is clear and concise.

Emergency situations that cause a disruption of normal operations may be categorized into one of four different **Agency/Organization Response Levels** based on the scope and magnitude of an incident. They are as follows:

- **Steady State:** Normal day to day operations.
- **Response Level 3:** A minimal disruption of normal operations with the potential to temporarily impede an agency's ability to conduct its mission essential functions. (e.g., >4 hours off-line)
 - The disruption is resolved within 12 hours and has no serious ramifications.
- **Response Level 2:** A moderate disruption of normal operations with the potential to partially impede an agency's ability to conduct its mission essential functions. (e.g., >12 hours off-line)
 - Portions of the COOP may be activated and the disruption is resolved within 24 hours.
- **Response Level 1:** A major disruption of normal operations with the potential to severely impede an agency's ability to conduct its mission essential functions. (e.g., >48 hours off-line)
 - This will likely require activation to an alternate facility with full implementation of the continuity plan; it could be several days, weeks or months before returning to normal day to day operations.

****Please note** that for certain agencies/organizations any disruption of its mission essential functions is **not** an option therefore, redundant data backups and alternate systems are of the utmost importance.

6. Team Leaders and Alternate Relocation Sites (if necessary)

Reader's Tip: In some cases, an agency/organization may use a regional office or sister agency's/organization's location as an alternate work site. The use of the site may be one shift per day, or multiple shifts per day, based on capacity or capability. Further, an agency/organization may be required to have multiple relocation sites to accommodate its size, complexity or mission. In either of the above cases, alternate sites require management. Therefore, a site manager should be established for each relocation site. It is recommended that all agencies/organizations pre-identify people to manage the alternate relocation site, and designate at least one person in their lines of succession who is geographically separated from the agency's/organization's headquarters to ensure that roles and responsibilities may be transferred under all situations. This concept is important in the event that people in leadership positions at an agency's/organization's headquarters are not available or have been incapacitated.

The Agency/Organization has identified site managers to manage the alternate worksites. These staff members will work with the CMT to ensure the facility is properly managed, secured, and serve as liaisons with facility owners/leasing company to address any issues.

The table below identifies the management of the alternate site, with geographically separated individuals being identified.

***Note: individual(s) should also be included under the lines of succession.**

Region	Name	Contact Info
Northern	Dan Pilsner	(555)123-4567
Southern	John Stout	(555)123-4568
Western	James Amber	(555)123-4569

7. Facility Relocation Handout for Employees to the Alternate Site

Readers Tip: The need for a facility relocation handout is primarily for displaced state employees whose alternate facility is in an unfamiliar geographic location. Counties are less likely to have a need for a relocation handout for employees.

Employees who have devolved from their primary work site to an alternate site will be provided informational guidance about working from the alternate site, as outlined below. In addition, agency/organization staff will bring their Go-Kits with them to the alternate site.

Site Setup Lead:	Agency Setup Leaders	Contact Information	
Site Setup Team:	As designated by leadership	Contact Information	
Directions:	Provide directions to the alternate site		
Nearby Hotels, Daycare, Pharmacies, ATM etc.:	Example One	Example Two	
Nearby Food Restaurants:	Restaurant One	Restaurant Two	Restaurant Three

8. Devolution of Functions/Delegation of Authority

Reader's Tip: The devolution of functions is a continuity option that can be used instead of or in conjunction with relocation to an alternate facility. The primary goal of devolution is to ensure the continued performance of essential functions. Devolution is the transition of the roles and responsibilities of agency/organization MEFs from a primary operating site to other employees, internal to the agency/organization at a separate facility (i.e. Regional Offices.)

A Delegation of Authority is a vital part to of an agency/organizations COOP. The DOA is generally tied to a specific position and provides designated individuals with the legal authorization to act on behalf of the incumbent for a specified purpose or duties.

The following devolution plan is in place for the agency/organization.

Primary Facility Destroyed & Non-Operational:

In the event that the Agency/Organization Headquarters is destroyed or otherwise not fit for occupancy, agency/organization duties will be performed by the usual staff at an alternate location(s) based on their original work location. In the interim, all agency duties will be managed by the north and south regional offices.

Employees who live near north office must report to the north facility. Employees who live in other geographic locations could have the option to work from the north office or telecommute. Based on roles, responsibilities and current priorities, employees could also have the option to work from home with limited technology available to them or in the south office.

Primary Facility and Agency Staff Non-Operational:

If both the building and staff are destroyed/non-operational, agency/organization duties will devolve to field staff based on seniority and priorities at that time. Day to day management of the agency/organization will be delegated to the person appointed by the Agency/Organization Executive.

Delegation of Authority:

While delegations of authority are important, they particularly relevant when the agency/organization are forced to devolve, the following delegation of authorities is in place for the agency/organization.

In the event that normal channels of communication and decision making capabilities are disrupted, the predetermined delegation of authority will take effect and will resume until terminated.

Delegation of Authority Template			
Agency	Position	Delegated Person	Authority
Additional Information:			
Prepared By:		Date:	Time:

Section IV – Recovery /Demobilization

Reader’s Tip: Recovery is the process of re-obtaining the functionality of the agency/organization back to its pre-disaster state, or better. Depending on the circumstance, recovery can be short-lived and relatively simple, or it can be extremely difficult. An emergency that takes the lives of employees can be especially devastating. Therefore, agencies/organizations developing continuity plans should consider the full spectrum of what may need to accomplish to overcome this event.

1. Reconstitution

Reader’s Tip: Reconstitution is the process by which surviving and/or replacement organization personnel resume normal organization operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility.³

If functions were devolved prior to alternate worksite activation, the CMT will assume a status report on MEFs from those persons who functions were devolved to. If functions were not devolved, the CMT will work to ensure the continuance of MEFs. MEFs will be addressed by priority until all MEFs are up and running at full functionality and capability.

Primary Facility Destroyed & Non-Operational:

While a new Agency/Organization Headquarters facility is being built, operations will be run via the following methods:

(1) In the short term, sister agency facilities can house the operations sections of the agency. Other sections can be allotted space in existing agency facilities based on needs and priorities at that time.

(2) Simultaneously, the general services office will be tasked with finding suitable office space to accommodate all staff that worked in the primary building. This space will be needed for a minimum of 18-24 months while a new facility is designed and constructed.

Primary Facility and Agency Staff Non-Operational:

If both the Agency/Organization Headquarters and all staff need to be reconstituted, the facility plan will be the same as in the paragraph above; the reconstitution may include some of the following groups in one capacity or another (ex. Staffing):

- Emergency contracts
- State, County and municipal personnel who are familiar with agency operations
- Existing Civil Service lists for appropriate personnel
- Other agency staff who can fill emergency rolls
- State or local retirees willing to return on a contract basis

If agency/organization operations have been substantially impacted by an emergency or disaster event, then both short and long-term recovery efforts may need to be well-planned and implemented in order to resume

³ Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1); FEMA, July, 2013.

normal day to day operations. For recovery planning and strategy development, the following concerns will need to be addressed:

- *Returning to the primary facility or headquarters, as feasible.*
- *Short-term agency-specific goals for returning to normal day to day operations.*
- *Long-term agency-specific goals and mitigation.*
- *Damage Assessment and Reconstruction efforts.*
- *Participation in or looking to obtain state/federal disaster recovery assistance*

Glossary

Activation- Once a continuity of operations plan has been implemented, whether in whole or in part, it is considered “activated

After Action Reports (AARs) - Reports that summarize and analyze performance in both exercises and actual events. The reports for exercises may also evaluate achievement of the selected exercise objective and demonstration of the overall capabilities being exercised

Alternate Facilities- Locations, other than the primary facility, used to carry out essential functions, particularly in a continuity event. “Alternate facilities” refers to not only other locations, but also nontraditional options such as working at home (“teleworking”), telecommuting, and mobile-office concepts

Business Impact Analysis (BIA)- A method of identifying the effects of failing to perform a function or requirement

Business Process Analysis (BPA) – A method of examining, identifying, and mapping the functional processes, workflows, activities, personnel expertise, systems, data, and facilities inherent in the execution of a function or requirement

Continuity of Communications- Communications that will be used in a continuity environment including use of information technology, cellular or hand –held communications and contact lists for staff

Continuity of Government- A coordinated effort within the Federal Government’s executive branch to ensure that NEFs continue to be performed during a catastrophic emergency

Continuity Event- Any event that causes an agency to relocate its operations to an alternate or other continuity site to assure continuance of its essential functions

Continuity of Operations- An effort within individual agencies to ensure they can continue to perform their Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) and Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs) during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies

Cold Site- A facility that is not manned on a day-to-day basis by personnel from primary operating facility. Organizations may be required to pre-install telecommunication equipment and IT infrastructure upon selection/purchase and deploy designated IT essential personnel to the facility to activate equipment/systems before it can be used

Continuity Program Manager (CPM)- The senior continuity planner who manages day-to-day continuity programs, represents their department or agency on the Continuity Advisory Group and working groups, as appropriate, and reports to the Continuity Coordinator on all continuity program activities

Continuity Planning Team (CPT) - a team that is cross-organizational, comprised of supervisory-level team members from each organizational segment in the agency

Corrective Action Program (CAP)- An organized method to document and track improvement actions for a program. The CAP System is a web-based tool that enables Federal, State, and local emergency response and homeland security officials to develop, prioritize, track, and analyze corrective actions following exercises or real world incidents.

Crisis Management Team (CMT)- The CMT assumes the role of the CPT for the agency/organization during an event. When activated, the CMT will assume the Command and General Staff positions within the Incident Command System (ICS)

Critical Recovery Tasks-A succinct list of tasks that defines the actions of the leadership

Dependencies and Interdependencies - Internal or external functions, agencies or organizations that you are dependent on to maintain MEFs

Delegation of Authority- Identification, by position, of the authorities for making policy determinations and decisions at headquarters, field levels, and all other organizational locations. Generally, pre-determined delegations of authority will take effect when normal channels of direction have been disrupted and will lapse when these channels have been reestablished

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

Drive-Away Kit (Go-Kits)- A kit prepared by, and for, an individual who expects to deploy to an alternate site during an emergency. The kit contains items needed to minimally satisfy an individual's personal and professional needs during deployment, such as clothing, medications, a laptop, and other necessities

Facility (Facilities) - Locations where an organization's leadership and staff operate. Leadership and staff may be co-located in one facility or dispersed across many locations and connected by communications systems. Facilities must be able to provide staff with survivable protection and must enable continued and endurable operations

Federal Continuity Directive (FCD) – A document developed and promulgated by DHS, in coordination with the Continuity Advisory Group and in consultation with the Continuity Policy Coordination Committee, which directs executive branch organizations to carry out identified continuity planning requirements and assessment criteria

Hot Site- A continuity facility that already has in place the computer, telecommunications, other information technology, environmental infrastructure, and personnel required to recover critical business functions or information systems

Incident Command System (ICS)- A standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is

used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

Key Non-Standard Software- Software that is not used on a daily basis, but could be utilized in the response of an emergency or in support of a mission essential function

Leadership- The senior decision makers who have been elected (e.g., the President, State governors) or designated (e.g., Cabinet Secretaries, chief executive officers) to head a branch of Government or other organization. Depending on the organization, directors and managers may also serve to assist in guiding the organization and making decisions

Lines of Succession- Lines of Succession are a formal, sequential listing of organization positions (rather than specific names of individuals) that identify who is authorized to assume a particular leadership or management role under specific circumstances

Long Term- Space that your agency can occupy for a minimum of 18-24 months while a new facility is designed and constructed

Mission Critical Systems- The standard and non-standard hardware and software needed to support each/all of the MEFs

Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) - The limited set of agency-level Government functions that must be continued throughout, or resumed rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities

Mitigation- The activities designed to reduce or eliminate risks to persons or property or to lessen the actual or potential effects or consequences of an incident. Mitigation measures may be implemented prior to, during, or after an incident. Mitigation measures are often formed by lessons learned from prior incidents. Mitigation involves ongoing actions to reduce exposure to, probability of, or potential loss from hazards. Measures may include zoning and building codes, floodplain buyouts, and analysis of hazard-related data to determine where it is safe to build or locate temporary facilities. Mitigation can include efforts to educate governments, businesses, and the public on measures they can take to reduce loss and injury.

Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP)- A short-term emergency response plan, which establishes procedures for evacuating buildings or sheltering-in-place to safeguard lives and property. Organizations may refer to this plan as the Emergency Plan or building closure plan. Common scenarios that would lead to the activation of these plans would be inclement weather, fire, localized power outages, and localized telecommunications outages. These types of events are generally short-term in nature

Personnel (Human Capital)- Human capital is the sum of talent, energy, knowledge, and enthusiasm that people invest in their work. In continuity situations, human capital means all employees.

Reconstitution- The process by which surviving and/or replacement agency personnel resume normal agency operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility

Recovery Point Objective (RPO) - is the maximum allowable or tolerable period which data can be lost. Stated simply, the RPO is the amount of data that your agency can afford to lose; the RPO is a critical component when determining the frequency of your systems backup

Recovery Time Objective (RTO) - the period of time within which systems, applications, or functions must be recovered after an outage (e.g. one business day)

Recovery- The implementation of prioritized actions required to return an organization's processes and support functions to operational stability following an interruption or disaster

Risk Assessment- The identification and assessment of hazards

Short Term- Office space that meet the basic needs and priorities of your agency while a more permanent solution is developed

Telework- A work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of such employee's position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work

Testing, Training, and Exercises (TT&E)- Measures to ensure that an agency's continuity plan is capable of supporting the continued execution of the agency's essential functions throughout the duration of a continuity situation

Vital Records- Electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records that are needed to support essential functions during a continuity situation. The two basic categories of vital records are (1) emergency operating records and (2) rights and interests records

Warm Site- A continuity facility that is equipped with some computer, telecommunications, other information technology, and environmental infrastructure, which is capable of providing backup after additional personnel, equipment, supplies, software, or customization are provided

[Helpful Resources](#)

[Federal Guidance & Directives](#)

National Security Presidential Directive-51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-20

National Security Presidential Directive-51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-20 (NSPD-51/HSPD-20), emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive national program involving all government levels and the private sector for integrated and scalable continuity planning. NSPD-51/HSPD-20 prescribes continuity requirements for all executive departments and agencies, and provides continuity guidance for the states, territories, tribal and local governments, and private sector organizations.

Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1) 2012

Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1) is a directive that applies to all Federal organizations to follow when planning their continuity program.

[Federal Continuity Directive 1](#)

Federal Continuity Directive 2 (FCD 2)

Federal Continuity Directive 2 (FCD 2) is a directive to assist Federal Executive Branch organizations identify its Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) and candidate Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs).

[Federal Continuity Directive 2](#)

[Continuity Guidance](#)

Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1)

To provide the operational guidance to implement this policy, the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with our non-Federal partners, developed Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1).

[Continuity Guidance Circular 1 \(CGC 1\) July 2013](#)

Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC2)

This Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC) provides guidance and direction to non-Federal Governments (NFGs) for the identification and verification of their essential functions, and the Business Process Analyses and Business Impact Analyses that support and identify the relationships among these essential functions.

[Continuity Guidance Circular 2 \(CGC 2\) October 2013](#)

[NFPA 1600: Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs](#)

Developed by both public and private sources NFPA 1600 is the standard Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs. NFPA 1600 is also the standard used for accreditation under the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)

[NFPA 1600](#)

[FEMA COOP Training](#)

[Continuity Webinar Series](#)

The webinars will address continuity-related topics and include presenters from varied backgrounds and experiences. These webinars will feature new continuity topics once a month and are free to the public

[Continuity Webinar Series](#)

[FEMA Continuity Courses](#)

FEMA offers a number of valuable online Continuity Courses. Courses are available for students at all levels, from individuals new to the Continuity community to program managers who have been involved with continuity for many years. This training provides an opportunity for personnel to develop and enhance their continuity knowledge and helps prepare them to respond to emergencies requiring continuity of operations activation.

[FEMA Continuity Courses](#)

NOTE: It is recommended that all personnel involved with the Continuity Program take, IS 547: Introduction to Continuity Operations and IS 548.a: Continuity or Operations Program Managers at a minimum

Attachment 1

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Preparedness Templates

Personnel

Line of Succession

Department / Section	Primary POC	1 st Alternate	2 nd Alternate

Key Recovery Staff

Role-Responsibilities	Name and # of Primary Contact	Name and # of Secondary Contact

Mission Critical (Emergency) Go-Kits

Section	Alternate Location	Contact Info @ Location

Systems, Files, Records and Database

Application/Technology

Applications/Technology	IT point of contact	Recovery Time Object (RTO)	Recovery Time Capabilities (RTC)
1			
2			

Vital Records

Description of vital record		Placement at primary location	Backup available? Location?
1			
2			

Key Non-Standard Software

Non-standard Software Name		Users	Location of Installation Media
1			

Logistics

Logistical Support - Equipment Requirements

Equipment Needed		Quantity	Department
1			
2			

Internal/External Contacts, Vendors & Suppliers

Vendor – Supplier – External Contact		Contact Information	
1			
2			

Dependencies & Interdependencies

Agency / Department		Data from	Data to	Contact Name / Number
1				
2				

Attachment 2

Business Process Analysis Data Sheet

(Organization) MEF # — BPA MEF Title Date
MEF Statement:
Line 1: MEF Output: (A list describing what products and services are produced or delivered to external partners or constituents. If possible, metrics that provide time and other performance measures should be included.)
Line 2: MEF Input: (A list describing information, authorizations, supplies, and services required to perform the MEF. Each input should briefly describe how the input supports the overall process.)
Line 3: Leadership: (A list identifying the key senior leaders [by position or title] who are required to participate directly in performance of the MEF.)
Line 4: Staff: (A list of staff requirements, positions and work schedules necessary to perform the MEF. This is particularly important if 24/7 operations or teleworking is applicable.)
Line 5: Communications and IT: (A list identifying general and unique communications and IT requirements.)
Line 6: Facilities: (A description of the facility requirements to perform the MEF, including office space, industrial capacity and equipment, and critical supporting infrastructure.)
Line 7: Resources and Budgeting: (Supplies, services, capabilities, and other essential resources required to perform the MEF and supporting activities not already accounted for in the BPA process.)
Line 8: Dependencies and Interdependencies: (A list of partners and interdependent organizations that support and/or ensure performance of the MEF. Products or services delivered by the partners, information shared or exchanged and any other critical elements relevant to the MEF's should be highlighted.)
Line 9: Process Details: (A detailed narrative or diagram that ties together all of the elements involved in the process of performing the MEF from start to finish/beginning.)
Telework Flexibilities: (if appropriate)
Other Comments: (Essential Supporting Activities that support the MEF can be captured here or in line 9 Process Details.)

Business Impact Analysis Worksheet

Business Impact Analysis Worksheet: Threat and Hazard Analysis						
MEF Number and Statement: MEF Number and MEF Title						
Entry Number	(1) Threat Hazard	(2) Threat or Hazard Characteristics	Threat or Hazard Likelihood (0-10)	MEF Vulnerability (0-10)	MEF Failure Impact (0-10)	MEF Risk Value (0-30)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Attachment 3

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Response/Recovery Templates

Plan Activation Procedures

Activation Indicators

Scenario / Timeframe	Decision Maker	COOP Activation

Emergency Notification Procedures

Methods for Contacting Employees

	Name

Agency Executive List

	Name	Contact Info
Primary		
Secondary		
Tertiary		

People Responsible for Outreach to Employees

	Name
Primary	
Secondary	
Tertiary	

Agency Locations in COOP situation and Entity/persons to be informed

Location going into a continuity of operations situation:	Entity/persons to be informed:
Agency Headquarters	
Any Regional Office	

Agency Operations Center	
All Locations	

Critical Recovery Tasks

Critical COOP response and recovery tasks	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	

Facility Relocation Handout for Employees to the Alternate Site

Site Setup Lead:	Agency Setup Leaders	Contact Information	
Site Setup Team:	As designated by leadership	Contact Information	
Directions:	Provide directions to the alternate site		
Nearby Hotels:	Example One	Example Two	
Nearby Food Restaurants:	Restaurant One	Restaurant Two	Restaurant Three

Team Leaders and Alternate Relocation Sites (if necessary)

The table below is an example of how geographically separated individuals may be identified.

***Note: individual(s) should also be included under the lines of succession.**

Region	Name	Contact Info
Northern		
Southern		
Eastern		
Western		

