

# ***Arizona Continuity of Operations (COOP) Basic Development Guide***

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
OPERATIONS SECTION  
CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS GROUP**

**APRIL 2010**

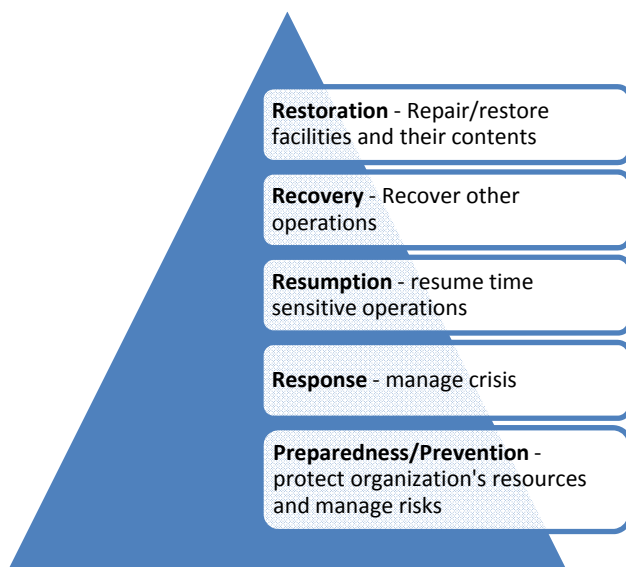
*Version 1.0*



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## FORWARD

The key purpose of Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning is to reduce the consequences of a disaster to acceptable levels. Although when and how a disaster will occur is not known, the fact that future disasters will happen is certain. How well a COOP plan is designed and implemented will determine *response*, *recovery*, *resumption*, and *restoration*.



**Continuity of Operations:** “An effort within individual agencies to ensure they can continue to perform their Essential Functions during a wide range of emergencies...” **Essential Functions:** “The critical activities performed by organizations especially after a disruption of normal activities.

—Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1)

Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning differs from emergency response planning in that it focuses inward to determine how your organization will operate in times of emergency. COOP planning focuses on the internal activities and responsibilities that enable your organization to maintain Essential Functions.

This guide provides a systematic chronological process that organizations may follow to develop a Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program. The steps followed in the planning process may not address each section in the order that they appear in the plan. The nationally recognized process will be followed that develops a foundation on which to incrementally build a robust plan. This document should be used in conjunction with the *Arizona Continuity of Operations Job Aids*. The data that is developed during the planning process can then be populated to the template. In many cases, most of the data required for the plan has already been compiled. If a step in this guide has already been completed or it is not relevant to the organization, continue to the next step. This guide will help organizations build on the accomplishments of Arizona COOP planning Phases I and II to develop a more robust and effective plan. The steps in this process should be viewed as guidance. This process will also be useful for the annual plan review. Generally the steps in the planning guide will be followed sequentially. Each organization should adapt the process to meet their planning needs.

Any questions and concerns you have regarding the planning process or use of this guide may be addressed to:

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Division of Emergency Management  
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## PLANNING BASIS

The plans and procedures an organization develops for COOP will inevitably interact with other planning initiatives, such as those involving all hazard emergency response planning and critical infrastructure protection. The COOP plan will be strengthened and will be easier to implement through coordination with other relevant planning efforts. It is prudent to coordinate with the COOP planning efforts of related departments, agencies, and other governmental entities. This is especially important if these outside organizations may be requested to provide resources or other assistance during an emergency. It is important to plan for small scale incidents that may only require specific components of the plan be activated, as well as large scale incidents that necessitate activation of the entire plan. For example, an organization may lose electricity to one portion of their facility. This may require the temporary relocation of those services to another area within the primary facility rather than moving to an alternate site.

It is particularly important to coordinate COOP planning with the all hazards emergency response planning effort that covers the department, agency, and jurisdiction. Despite some differences in the orientation of these two types of planning, they share some common characteristics and may be implemented simultaneously in an emergency. Some departments, agencies, and officials will likely play major roles under both plans, and resources will be required to implement both plans. Coordinated planning will help ensure that the combined resource requirements are reasonable and the assigned responsibilities are compatible.

COOP planning should also be coordinated with any critical infrastructure planning that relates to the department, agency, jurisdiction, and other governmental entities. In order to maintain essential services and functions during a disaster, state and local governments/jurisdictions will often rely on critical infrastructure elements. Telephone lines, the internet, and/or satellite systems, for example, are required for effective communications. Streets, highways, and vehicles are necessary for goods and services that must be physically delivered to customers. Coordination can help COOP planners understand which critical infrastructure elements are most likely to be available during an emergency.

Some emergencies that result in COOP activation could affect the organization's resources for providing essential services, thus making it necessary to request resources from other organizations. It is important to coordinate the COOP planning effort with any outside organizations that may be requested to provide resource assistance in emergencies. Such organizations may include other departments in the city, surrounding local jurisdictions, county, or other levels of government. In cases where a potential need for resource assistance is identified, it is often desirable to enter into pre-arranged agreements with other organizations for obtaining the needed resources during an emergency.

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## COOP PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for COOP planning resides with the highest level of management of the organization involved. The chief elected official of a local government or jurisdiction is ultimately responsible for the continuation of essential services in an emergency and, consequently, for the related planning.

The Continuity of Operations Group within the Arizona Division of Emergency Management will work with each organization throughout the process as well as provide guidance and technical assistance in your plan development and maintenance. The assistance will include on-site visits to each organization by the State COOP Group.

The organizational head has several COOP planning responsibilities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Appointing a department or jurisdiction COOP Coordinator
- Identify a COOP Planning Team
- Developing a COOP Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management Plan
- Developing, approving, and maintaining agency COOP plans for all components of the department or jurisdiction
- Coordinating COOP planning efforts and initiatives with policies, plans, and activities related to critical infrastructure protection
- Training the organization's staff for their COOP responsibilities
- Participating in a COOP Test, Training and Exercise program
- Notifying appropriate outside parties (e.g., the Governor) when COOP plans are activated

The head of the department/agency may delegate these tasks but should continue to regularly monitor and be apprised of COOP team efforts. There should be close coordination between the department/agency's management and the team responsible for COOP planning.

## 1.0 REVIEW EXISTING COOP PLANS

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 1**

Review your existing Continuity of Operations Plan with the Arizona Continuity of Operations Plan evaluation tool. Ensure that the information in the existing plan is current. If so, the information already compiled in the existing plan can be used to populate the plan as you go through the planning or review process.

## 2.0 MISSION OF THE ORGANIZATION

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 2**

Identify/review the organization's mission and objectives. This will assist in the next step of identifying the organizations essential functions.

## 3.0 ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 3**

After organizing the COOP team and identifying resources for COOP planning, the first step in developing a COOP Plan is identifying the organization's essential functions; their associated key personnel; and supporting critical systems/processes that must be sustained for at least thirty days following a disruption. Essential Functions are those functions that enable an organization to:  
**1. Provide vital services, 2. Exercise civil authority, 3. Maintain the safety of the general public, and 4. Sustain the industrial or economic base during an emergency. In other words, essential functions are an agency's business functions that must continue with minimal or no interruption. Each essential function, in turn, is supported by critical processes or services that are provided to the public, other divisions within the agency, or other local, state, and federal agencies.**

Every complex organization provides a wide variety of services, and the task of separating those that are essential from those that are not may be surprisingly challenging. Listing all functions performed by the department or jurisdiction is a useful prelude to identifying the essential functions and operations. To ensure the listing is complete, a systematic approach is recommended, beginning with identification of all work tasks performed by the organization, followed by a specification of the functions of each of these tasks.

**NOTE: ALL JOB AIDS MENTIONED IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE AVAILABLE IN THE ARIZONA CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS BASIC JOB AIDS GUIDE.**

### 3.1 IDENTIFY ALL FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY THE ORGANIZATION

The organization's mission clearly outlines the basic purpose and is the first place to look to determine the organization's functions. Statements of an organization's mission are often in the legislation that created the organization; However, other sources, such as regulations promulgated by the organization, may also contain information on the organization's functions. Existing Standard Operating Procedures, Emergency Operations Plans, and reports on agency operations usually offer a good starting point for identifying various agency functions.

### 3.2 IDENTIFY ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Once all functions have been listed, the next task is to identify those that are essential and will provide the basis for COOP planning. A good place to start is by identifying the functions from your agency that address one of three criteria:

- Life Safety and Public Health
- Custodial Care
- Statutory Requirement

This list is not all inclusive and your agency may have additional standards that identify required functions.

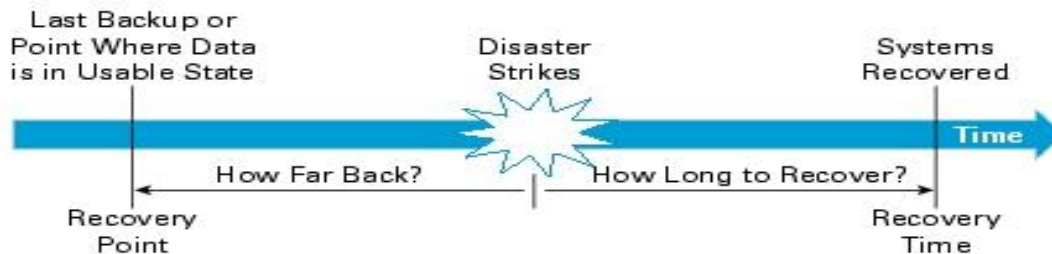
***NOTE: ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS ARE THOSE THAT ENABLE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS/JURISDICTIONS TO PROVIDE VITAL SERVICES, EXERCISE CIVIL AUTHORITY, MAINTAIN THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF THE GENERAL POPULACE, AND SUSTAIN THE INDUSTRIAL/ECONOMIC BASE IN AN EMERGENCY.***

### 3.3 PRIORITIZE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Once all essential functions have been identified, prioritize them according to those activities that are pivotal to resuming operations when a catastrophic event occurs. Prioritization requires determination of the following:

- Time criticality of each essential function
- Sequence for recovery of essential functions and their critical processes

An essential function's time criticality is related to the amount of time that function can be suspended before it adversely affects the agency's core mission. Time criticality can be measured by either recovery time or recovery point objectives. These are terms of art borrowed from Information Technology (IT) disaster recovery planning, but they can be used in the broader context of COOP planning. A recovery time objective (RTO) is the period within which systems, processes, services, or functions must be recovered after an outage. A recovery point objective (RPO) is more specific to information systems. It is the amount of data that can be lost measured by a time index. Not all processes have RPOs, and some processes can have both a RPO and a RTO.

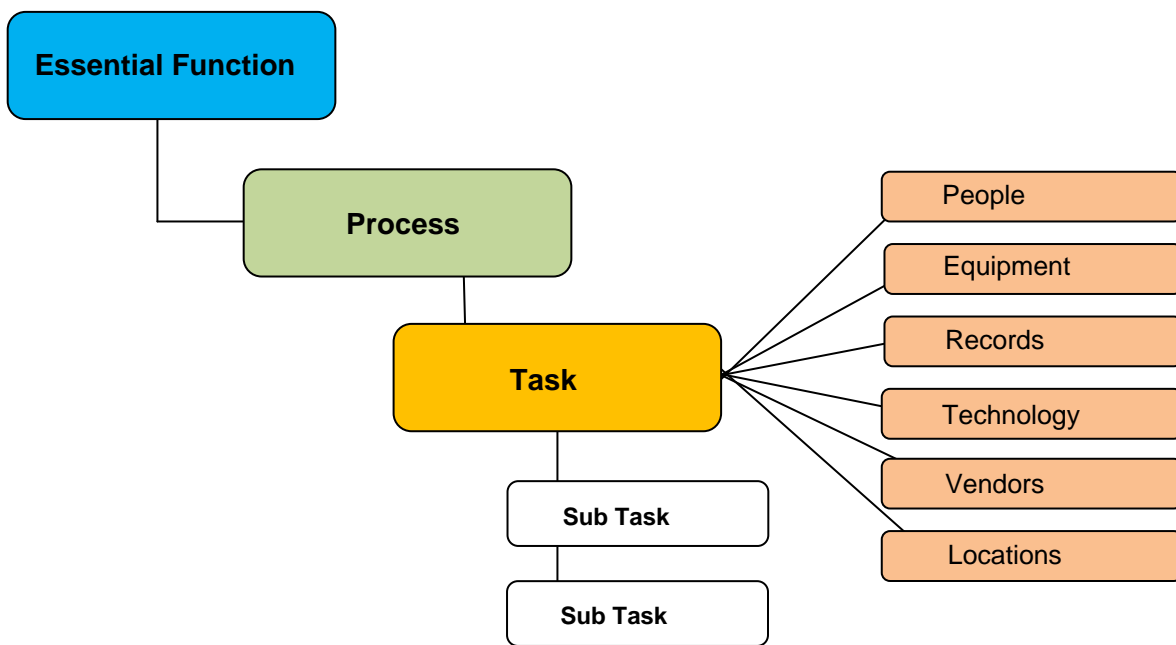


Deciding which essential function should be restored first in a crisis would be impossible without also considering their related critical processes and services. Critical processes or services are those that must be resumed soon after a disruption, generally within 12 hours. By contrast, secondary processes or services do not need to be resumed as quickly after a disruption.

### 3.4 IDENTIFY CRITICAL PROCESSES AND SERVICES

After the essential functions are determined, examine the processes and tasks that support them. Essential functions and their supporting processes and tasks are intricately connected. Each essential function has unique characteristics and resource requirements, without which the function could not be sustained. Those processes and tasks that are necessary to assure continuance of an essential function are considered critical. Often, critical processes and tasks vary depending upon the emergency or if they have a time or calendar component. For example, a blizzard would make snow removal a critical service, while a hurricane would not. Likewise, snow removal is a critical service in the winter, but not in the summer.

Once your processes and tasks have been identified, determine the activation criteria for each function. Use the previously identified function priorities to set the activation criteria for each individual function. Beginning with your highest prioritized essential function, list the processes that are needed to support the on-going operation of that function. Each process will require tasks and possibly subtasks. Think of the tasks like a "to do list" of the steps required to complete that process. Make the list detailed enough that someone without expert knowledge in that area could perform the individual assignments. Keep in mind that functions may have multiple processes and processes may have multiple tasks. Take each task and identify what resources will be needed to accomplish the task.





## 4.0 KEY PERSONNEL AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS – HUMAN CAPITAL

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 4**

Every employee is important to the achievement of the organization's mission. Each critical process and task associated with an essential function has key personnel and positions that are necessary to the continuity of the organization's operations. They represent strategically vital points in the organization's management and authority, and underscore the essential functions of the organization that must be carried out. If these positions are left unattended, the organization will not be able to meet customer needs or fulfill its essential functions. That is why a comprehensive COOP plan always includes succession planning and management components in the event these key positions suddenly become vacant. Succession planning and management ensures the continued effective performance of the organization by making provisions for the replacement of people in key positions.

### 4.1 IDENTIFY ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Identify personnel and/or teams necessary to perform Essential Functions in an emergency with relevant contact information. Based on the department, agency, or jurisdiction's list of essential operations and functions, decisions can be made regarding the staff that will be required to perform those functions during an emergency. In general, key personnel will be needed for the positions listed below. For small organizations, some of these positions could possibly be combined, while larger and more complex organizations might require additional support staff for some positions.

Examples of key COOP staff members include, but are not limited to, the following:

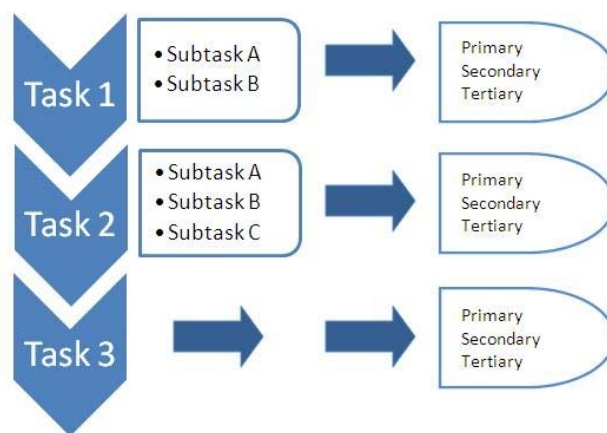
- Chief Executive Officer
- Director of Logistics and Administrative Support
- Communications Coordinator
- Public Information Officer
- Resource Manager
- Employees for conducting essential operations and providing essential services

The COOP plan should include a roster of fully equipped and trained personnel with the ability to perform essential functions. To avoid the necessity of updating the COOP staff list every time the organization experiences a personnel change, it is recommended that staff requirements be identified on the basis of functional roles (positions) rather than individuals. Consideration should be given to whether round-the-clock operations are necessary, entailing staffing for multiple shifts.

Teams should be built by identifying critical job titles rather than individuals. All team positions should have a primary, secondary and tertiary individuals identified as able to perform tasks assigned to the position. Some team members may be assigned as the primary to one task and the secondary or tertiary to other tasks, but it is important to assign individual in a way that does not create a point of failure by having a single individual in numerous primary positions.



Checklists should contain tasks and their necessary sub-tasks. Tasks can be defined as, a specific activity or function required to complete a portion of the recovery plan, or a group of sequential subtasks required to complete a portion of the recovery plan.



## 4.2 IDENTIFY DISMISSAL/CLOSURE PROCEDURES FOR NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Develop dismissal/closure procedures for non-essential personnel. These procedures may include sending personnel home or reassigning them to other organizations who can utilize their skills. Human capital resiliency can begin with an assessment of your continuity plan to see if it addresses all the people-related components.

## 4.3 ORDERS OF SUCCESSION

This section should identify orders of succession to essential positions within the organization. Orders should be of sufficient depth (primary, secondary, tertiary) to ensure the organization's ability to manage and direct its essential functions and operations. The conditions under which succession will take place, the method of notification, legal authorities and any organizational limitations of authority must also be identified in this section.



#### 4.4 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

This section should identify, by position, the authorities for making policy determinations and decisions at headquarters, field levels, and other organizational locations, as appropriate. Generally, pre-determined delegations of authority will take effect when normal channels of direction are disrupted. These authorities terminate when these channels have resumed. Such delegations may also be used to address specific competency requirements. Delegations 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. Pre-determined delegations of authority may be particularly important in a devolution scenario. All delegations should be in writing and included in the plan. Delegations should be specific and include any limitations of authority that are delegated.

Row #	Officials	Designated Successor(s) <i>(Position Name not Individual)</i>	Limitations / Conditions	Responsibilities
<i>Group or Team:</i> <input type="text"/>				
Example	Director	1. Deputy Director 2. Chief of Staff 3. State Engineer	Absence of Director and inability to contact	Director overall responsibility and direction
1		1. 2. 3.		
2		1. 2. 3.		
3		1. 2. 3.		

#### 4.5 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

This communications plan is related specifically to operational elements. This section will address all communications needs specific to Essential Function elements that are not addressed in the Executive Management Communications Plan. Areas that may be addressed are:

- Alternate methods of communication (equipment, radios, runners, etc...)
- Lines of communication with team elements
- Lines of communication with supervisory/command elements

## 5.0 DEVOLUTION OF CONTROL AND DIRECTION

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BLOCK # 5

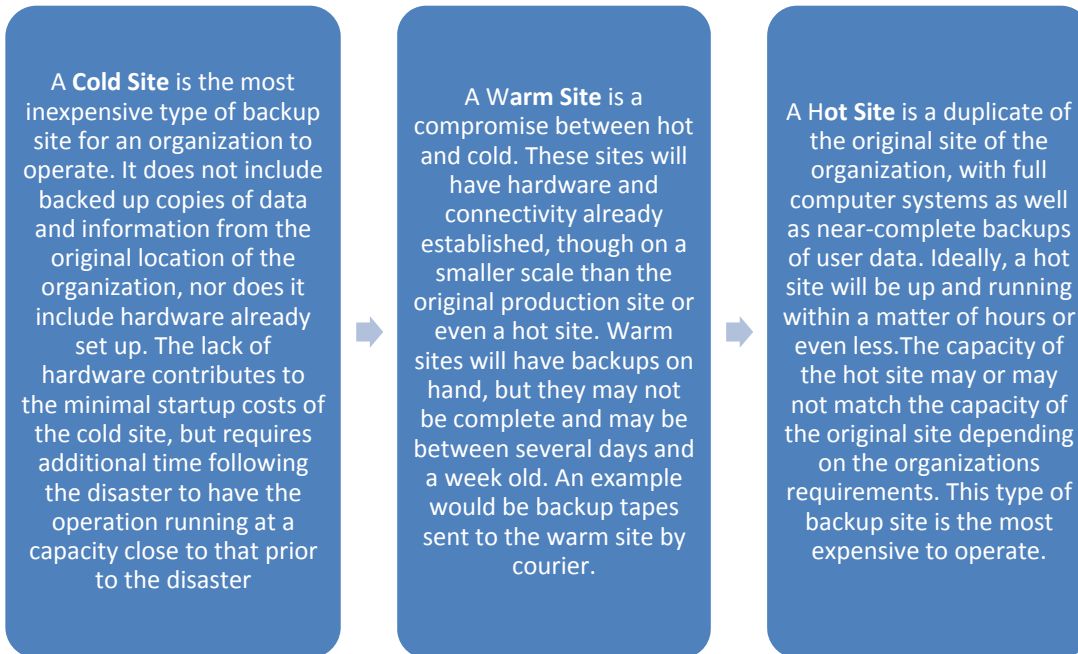
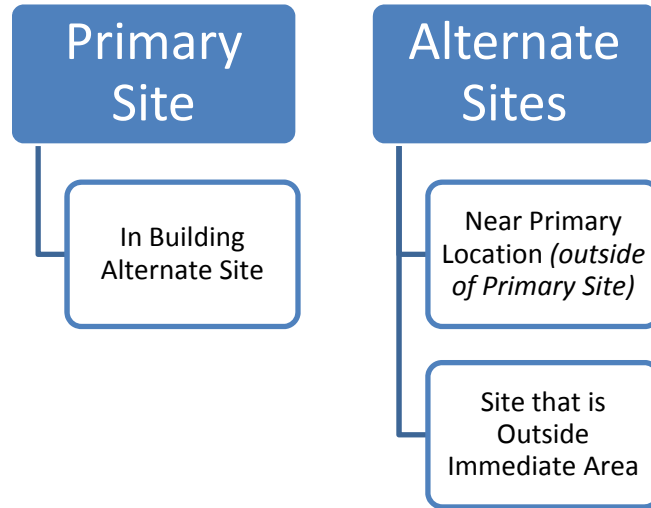
### 5.1 ALTERNATE FACILITIES/WORK SITES

Emergencies, whether anticipated or unanticipated, may affect the ability of organizations to perform their mission-essential functions from their primary locations. Emergencies might affect a department or jurisdiction's work facilities in a variety of ways.

A critical element in COOP planning is the identification and preparation of facilities that can be used to accomplish essential functions if the organization's primary facilities become unusable. In selecting an alternate facility, it is essential to have a thorough understanding of the organization's mission, essential functions, concept for deployment and operations at an alternate facility, communications connectivity requirements, and resources allotted. These factors can vary widely from one organization to another. An acceptable facility for one department or jurisdiction might be provided in a borrowed conference room for use by a few key people on a temporary basis. A more complex department or jurisdiction might require a complete turn-key facility able to house the entire organization for an extended period.

- **Identify One or More Alternate Facilities/Work Sites.** This alternate facility/work site should allow the organization's key personnel to perform essential functions when an emergency renders the primary facility unusable. The alternate facility should be capable of supporting operations in a threat-free environment, as determined by a vulnerability assessment that considers the significant hazards that might threaten the facility location and the facility's ability to withstand those hazards.
- **There are several types of alternate work sites and all have different capacity levels.** The type of work sites chosen may depend on organizational needs, budgetary concerns, or the level of the emergency. An organization should not limit itself to one alternate work site. Several should be chosen. For instance, an organization can have one type of alternate site available for lower-level and short-term emergency operations and a larger and more equipped site set up for use in higher-level emergencies.
- **Identify the Layouts of Alternate Facilities/Work Sites for COOP.** These layouts include room assignments, equipment location, etc.
- **Identify List of Critical Alternate Facility Information.** This list should include the facility's address, telephone number, and a contact person.

When planning continuity of facilities, some considerations include the size and severity of the event, and how quickly the function must be recovered. It is best practice to cultivate more than one alternate site.



## 5.2 LOGISTICS

### 5.2.1 TRANSPORTATION, LODGING, AND FOOD

In the event that the organization has to move to an alternate facility, the needs of staff operating at the facility must be met. This includes provision for logistical support and lodging through arrangement with vendors for transportation, hotels, catering, etc. Be sure to address the needs of employees with disabilities as required by the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

### 5.2.2 SECURITY AND ACCESS

Not only does the alternate work site need to be identified and the care of staff arranged, but the security and access to both the primary and alternate facilities during emergency and non-emergency situations also need to be arranged. The security procedures should be able to accommodate all hazards and include provisions for identifying access restrictions.

## 6.0 EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 6**

The Executive Management Plan addresses several sections that are vital to the COOP plan. The Executive Management Plan will lay the groundwork activate and maintain COOP activities.

The executive summary should describe in broad terms the organization and content of the COOP Plan and describe what it is, whom it affects, and the circumstances under which it should be executed. Further, it should discuss the key elements of COOP planning and explain the organization's implementation strategies.

Plan Strategies describe how you will effectively respond to the event and to what extent you will be able to mitigate, contain, or control the impacts associated with an event. Document strategies, such as the use of pre-defined locations elsewhere in the organization, outsourcing certain functions, and service level agreements for hot or cold site access and communications support.

Activation Criteria should summarize at what point the plan will be activated. Your organization will need to determine the acceptable outage duration, loss of personnel, or lack of resources for each of your essential functions.

Activation Procedures should outline the process by which the plan is put into effect. The steps to notify leadership, who can activate the plan and any requirements that activation necessitates is some of the information that may need to be documented within the procedures. If the activation criteria include levels of activation then the procedures will need to include how to assess the impact and severity of the event and the methods for a determination.

### 6.1 PROCEDURES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

After the basic plan for COOP has been developed, it is important to address how it will be executed. By definition, the COOP Plan will be implemented at a time of disruption, when an organization's personnel are dealing with a stressful, unfamiliar, and uncertain situation. It is crucial that plans and procedures be in place to guide their actions at this time. These plans and procedures should address three distinct phases of COOP operations: activation and relocation; alternate facility operations; and resumption/reconstitution (termination and return to normal operations).

## 6.2 ACTIVATION AND RELOCATION

Plans for COOP typically call for resuming the performance of essential functions within 12 hours of a disruption. In its COOP Plan, each organization should state its time goal for resuming essential functions and should establish procedures that will enable it to achieve this goal. The plan might include a checklist with a timeline that is tailored to the unique characteristics of the organization and indicates what actions need to be taken at what times to resume essential functions within its stated timeframe.

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### 6.2.1 ACTIVATION

The decision process and procedures for COOP activation should encompass the following functions:

- **Command:** determine objectives and establish priorities based on the nature of the incident
- **Planning:** develop the incident action plan to accomplish these objectives; collect and evaluate information and maintain status of assigned resources
- **Operations:** develop the tactical organization and direct all resources to carry out the incident action plan
- **Logistics:** provide resources and all other services needed for support
- **Finance:** monitor costs related to the incident, and provide cost analysis and overall fiscal guidance
- **Administration:** provide accounting, procurement, and time recording
- **Legal:** provide guidance on the legal and liability implications of COOP activation
- **Safety:** provide direction that addresses all safety considerations

### 6.2.2 COOP IMPLEMENTATION DECISION PROCESS

This process should include the criteria for deciding when to implement COOP. The process may include partial activation or phased-activation. The following table is an example. **The criteria for each organization will vary and must be determined as part of the planning process. For some organizations a disruption of more than one hour of an essential function may require activation of the COOP Plan.**

Class/Level of Emergency	Impact on Agency
I	Disruption of up to 12 hours, with little effect on services or impact to essential functions or critical systems. No COOP activation required, depending on individual agency requirements.
II	Disruption of 12 to 72 hours, with minor impact on essential functions. Limited COOP activation, depending on individual agency requirements.
III	Disruption to 1 or 2 essential functions or to a vital system for no more than 3 days. May require movement of some personnel to an alternate facility/work site or location in the primary facility for less than a week.
IV	Disruption to 1 or 2 essential functions or to the entire agency with potential of lasting for more than three days but less than fourteen days. May require activation of orders of succession for some key personnel. May require movement of some personnel to an alternate work site or location in the primary facility for more than a week.
V	Disruption to the entire agency with a potential for lasting as long as 30 days. Requires activation of orders of succession for some key personnel. Requires movement of many, if not all personnel, to an alternate work site for as long as 30 days.

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### **6.2.3 RELOCATION**

Key issues to address in relocation planning include personnel notification, deployment of key personnel to the alternate facilities/work sites, transition of operations to the alternate facilities, and provision of administrative and logistic support.

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#### **6.2.3.1 PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL**

The first step in implementing a COOP relocation plan is to notify all pertinent parties that the COOP plan for the organization is being activated and that essential operations are being transferred to the alternate facilities/work sites. Pre-established notification procedures can help ensure that all parties are contacted and that they receive accurate and complete information about the relocation.

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#### **6.2.3.2 PROCEDURES FOR CONTACTING NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL**

Develop processes and procedures for contacting and keeping non essential personnel updated on the status of the organizations operations. For example, how would you notify non essential personnel if the COOP activation was initiated during non duty hours? How would you notify these personnel when normal operations will resume?

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#### **6.2.3.3 PROCEDURES FOR COOP TEAM DEPLOYMENT TO ALTERNATE FACILITIES/WORK SITES**

The occurrence of an emergency and activation of the COOP Plan will likely generate stress for the organization's designated key personnel as they quickly prepare to depart for the alternate facilities/work sites. Written procedures to guide the deployment process can reduce this stress and make sure that no important concerns are overlooked during the disruption of normal operations. These procedures should specify the actions key personnel should take as they depart their primary workstations as well as the resources they should take with them to the alternate facility. Based on level of threat, the procedures may allow for partial pre-deployment of any essential functions that are critical to operations.

Deployment procedures should also address administrative requirements associated with the travel of key personnel to the alternate facility as well as the transfer of documents and needed communications, data processing, and other equipment to the alternate facility.

### 6.3 ALTERNATE FACILITY OPERATIONS

The way operations at an alternate facility are organized and the activities that are undertaken there will vary widely depending on the nature of the organization and the essential functions it performs. For example, the activities performed, resources required, and interactions among staff members of a transportation agency working to continue essential transit services during an emergency might bear little resemblance to those of a child welfare agency acting to continue caring for its clients. In both cases, well-designed operating procedures developed during COOP planning will enhance the organization's ability to function effectively in its alternate facility; however, the specific procedures needed will vary.

Despite this variability in the specifics of alternate facility operations, there are common issues that need to be addressed in the planning phase. It is recommended that each state or local government/jurisdiction develop alternate facility operating procedures addressing the following issues:

- Execution of Essential Functions (i.e., functions determined to be critical to operations)
- Establishment of lines of communications to all critical customers and other parties, including notification to other agencies immediately of the alternate location, operational and communications status, and anticipated duration of relocation, if known
- Assignment of responsibilities to key staff to perform Essential Functions, including Advance Team and COOP Team roles
- Augmentation of staff if it is determined that current staffing is inadequate to meet the workload involved in performing mission-essential functions
- Accountability of staff including accounting for all personnel on a regular basis, including non-activated staff
- Amplification of guidance to essential and non-essential personnel regarding such concerns as the duration of alternate operations, payroll, time and attendance, duty assignments, etc.
- Development of plans and schedules for reconstitution and termination including the preparation of procedures for transferring communication and essential records and databases back to the primary facility (In some circumstances, a new primary facility may have been designated)

## 6.4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary should briefly outline the organization and content of the COOP Plan and describe what it is, whom it affects, and the circumstances under which it should be executed. Further, it should discuss the key elements of COOP planning and explain the organization's implementation strategies. For example:

Historically, the **[Arizona insert name of agency, board or commission]** has always prepared, to the greatest extent possible, to respond to all hazard disasters and emergencies within its jurisdiction to save lives; protect the public health, safety, and well being; protect property; maintain essential communications; provide for business/industrial continuity; and restore basic public services. However, the **[Arizona insert name of agency, board or commission]** has become increasingly aware of the extent to which disasters and emergencies can interrupt, paralyze, disrupt, and/or destroy its capabilities to preserve civil government institutions and perform essential governmental and jurisdictional functions effectively under emergency conditions.

Consequently, the **[Arizona insert name of agency, board or commission]** has determined that it is imperative that each department, agency, and other governmental entities develop and maintain a Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan. COOP planning is designed to develop and maintain a plan that enables each department, agency, and other governmental agencies to preserve, maintain, and/or resume its capability to function effectively in the event of the threat or occurrence of any disaster or emergency that could potentially disrupt governmental operations and services.

## 6.5 INTRODUCTION

The introduction to the COOP Plan should explain the importance of COOP planning to the organization. It may also discuss the background for planning, referencing recent events that have led to the increased emphasis on the importance of a COOP capability for the organization.

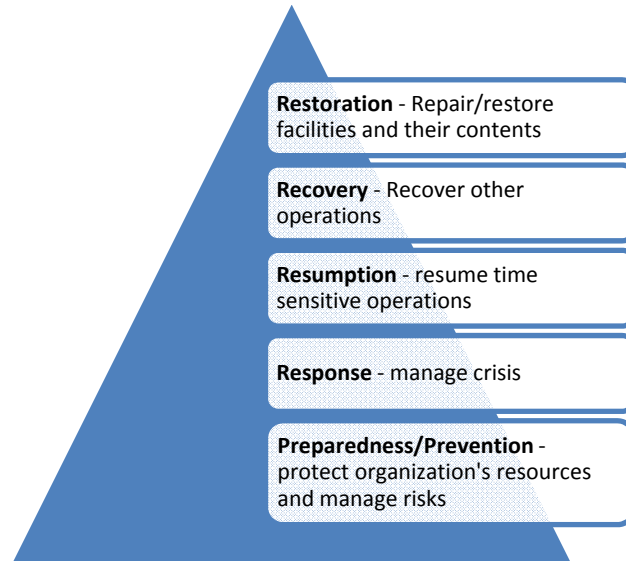
## 6.6 PURPOSE

Continuity of Operations: “An effort within individual agencies to ensure they can continue to perform their Essential Functions during a wide range of emergencies...”

Essential Functions: “The critical activities performed by organizations especially after a disruption of normal activities.

—Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1)

The key purpose of Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning is to reduce the consequences of a disaster to acceptable levels. Although when and how a disaster will occur is not known, the fact that future disasters will happen is certain. How well a COOP plan is designed and implemented will determine *response, recovery, resumption, and restoration*.



The Purpose Section should explain why the organization is developing a COOP Plan. It should briefly discuss applicable Federal guidance and explain the overall purpose of COOP planning, which is to ensure the continuity of mission essential functions. Because of today's changing threat environment, this section should state that the COOP Plan is designed to address the all hazards threat.

The Purpose should summarize your effort to build an actionable program that allows for the resumption or recover of your specific function, division, or agency. This text should represent what the accomplishment of your plan will be.

Your plan's Objectives should briefly describe what outcomes you expect from putting the plan into action. Include the areas that should be recovered. This section should briefly

outline the organization, the importance of COOP planning to the organization, and describe the overall goals of the plan.

- The basic elements of a viable COOP Plan include the following:
  - Orders of Succession
  - Delegation of Authorities
  - Devolution of Control and Direction
  - Essential Functions
  - Human Capital Management
  - Essential records Management
  - Alternate Facilities
  - Continuity Communications
  - Reconstitution
  - Testing, Training, and Exercising Program

COOP planning is an effort to assure that the capability exists to continue essential agency functions throughout any potential emergency. The primary objectives of this plan include the following: ***[List additional primary objectives as needed.]***

- Ensure the continuous performance of a department or agency's Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEF) and Mission Essential Functions (MEF) during an emergency
- Protect essential facilities, equipment, essential records, and other assets
- Reduce or mitigate disruptions to operations
- Assess and minimize damage and losses
- Facilitate decision-making during an emergency
- Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency and resumption of full service to customers

## 6.7 APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This section describes the applicability of the plan to the organization as a whole. It specifies how the plan is relevant to the primary location or headquarters as well as secondary activities and locations, co-located or geographically dispersed, and includes specific personnel groups of the organization.

Your Scope should identify the responsibilities and limitations of your plan. The simplest way to express scope is to start by writing two sentences:

“1) This plan will...”

“2) This plan will not...”

Clearly define the limits of the plan, and describe how and to whom you will escalate events if the impacts reach beyond the plan scope

List the jurisdictions departments, agencies, and other organizations to which the COOP Plan applies.

- List the emergency conditions, events, and situations under which the plan would be implemented.
- Identify the Assumptions on which the plan scope is based, such as: availability of experienced staff, supporting resources, or technology; access to alternate locations; support from local authorities; and successful execution of related plans.

## 6.8 AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

When a local government or jurisdiction undertakes the preparation of a COOP plan, it does so based on some authority granted to the organization. The COOP plan should acknowledge the documents that provide legal authority for the plan and should briefly summarize the scope and limitations of that authority. In cases where COOP planning has been explicitly mandated or authorized by legislative action or executive directive, the appropriate documents can be easily identified. However, in cases where elected officials have not explicitly addressed COOP planning, it will be necessary to research other legal documents that provide the authority for this type of planning. Such documents may include legislation or policy statements regarding general emergency preparedness or planning.

General authorities and references regarding COOP planning for Arizona agencies is available in the *Arizona Continuity of Operations Job Aid Guide*, Authorities and References.

Each organization must determine if there are additional authorities specific to that entity.

In addition to the documents that provide the legal authority for COOP planning, other publications will influence the planning effort and the resulting program. Such documents might include those relating to the mission of the department or jurisdiction as well as general development plans and emergency response plans for the jurisdiction.

**NOTE:** INCLUDE DOCUMENTS IN THIS SECTION THAT PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATION WITH LEGAL AUTHORITY TO ENGAGE IN COOP PLANNING, ADDRESS ISSUES RELATED TO THE JURISDICTION, DEPARTMENT, AGENCY OR OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES' MISSION AND FUNCTIONS AS WELL AS ACTIVITIES NECESSARY FOR EXECUTION OF THE PLAN, AND PROVIDE INFORMATION SUPPORTING THE COOP PLAN (E.G., THE JURISDICTION'S HAZARD ASSESSMENT OR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN).

## 6.9 PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The environment in which government organizations operate is constantly evolving. In order to plan for future emergency operations, planners must make assumptions about what the state of that environment will be at the time of an emergency. Some of these assumptions concern the physical environment (setting in which the plan will be implemented); others concern the operational environment (circumstances under which the plan will be implemented). In order to plan appropriately, it is crucial that all planning assumptions be stated and tested.

As COOP plans are developed, state, county, city governments, and jurisdictions should think carefully about the assumptions that underline their strategies for continuing to perform essential functions during emergencies. Decision makers should consider whether each assumption is reliable. It is particularly important to consider whether the plan will fail if a particular assumption proves to be untrue. The evaluation of planning assumptions may even allow the organization to make an initial assessment of its vulnerability and the likelihood of an specific type of event.

## 6.10 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The **Concept of Operations** describes the procedures for plan implementation. Continuity Plan implementation takes place in four phases:

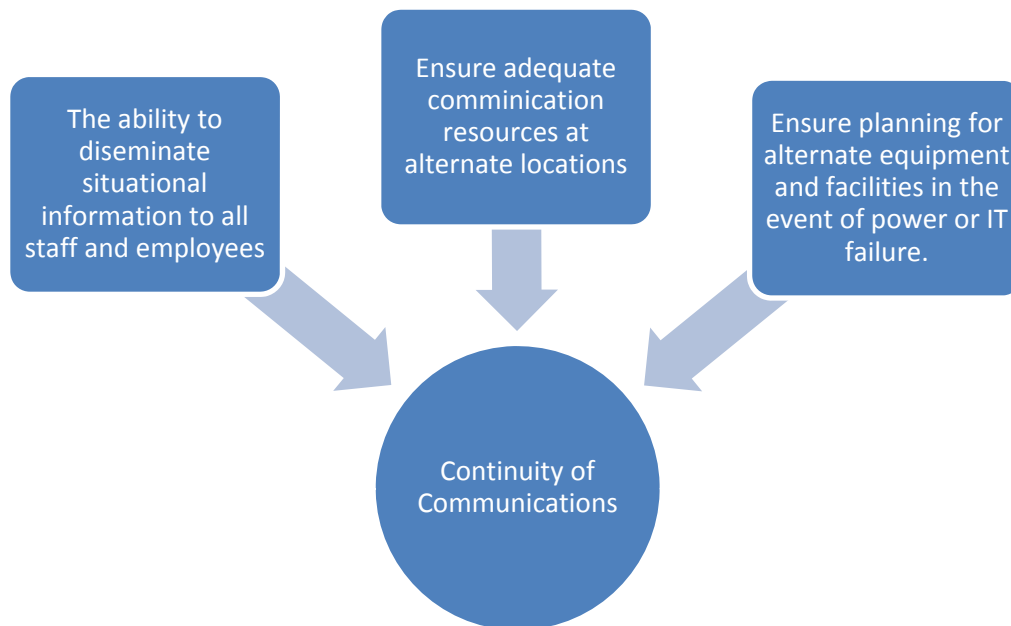
- Phase I: Readiness and Preparedness
- Phase II: Activation and Relocation (0–12 hours)
- Phase III: Continuity Operations (12 hours–30 days or until resumption of normal operations)
- Phase IV: Reconstitution (recovery, mitigation, and termination)

The criteria the organization will use to decide whether to activate the COOP plan should be described, using examples to illustrate various activation scenarios. The principles that will guide decisions on the duration COOP operations should be determined, as well as the organization's approach for transitioning from COOP operations back to normal activities. Organizations may find it helpful to define subdivisions of the four phases of Continuity Plan implementation based on differences in objectives, resource requirements, etc.

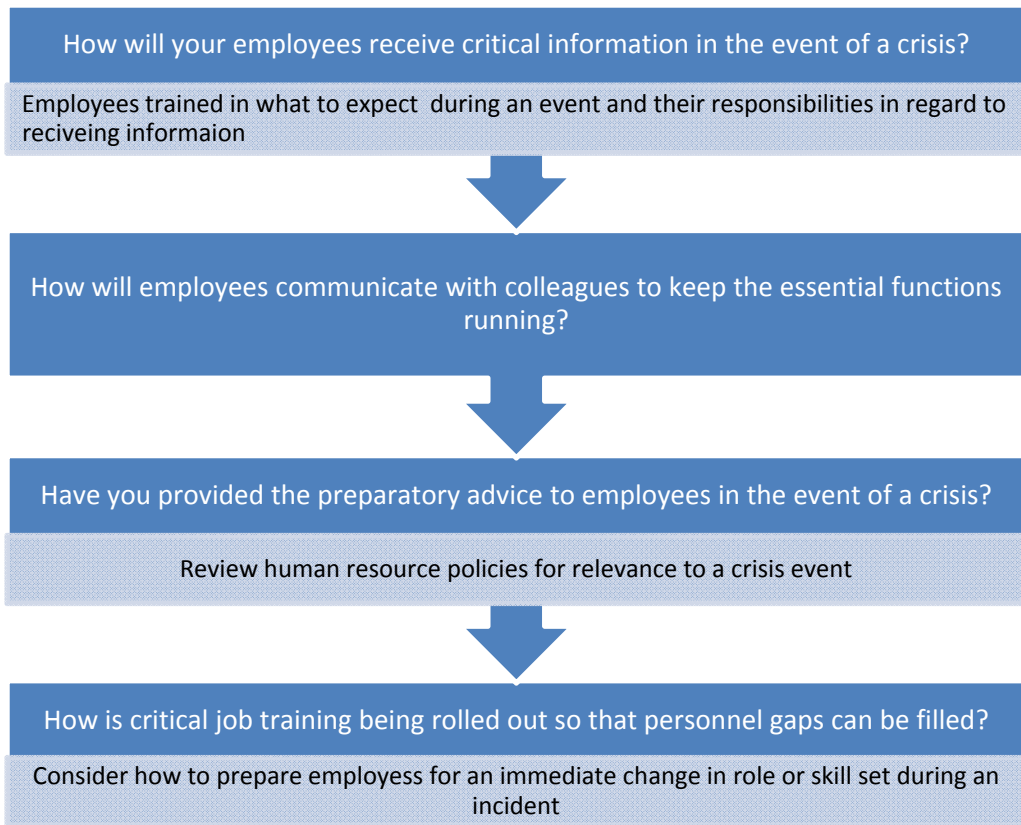
## 6.11 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Planning for continued communication in times of crisis can be challenging for government agencies that do not have first responder responsibilities. Primary and alternate modes of communication should be identified in the plan. The three concepts of communication that must be planned for are:

- **External Communications** (How to get information to and from organizations outside your agency).
- **Internal Communications** (How to get information to and from your employees and staff).
- **Communications Infrastructure** (What equipment and connections can we use to communicate with leadership and recovery teams).



Each of the following should tie in with the continuity of communications plan.



## 7.0 ESSENTIAL RECORDS, DATABASES AND EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 7**

Every agency has documents, files, and other materials that are “essential” to the agency and its operations. These records may include:

- Emergency operating records.
- Rights and interests records.

### Types of Essential Records

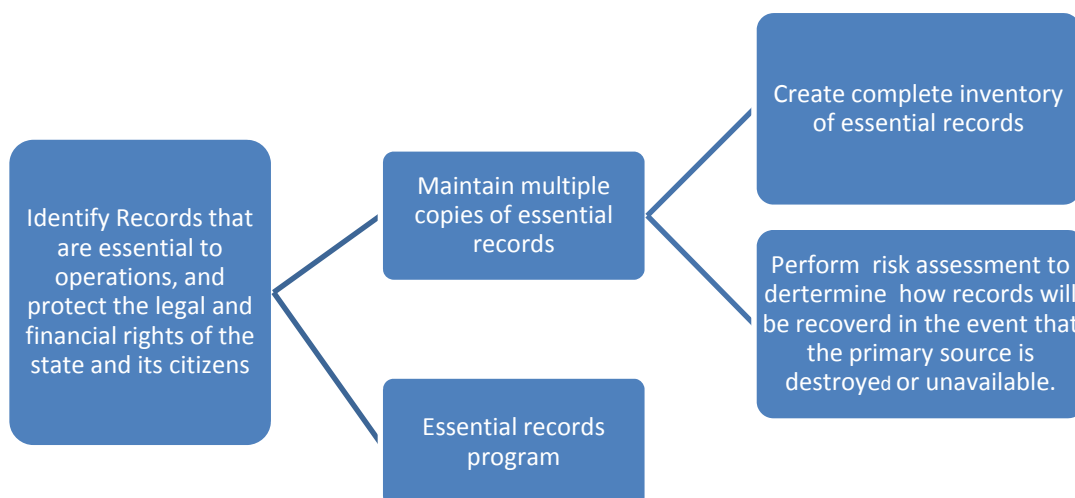
There are two types of essential records:

**Static records** are those that change little or not at all over time. Policies and directives are examples of static records.

**Active records** change constantly with circumstances or as work is completed. The continuity call-down roster and payroll records are examples of active records.

Both types of essential records are necessary and should be preserved so that operations can be maintained or quickly resumed following an interruption.

- Contracts/agreements that prove ownership of property, equipment, vehicles, products, etc.
- Operational records such as current accounting and tax records, current personnel/payroll records, account histories, and shipping records
- Current client files
- Current standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Produced reports and summaries
- Software source codes (to include both licensed programs and systems and custom developed applications)



## 8.0 RESUMPTION/RECONSTITUTION (TERMINATION AND RETURN TO NORMAL OPERATIONS)

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 8**

Just as the specific procedures appropriate to guide alternate facilities operations vary from one organization to another, so to do procedures for returning to normal operations at the primary facility when the emergency is over. It is recommended that all departments and jurisdictions prepare procedures to guide the return to normalcy and that the procedures address the following topics:

- The Concept of Operations provide general guidance and policy on ending alternate operations and returning to a non-emergency status at the primary facility. These procedures should provide for informing all personnel, including non-emergency personnel, that the threat of or actual emergency no longer exists, and for issuing instructions for resumption of normal operations.
- Termination procedures to establish the specific actions that will be taken to ensure a timely and efficient transfer of communications, direction and control, and essential records and databases to the primary facility. These procedures, which may be developed or adapted while at the alternate facility, should manage an orderly return to the normal operating facility or movement to another temporary or permanent facility using a phased approach if conditions necessitate. Departments and jurisdictions should report the status of their relocation to the governor's office or other appropriate agencies.
- After-action review and remedial action plans to guide the assessment of all phases and elements of the alternate operations and provide specific recommendations to correct any areas of concern.

## 9.0 TRAINING, TESTING & EXERCISE (T, T & E)

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 9**

Finally, after the COOP plan has been prepared and procedures have been developed for its implementation, the planning team can establish a program to maintain the organization's COOP capability. Major components of this program are the training of all key personnel in the performance of their COOP responsibilities; the conducting of periodic exercises to test and improve COOP plans and procedures, systems, and equipment; and the institution of a multi-year process to ensure the plan continues to be updated in response to changing conditions.

## 9.1 TRAINING PLAN

The training plan should outline COOP training requirements for key personnel.

Once the COOP plan has been developed, all personnel who will be involved in COOP activities should be trained and equipped to perform their emergency duties. Consideration should be given to “cross-training” team members to ensure the team is prepared to deal with the unusual demands that may arise when emergency conditions must be faced by a reduced staff. Effective COOP training plans will provide for the following:

- Individual and team training of COOP team members and emergency personnel to ensure currency of knowledge and integration of skills necessary to implement COOP plans and carry out essential functions. It is recommended that team training be conducted at least annually to ensure that COOP team members are current on their respective COOP responsibilities.
- Refresher orientation for the COOP team as it arrives at an alternate operating facility. The orientation should cover the support and services available at the facility, including communications and information systems; and administrative matters, including supervision, security, and personnel policies.
- Training courses and materials designed to improve knowledge and skills related to carrying out COOP responsibilities.

## 9.2 TESTING AND EXERCISING THE PLAN

Testing and exercising of COOP capabilities are essential to demonstrating and improving the ability of organizations to execute their COOP plans. They serve to validate, or identify for subsequent correction, specific aspects of COOP plans, policies, procedures, systems, and facilities. Periodic testing also helps ensure that equipment and procedures are maintained in a constant state of readiness.

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### 9.2.1 SCOPE OF EXERCISES

Each government organization is encouraged to develop a comprehensive plan for training, testing, and exercises. The exercise program should include a variety of potential hazards and be scalable in the magnitude of the event. An effective program will include a variety of exercise types, including tabletops, drills, and full-scale exercises. Full-scale exercises should simulate actual emergency conditions, and exercises should include the phase-down of alternate facility operations and return to normal operations. Following an exercise, a comprehensive debriefing and after-action report should be completed.

## 9.2.2 EXERCISE SCHEDULE

It is recommended that testing and exercise plans for COOP provide for the following elements:

- Internal testing/exercising of COOP plans and procedures at least annually to ensure the ability to perform essential functions and operate from designated alternate facilities/work sites
- Testing of alert and notification procedures and systems for any type of emergency at least quarterly
- Joint departmental or jurisdictional exercising of COOP plans, where applicable and feasible

## 10.0 PLAN MAINTENANCE

**BLDG  
BLOCK # 10**

Major issues to be considered include the following:

- Designation of a review team
- Identification of items or issues that will impact the frequency of changes required to the COOP plan
- Establishment of a review cycle

Suggested responsibilities of the COOP Review Team include the following:

- Maintaining overall plan currency and readiness, to include procedures, equipment, systems, personnel, and rosters
- Addressing and resolving COOP plan policy issues
- Advising the head of the department or jurisdiction on COOP related matters
- Coordinating among related plans
- Conducting training, testing, and exercises
- Updating plans at least annually to incorporate lessons learned from testing and exercises as well as any actual events that occurred during the year

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Please contact us if you have any questions or comments regarding the Continuity of Operations process or this document.

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