



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

TITLE: Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)		PROCEDURE #: 526-A
DEPT: Public Works		DIVISION: Emergency Management
EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/18	REVIEWED:	REVISED:

OBJECTIVE: To develop a comprehensive and effective program to ensure continuity of essential county functions under emergency circumstances.

REFERENCE: Policy #526

POLICY STATEMENT: As a baseline of preparedness for the full range of potential emergencies, all county departments shall have in place a viable Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) which ensures the performance of their essential functions during any emergency or situation that may disrupt normal operations.

APPLICABILITY: All county departments, employees, and volunteers.

PROCEDURES:

1. Continuity of Operations Plans aim to:
 - 1.1. Reduce loss of life, and minimize damage and losses;
 - 1.2. Ensure the continuous performance of a department’s essential functions and operations during an emergency;
 - 1.3. Protect essential facilities, equipment, records, and other assets;
 - 1.4. Reduce or mitigate disruptions to operations; and
 - 1.5. Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency and resumption of full service to customers.

2. The COOP implementation plan should:
 - 2.1 Designate essential functions, orders of succession, delegations of authority, continuity of facilities, continuity of communication, essential records management and resources;
 - 2.2 Define short and long-term COOP goals and objectives;
 - 2.3 Forecast budgetary requirements;
 - 2.4 Anticipate and address issues and potential obstacles; and
 - 2.5 Establish planning milestones to include: testing, training, and exercising of the plan.

3. At a minimum, all departmental COOPs shall include the following elements:
 - 3.1 **CONTACTS DATABASE AND TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES**
 - 3.1.1 Include information for the personnel, by position, who play a part in or are mentioned in your plan, including those outside of your department.
 - 3.1.2 Clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of employees mentioned.
 - 3.1.3 Include contact information for all personnel within your organization.

3.2 MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Those functions that enable county departments to provide vital services, exercise civil authority, maintain the safety and wellbeing of the general populace, and sustain the industrial /economic base in an emergency.

3.2.1 Determine the frequency of each essential function (daily, weekly, monthly).

3.2.2 Identify personnel it requires to complete the function.

3.2.3 Identify any specialized resources required to complete the function (vehicles, tools, software, etc.).

3.2.4 Prioritize the functions based on their importance and any laws, ordinances, or regulations that stipulate the functions.

3.3 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

To ensure rapid response to any emergency situation requiring COOP implementation, departments should delegate authority, in advance, for making policy determinations and decisions, as appropriate.

3.3.1 Departments shall determine:

3.3.1.1 Who can sign checks, contracts, or other legal documents;

3.3.1.2 Who can grant travel and leave authorizations;

3.3.1.3 Who can make purchases of certain amounts above and beyond normal purchase limits;

3.3.1.4 Who can close the workplace or determine a delayed opening; and for what period of time;

3.3.1.5 Who can hire or lay off personnel; and

3.3.1.6 If there are special authorities or capabilities performed by specific personnel within the organization:

3.3.1.6.1 What are the specific authorities and who should perform them if these personnel are not available?

3.3.1.6.2 Is there an established line of back-up personnel who could perform these authorities?

3.4 ORDERS OF SUCCESSION

County departments are responsible for establishing, publicizing, and maintaining orders of succession to key positions. Orders should be of sufficient depth to ensure the department's ability to perform essential functions throughout the county in an emergency. Geographical dispersion is encouraged.

3.5 ALTERNATE FACILITIES

All departments shall designate alternate operating facilities as part of their COOP, and prepare their personnel for the possibility of an unannounced relocation of essential functions.

3.5.1 Identify at least two alternate facilities.

3.5.1.1 The first choice facility should be close to your primary office location and easily accessible in the event of a small scale disruption that only impacts the single building or work area, e.g., fire, pipe burst, mold in the walls.

- 3.5.1.2 The second choice facility should be on a regional level and should assume a large scale event has impacted the surrounding area, e.g., earthquake, tornado, flooding.
- 3.5.2 Provide specific details about each alternate facility, including the resources already available at the location vs. the resources that would need to be transported to the location in order to continue operations.
 - 3.5.2.1 Resources might include computers, communication equipment, office furniture, emergency supplies, and any other amenities necessary for department functions.
- 3.5.3 Facilities may be identified from existing local or field infrastructures, or external sources.
- 3.5.4 Facilities shall be capable of supporting operations in a threat-free environment, as determined by the geographical location of the facility, a favorable assessment of the local threat, or the collective protection characteristics of the facility.
- 3.5.5 In acquiring and equipping such facilities, departments are encouraged to consider cooperative interagency agreements and promote sharing of identified alternate facilities.

3.6 INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS

Success of department operations at an alternate facility is dependent on the availability and redundancy of critical communications systems to support connectivity to internal organizations, other agencies, critical customers, and the public. When identifying communications requirements, departments should take maximum advantage of the entire spectrum of communications media likely to be available in any emergency situation.

- 3.6.1 These services may include but are not limited to:
 - 3.6.1.1 Cell phones, pagers, 800MHz radios;
 - 3.6.1.2 Secure and non-secure voice, fax, and data connectivity;
 - 3.6.1.3 Internet access;
 - 3.6.1.4 Email;
 - 3.6.1.5 Social media;
 - 3.6.1.6 SMS or text alert systems; and
 - 3.6.1.7 Local television stations and news media.

3.7 VITAL RECORDS/RESOURCES

The protection and ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information systems needed to support essential functions under the full spectrum of emergencies is critical to a successful COOP. Department personnel must have access to and be able to use these records and systems in conducting their essential functions.

3.8 TESTS, TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Testing, training, and exercising of COOP capabilities are essential to demonstrating and improving the ability of departments to execute their COOP plans.

- 3.8.1 Training familiarizes contingency staff members with the essential functions they may have to perform in an emergency.
- 3.8.2 Tests and exercises serve to validate the COOP and identify areas for correction.

- 3.8.3 Periodic testing also ensures that equipment and procedures are maintained in an appropriate state of readiness to support restoration of mission essential functions within proscribed timeliness.
- 3.8.4 All departments shall plan and conduct annual tests and training to demonstrate viability and interoperability of their COOP.

3.9 GO-KITS

A pre-packed box or bag of essential items that will be used to establish recovery operations during the onset of relocation to an alternate facility. A properly equipped go-kit will assist the department in recovering and maintaining the most critical operations during the first few days following a continuity event.

- 4. Department COOPs should address security measures necessary for continuation of operations at alternate facilities. Things to consider:
 - 4.1 Are there security measures like swipe cards or key pads for entering the building?
 - 4.2 Does your department handle money or sensitive data that requires additional specialized security systems?
 - 4.3 What is the evacuation procedure for the facility?

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each Marion County department head is responsible for developing and implementing a department Continuity of Operations Plan to ensure continued delivery of vital services during an emergency, identify resource needs, and to identify resources that can be provided to local agencies during response and recovery phases of an emergency or disaster event.

ANNUAL REVIEW:

This policy and procedure are to be reviewed annually, by all departments, before the first day of December. Department heads and elected officials are responsible for reviewing this policy within their departments.

ADOPTED: 01/18