

Human Resources

Description of topic

It is impossible to continue the performance of essential functions without trained and qualified personnel and it is difficult to retain skilled individuals if they lack confidence that their employer is willing and able to safeguard their financial security and support their personal recovery needs.

If your organization hopes to survive a disaster with minimal negative effects, it is necessary to prepare and protect your workforce. Everyone should understand their roles and responsibilities and should feel like an integral, important member of the organization. Training and helping them prepare for and respond to a disaster both at work and at home and keeping them informed on recovery in the workplace helps create trust and dedication.

When an event occurs, you must first account for the location and condition of every member of staff, determine their needs and assist them with accessing aid to recover from issues at home and in the workplace. Each person should know where to report and what is expected of them during the time till full operations are resumed.

Leadership personnel need to be aware of their altered responsibilities as well, and must remain prepared to enact the chain of succession should a key leader become unable to fulfill their work role for a period of time so the entire organization can quickly and effectively transition to continuity operations.

Temporary or permanent replacement personnel may also be needed, and if partner entities are taking over work on some or all essential functions they may also need support.

Component 1 – Accounting for staff and Assisting Personal Recovery

Location

Human Resources section

- Overview of evacuation, shelter-in-place, accounting for staff location and well-being from Emergency Plan.
- Description of activation and transition to continuity operations.
- Work flow process description of procedure to monitor and relay updates of personnel recovery and availability.
- Overview of personal recovery assistance provisions.

Human Resources appendix

- Reference to the location of the Emergency Plan and designation as an essential record [ER].
- Personal readiness planning and go-kit tools template (or reference location of other tools).
- Reference to the location of procedures to access Workers' Compensation and Employee Assistance providers and designation as an essential record [ER].
- Go-kit inventory with dates for updating.
- Reference to staff rosters for taking attendance at evacuation or shelter in place site and designation as an essential record [ER].
- Reference to location of Workers Comp and EAP resources and designation as an essential record [ER].

Summary

If the disaster occurs during working hours the continuity plan should reference the Emergency Action Plan (EAP), which in turn should dictate:

- The location(s) where personnel will assemble after evacuation or while sheltering in place.
- The necessity to take roll to account for the location and condition of each person in the assembly point.
- Identification of individuals who is unaccounted for or known to be trapped, injured or deceased.
- Procedures for notifying emergency services so that they can initiate rescue and recovery operations.

The organization should continue searching until everyone has been located and their conditions reported to senior management. A schedule and procedures for reporting should be established.

An event that disrupts the workplace may also disrupt the personal lives of staff. They may suffer physical or emotional injury that requires medical attention before they are ready to resume work. The damage may also affect their homes, family members, pets and/or livestock.

When a member of your workforce suffers ill effects, they may need assistance accessing aid. You should describe the assistance the organization will provide and how these services can be accessed, including Workers' Compensation, employee assistance programs (EAPs), grief counselors, etc.

It should be expected that staff will prioritize recovery of home and family ahead of the workplace. Setting realistic expectations and supporting the development of effective personal disaster plans is a way of showing concern for your employees' wellbeing. It also helps to ensure they will suffer the least impact and execute the fastest recover which will allow them to turn their attention to recovery of the workplace more quickly.

It is important to stay abreast of the condition and availability of each member of staff. The plan should outline responsibilities for initial and ongoing contact, including:

- The responsibility of staff to notify supervisors of their location, their health and how their personal responsibilities currently affect their availability to work (things such as such as family, pets, home, property and access to routes between home and work station).

- The responsibility of managers to account for each supervisee and report to the designated monitor.
- Designation of an agency-wide monitor (and their substitutes) and their responsibility to compile updates and report through to senior management.

Outline anticipated procedures for handling payroll and benefits during a short- or long-term event. This should include:

- Anticipated delays for payroll or benefits (possible if Comptroller or Employee Retirement System is reduced to continuity operations).

Designation of when payroll may be interrupted, or unemployment benefits instituted, if necessary.

Describe the organization's go-kits, portable sets of resources that will allow staff to resume essential functions while waiting for recovery of electronic systems. These should include items such as:

- Internal and external contact directories.
- Copies of the continuity plan.
- Business work flow process descriptions and SOPs.
- Blank forms to conduct work in hard copy format.
- Duplicate equipment.
- Items specific to your organization's essential function needs.
- Maps and directions to alternate site, as well as access cards or keys.
- Safety equipment if needed (batteries, flashlights, weather radios, two-way radios)
- Personal comfort items if required (snacks, water)

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

- Human Resources

External

- Mass notification services
- Homeland Security's <https://www.ready.gov>

Component 2 – Succession, substitution and replacement staff

Location

Human Resources section

- Explanation of the strategies used to ensure staffing, and the specifics of each, including:
 - Substitutes for continuity teams.
 - Successors for leadership positions. (with reference to delegations of authority)
 - Temporary or permanent replacement staff.

Human Resources appendix

- Completed delegations of authority with successors names.
- Staffing list for Continuity Team and Reconstitution Team with substitutes.
- Contracts/MOAs/MOUs with staffing agencies.
- Contracts/MOAs/MOUs with devolution organizations (see Back-up Planning section)

Summary

It is essential that the organization plans to ensure adequate backup and cross trained staff to ensure that at least the essential functions and reconstitution tasks are not interrupted.

At least three substitutes should be designated and trained for each Continuity Team and Reconstitution Team member. (if there are several individuals conducting the same essential function then a pool of substitutes can be created rather than assigning substitutes for each primary team member). If the organization is able to devolve a list of staffing at the devolution entity should also be included.

Three to five successors should be appointed to fill any key leadership positions (such as the head of the organization or Chief Counsel). Transfer of responsibilities for these positions usually requires a written Delegations of Authority document. To fill these positions successors may need to have, or obtain, specific education or certification and additional cross-training by the primary job holder. These qualifications should be obtained prior to becoming a successor. Succession plans should also include:

- When and how the successors are authorized to step into the role.
- The order in which they would succeed to the position.
- What authorities they are, and are not, allowed to assume while acting in this role.
- When and how they must return responsibilities to the primary job holder or higher level successor.

The primary job holder and each successor should sign the delegations document. The General Counsel or other legal representative for the organization will determine others whose signatures should also be included. If an oath of office is required to do the job, the oath should be included in the delegations document or referenced as an essential record, and the process and participants to process the oath should be outlined.

Outline the procedures for obtaining temporary or permanent replacement staff with the necessary qualifications and credentials, and within the time required to continue essential functions. This may include use of temporary placement agencies and job posting sites and procedures. A contract/MOA/MOU may be necessary to ensure rapid response. (see Essential Functions section for work flow process documents as quick training tools/guides for replacement personnel to ensure they perform work using accepted methodologies).

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

- Senior leadership.
- Section managers.
- Human Resources.

- Primary Continuity Team members.

External

- Staffing agencies.
- Devolution entity (if applicable)

Worksheet HR-2-A: Delegations of Authority with Successors

Entity Name:

Delegation Number:

Issue Date:

Purpose:

This delegation of authority for continuity of operations authorizes the orderly succession of personnel at organization to the office of leadership position title in case the primary job holder is unable to act during a disaster or security emergency, or due to vacancy in that office.

Delegation:

I hereby delegate the authority to the following officials, in the order listed below, to exercise my powers and perform the duties of leadership position title in case of my absence or inability to perform, or due to a vacancy of my position, and until the precipitating condition ceases.

- Successor 1
- Successor 2
- Successor 3
- Successor 4
- Successor 5

Add or delete rows for number of successors. To minimize required updates, use position title rather than name.

Eligibility for succession to the office shall be limited to officially assigned incumbents of the position listed above. If this position is vacant, the next designated official in the order of succession may exercise all the powers, duties, authorities, rights and functions of the office, but may not perform any function or duty required to be performed exclusively by the office holder. Adjust to fit the allowed and disallowed responsibilities for successors within your entity.

In the event a person in a position higher in the order of succession than the current delegate has been unable to serve but subsequently becomes available to serve, such person shall succeed to the office of Head of agency upon written notice to the current delegate.

Upon return to full operations, successors who have assumed a leadership position during continuity operations will retain that role unless and until the Board takes action otherwise.

Persons assigned or delegated authority pursuant to this Delegation of Authority shall be provided, in writing, a list of their assigned or delegated duties and the supporting legal authorities.

Typed name
Head of entity title

Typed name
General Counsel

Typed name
Successor

Typed name
Successor

Typed name
Successor

Typed name
Successor

Typed name
Successor

Worksheet HR-2-B: Sample Text for Continuity Resolution *(consult your legal team to see if this is necessary)*
Resolution Number XX-XXX

RESOLUTION APPROVING DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY TO ENSURE RAPID RESPONSE AND TO MINIMIZE DISRUPTIONS THAT REQUIRE CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN ACTIVATION

WHEREAS, in August 2007 the President of the United States approved the National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan to provide guidance to executive departments and agencies on the federal, state and local level, on appropriately identifying and carrying out their primary mission essential functions;

WHEREAS, in 2007 by the enactment of Tex. Labor Code §412.054 the Texas Legislature tasked the State Office of Risk Management with coordinating development of organization-level continuity of operations plans for all state entities;

WHEREAS, in January 2009 The Federal Emergency Management Agency published the first Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC-1) for the purpose of providing operational guidance to non-federal government entities, to assist with implementing Continuity of Operations Planning;

WHEREAS, the State Office of Risk Management adopted the Continuity of Operations model as the standard for planning, to meet their legislative mandate of assuring the development of organization-level continuity of operations plans within state entities;

WHEREAS, the CGC requires organizations to pre-delegate the authority to make decisions at leadership levels in the event of any emergency, which delegations shall include legal authority to (1) make key decisions during a continuity situation, (2) re-delegate responsibilities, (3) stipulate when the delegation of authority would take effect and when it would terminate, (4) establish plans for training on at least an annual basis for successors to enable them to carry out their emergency responsibilities, and (5) retain copies of written and signed delegations of authority that are available at alternate facilities in the event the continuity plan is activated;

WHEREAS, in order to satisfy the requirements under these various state and federal laws, rules and guidance, the Board/Commission adopts the following procedures and measures incorporating, addressing, and coordinating the various requirements identified above;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT these provisions regarding delegation of authority and implementation of delegation of authority are hereby adopted.

Component 3 – Continuity Staff Support

Location

Human Resources section

- Overview of the need for, and procedure to ensure, adequate staffing to continue essential functions.

Human Resources appendix

- Signed Continuity Team, Reconstitution Team and Devolution Team agreements and designated as essential records [ER]. *For submission to SORM you can provide a blank copy of the agreement template and omit all of the individual signed copies.*

Summary

Personnel serving on either Continuity or Reconstitution Team need to be assigned and trained ahead of an event. These teams should include workers to conduct tasks, managers to authorize or approve the processes, and substitutes to step in if primary team members become unavailable.

This section should describe agreements that notify each individual in writing of their appointment as a primary or substitute member of their role on the Continuity Team, Reconstitution Team or Devolution Team (if used). These should include:

- The responsibilities and expectation for personnel filling these roles.
- A description of when and how the agreement will be activated, and when and how members are expected to report to:
 - The continuity facility.
 - An assembly point for mass-transit.
 - A pre-designated remote work station (refer to the Continuity Facilities section)
- The employee's signature designating that they understand and are ready to fulfill these responsibilities.
- The procedure for calling up substitutes (including the same expectations described above).

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

- Senior leadership
- Section managers
- Human Resources

External

- Devolution entity (if applicable)

Component 4 – Non-continuity staff roles and responsibilities

Location

Human Resources section

- Description of expectations of all personnel not serving on the Continuity Team or Reconstitution Team, or on the Support Team for essential functions, legal, accounting or administrative duties.

Human Resources appendix

- Copy of the general duty job description outlining the requirements for all non-continuity personnel.

Summary

Describe the expectations and guidelines for staff members who are not primary or substitute members of the Continuity or Reconstitution Teams.

- Requirements to provide support work, as needed, from home.
- Procedures to re-activate if continuity personnel become unable to continue their duties or need a break, including minimum notification time to report (such as 8 business hours).
- Procedures to return to work when full operations can be resumed.

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

- Senior leadership.
- Section managers.

External

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Component 5 – Return to Normal Operations

Location

Human Resources section

- Describe the process for returning staff to work when normal operations can be resumed, including (if used) the incremental order of return (based on importance, time criticality, or ability to continue the work outside of the zone affected by the disrupting event).

Human Resources appendix

- List of divisions or sections in order of return to work.

Summary

Provide an overview of the process to work with the Reconstitution Team to schedule personnel for return-to-work when it becomes possible to resume non-essential functions. Several options are possible:

- All non-essential operations will resume simultaneously at the new or recovered primary facility.
- Non-essential functions may be tiered by recovery time objective (RTO) and resumed sequentially so that those with the most urgency are begun as quickly as possible.
- Some tasks that are important, or that can be done outside of the damaged area, may be resumed while the organization is in continuity operations.

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

- Senior leadership.
- Human resources.
- Section managers.

External

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