

Section 4 – Alternate Facilities

Description of topic

Each essential function has a return to operation (RTO) time. This is the maximum amount of time by which the function must be resumed without causing the entity to fail at critical portions of their mission. Depending on the criticality of the function, the RTO may require immediate resumption (as might be the case with a 9-1-1 call center), or may allow for several days of down time.

If the disaster event renders the normal workplace unusable, or leaves it unreachable, for longer than the shortest RTO, it becomes necessary to use alternate workspaces. Alternate facilities are work spaces that are geographically separated far enough from the primary workplace that they are not likely to be impacted by the same disruptive events that affect work within the primary space. It is a good idea to review the risk analysis (Business Impact Analysis – BIA) to determine the most likely threats so a continuity facility can be selected that does not share the same vulnerabilities as the primary facility.

Alternate facilities include options such as moving continuity staff into a space to another facility owned or leased by the organization, borrowing space (such as a conference room) from another entity or working remotely from a home office, public space or other locations outside of the primary or designated alternate facility.

It is possible to utilize multiple types of alternate workspace, and even to continue using a portion of the primary space if it is safe to do so to allow personnel access.

Alternate facilities should:

- Adequately accommodate the staff and equipment necessary to conduct just the essential functions.
- Be located a sufficient distance from the primary facility to avoid being encompassed by the same disasters.
- Be arranged ahead of any event so that valuable recovery time is not spent hunting for a place where work can be done.

At least one continuity facility should be at least five miles from the affected building to minimize the potential for the same event to damage both structures. However, if an incident does not damage the surrounding area, it is acceptable for the entity to utilize a building nearer than five miles.

This is a common practice for an institution like universities that have dozens of buildings on a single campus. However, they should also establish a contract with another campus or other suitable space more than five miles away, or arrange to conduct classes and businesses remotely so that they can relocate if the disrupting event makes it impossible to work from the entire campus

The RTO requirements should be used to determine the advance setup required at the facility:

- A hot site is one where all information and communications systems, infrastructure and personnel are in place at the site before the time of need. This is most likely when an organization has duplicate/multiple facilities.
- A warm site is one where some of the equipment and infrastructure is stored and maintained to allow more rapid resumption of work.
- A cold site is one where it may be necessary to install equipment and accesses upon arrival.
- The alternate facility should contain enough space for the Continuity Team, Support Team and any other personnel necessary to continue essential functions. The space should be equipped with the infrastructure and accesses required for continuity operations so that work can resume within the

shortest essential function RTO. Because essential functions need to be resumed very quickly, the right to occupy alternate spaces with minimal warning, and within the required recovery time objective (RTO), should be contracted ahead of time.

As much as possible, the continuity facility should offer the systems and configurations that are used in normal, daily activities. This includes

- Communications.
- IT equipment, software, network and internet access.
- Hard copy records access.
- Logistical support such as hotels, restaurants, gas stations and services within convenient proximity.
- Ability for workers to commute or provision of transportation.
- Emergency back-up power capability.

A contract should be agreed upon that will allow sole use occupancy within the time required by the shortest RTO. The contract should also outline all occupancy, use and access capabilities and requirements. This would include:

- Hours of operation.
- Security and parking access requirements.
- Availability of power, telephone and computer outlets.
- Internet access and bandwidth availability.
- Break room, restroom and other common use space accessibility.

There are some conference rooms available in other state entity buildings. You may want to talk to the Continuity Planner from these entities, and travel to see and assess the space to determine whether the configuration, outlets, communications ports and internet access can be configured to meet your needs.

There are conference rooms within the state system that might fill your need, but the number is limited and it may not be possible to obtain an appropriate space.

Leased space may be necessary. There are providers who will contract to ship everything necessary during continuity operations, including portable buildings with workstations, power generators, servers, laptops and cell phones with satellite connections. These usually require an ongoing paid contract, and will charge additional fees for delivery at time of need, but they also guarantee arrival within a short period of time. It is necessary to negotiate an MOA for space to set up (a parking lot or other flat space).

Component 1 – Determining Requirements

Location

Alternate Facilities section

- Summarize the need and availability for workstations, meeting and/or storage spaces, bathrooms, break rooms, smoking areas. (each employee should have at least 3.5' – 5' of space)
- Describe internet and communications access capabilities.
- Overview equipment and supplies necessary to conduct work.

Alternate Facilities appendix

- Blueprint or diagram of continuity space and usage.
- Inventory of required equipment and supplies.
- List of equipment and supplies to be stored ahead of time, salvaged from the primary facility and brought along, or replaced at time of need (include procedures for emergency procurement in Budgeting and Acquisition section and reference that location here).

Summary

Describe the resources needed at the alternate facility, and whether they will be:

- Stored there ahead of time.
- Salvaged from the primary facility and brought along.
- Replaced at time of need – include procedures for emergency procurement (see Budgeting and Acquisition section).

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

External

Component 2 – Contracts/MOAs/MOUs

Location

Alternate Facilities section

- Description of the alternate facility(ies).
- Guidelines for its use and limitations.
- Procedure for updating host entity of which personnel should be allowed access.
- Delineation of work hours.
- Equipment and supplies to be shared.
- Secure access areas.

Alternate Facilities appendix

- Contracts/MOAs/MOUs for right-of-use of alternate facilities Maps and directions to the alternate facility(ies)
- Blueprints or diagrams of continuity space and infrastructure and how it should be set up for use.
- Back-up internet and vendor contracts or procedures

Summary

Secondary and tertiary alternate facilities should be identified, and one should be at least 5 miles from the primary location and in an area not likely to be impacted by the same disaster events as the primary facility

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

External

Worksheet AF-2-A: Sample Memorandum of Agreement

Memorandum of Agreement
State entity receiving continuity space
and
State entity providing continuity space

This memorandum of agreement (MOA) sets forth the terms between state entity receiving continuity space and state entity providing continuity space with regard to implementation of continuity of operations (COOP) plan. The agreement is for use of the room name or number, building address as an alternate facility during a continuity event.

The purpose of this MOA is to establish responsibilities of the parties as they relate to a COOP situation that would require state entity receiving continuity space personnel to operate in an alternate location.

This MOA is effective upon signature of the Head of Entity of the state entity receiving continuity space and the Head of Entity of the state entity providing continuity space, and shall remain in full force and effect unless cancelled by either party pursuant to the provisions set forth herein.

1. Program Description

Under Continuity of Operations directives, Texas state agency personnel must be capable of quickly resuming essential functions, and continuing them through any disrupting event until normal operations can be resumed (usually within 30 days). State entities will continue to operate even if the facility in which they normally operate becomes uninhabitable. To perform these duties an off-site facility needs to be available to house continuity personnel.

2. General Provisions

It is understood by the Head of Entity of the state entity receiving continuity space and the Head of Entity of the state entity providing continuity space, that each office should be capable of fulfilling its responsibilities under this MOA. If at any time either party is unable to perform its functions under this MOA, the affected party shall immediately provide written notice to the other.

3. Responsibilities of the Parties under the MOA

The state entity receiving continuity space and the state entity providing continuity space agree that their responsibilities are as follows:

The state entity receiving continuity space agrees to:

- a. Notify the state entity providing continuity space Facility Manager or designee immediately when a continuity situation occurs and they need to occupy the state entity providing continuity space facility.
- b. Provide state entity providing continuity space with a list of personnel who will occupy the facility during the continuity event. This list should include the names of persons authorized to verify continuity activation, and should be updated annually.
- c. Provide a list of customers and vendors who may require access to the host facility, including:
 - i. Name(s) of personnel.
 - ii. Name and address of organization.
 - iii. Contact information for the organization's security officer for verification questions/issues.
- d. Limit the number of vendors and other outside access to between the hours of normal work hours or as agreed by both entities. Customers and vendors will be required to follow the security procedures established by the state entity providing continuity space. state entity receiving continuity space will provide an escort and assist in providing secure access to all visitors as required.
- e. Plan, participate and support the conduct of continuity exercises at a time and date agreed upon by representatives of state entity receiving continuity space and state entity providing continuity space.

The state entity providing continuity space agrees to:

- a. Provide adequate office space for state entity receiving continuity space at the room name or number, building address to house approximately number members of personnel during continuity situations. The state entity receiving continuity space will be provided sole right of use of the allocated space throughout the period of occupancy.
- b. Provide assistance with accessing the facility within number hours of notification by state entity receiving continuity space staff that they have activated their continuity plan.
- c. Provide reliable logistical support, services, and infrastructure systems (to include parking, bathrooms and break room/canteen facilities).
- d. Provide state entity receiving continuity space with:
 - i. Telephones.
 - ii. Internet connections.
 - iii. Electrical outlets.
 - iv. Video conferencing capabilities.
 - v. Photocopy/scanning equipment.
 - vi. Shredding for confidential materials.

If there are costs associated with the use of this equipment beyond that of normal usage, the parties will enter into an inter-agency agreement to provide for payment as set forth in section 4 below.

- e. Provide keys and/or access badges, as appropriate, to the areas occupied by state entity receiving continuity space personnel.
- f. Cease activities that would preclude state entity receiving continuity space from gaining access to the contracted room(s).
- g. Support, and participate in, conduct of continuity exercises at dates and times agreed upon by both entities.

4. Allocation of costs

There are no anticipated costs associated with this MOA. Should any costs be incurred, however, such costs will be the full responsibility of state entity receiving continuity space.

5. Amendment or Cancellation of MOA

This MOA may be amended or cancelled number days after written notice by either the state entity receiving continuity space or the state entity providing continuity space.

state entity providing continuity space agrees to:

Points of contact (POC)

For the state entity receiving continuity space

Primary contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email
Alternate contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email
Alternate contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email

Name
 Address
 Desk phone
 Cell phone

For the state entity providing continuity space

Primary contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email
Alternate contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email
Alternate contact name	Address		
Desk phone	Cell phone	Fax	Email

Approval

The undersigned parties bind themselves to the faithful performance of this MOA. It is mutually understood that this MOA shall not become effective until approved by all parties involved.

State entity receiving continuity space

state entity providing continuity space

Name
Title

Name
Title

Date

Date

A copy of this signed MOA will be sent to the State Office of Risk Management. A copy will also be sent to the Texas Facilities Commission if the building is owned by the state.

Component 3 – Activation and Relocation

Location

Alternate Facilities section

- Detailed activation protocols
- Summary of transportation plans and limitations
- Details regarding access and limitations to use of the alternate facility, including passwords, keys, etc.
- Procedures used to familiarize staff with route and facility.
- Work go-kits
 - Who is responsible for maintaining and transporting go-kits.
 - Contents required/suggested for each kit.

Alternate Facilities appendix

- List of activation point of contact, access procedures, and alarm codes.

Summary

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

External

Component 4 – Remote Work

Location

Alternate Facilities section

- Process for receiving authorization to work remotely
- Overview of internet and data security requirements
- Directions to access primary and backup servers remotely (ensure adequate licenses).
- Description of procedures and acceptable practices to conduct work remotely.
- Outline the procedures if the servers become unavailable

Alternate Facilities appendix

- Summary list of personnel who have been authorized to work remotely (or designation on mater staff list).
- Reference where to find authorizations signed by the head of the organization and identify these as essential records using [ER]
- Maps and directions to alternate facility.

Summary

Resources, tools and templates to guide planning

Internal

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External

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