

Part 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING (COOP) FOR COMMUNITY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

What would you do if your building was made unusable by a disaster, if your staff was unavailable, or if you had no way of reaching your clients? By developing a continuity of operations plan (COOP) you can significantly strengthen your ability to serve your community during and after disasters. This introduction will help demystify the COOP planning process and help you get started. Part 2 and 3 of this COOP toolkit includes a “Quick-Check” tool and worksheets to help you gather the information necessary to develop a COOP plan that will help ensure your organization can accomplish its mission.

Create a Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) Team

Your planning team needs to represent all aspects of your facilities and programs: Board members, organization management, administrators, facilities managers, program coordinators, front office and front line staff. Be sure to include those with expertise vital to daily functions. Find out if there are members of your Board or volunteers with risk management or business continuity planning experience. **Note:** the team you assemble to create this plan can be different from the team designated to lead during a disaster. Designate an individual who will be responsible for coordinating the effort and for developing and maintaining the plan. Understand that the plan’s success depends on participation from across the organization and will require regular training, practice, and updating, including this work in the job descriptions and duties of multiple people can help your organization be successful.

Perform an Operational Assessment

How Does Your Organization Function?

- **Identify your mission and all of your programs and services:** Day-to-day services, post-disaster services, and guest programs (i.e., local organizations using your facilities for programs and meetings).

What are Your Business Activities?

- Identify your business activities: Prioritize the programs you have identified and decide which are most critical and need to function quickly during the post-disaster period.
- **Identify actions & processes associated with these business activities:** Inventory the separate processes that allow each business activity to function. For example, in order to run your soup kitchen, you must (among other things):
 - ✓ Pay employees or coordinate volunteers
 - ✓ Continue your access to food
 - ✓ Ensure you have a facility
 - ✓ Conduct outreach

Identify your critical activities

- **Assess how your organization functions,** both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures, and equipment are absolutely necessary to maintain operations. Determine how decisions will be made and operations managed during an operational disruption.
- **Identify which activities are critical to survival and recovery:** In addition to those activities critical to direct delivery of your primary programs and services, include emergency payroll, expedited financial decision-making, and accounting systems to track and document costs in the event of plan activation. Establish procedures for delegation of authority and succession of management. Identify personnel necessary to carry out these activities and designate alternates.

Consider the events that can cause a major disruption to your organization's facilities and programs.

- **All-Hazards:** This should include natural and human-caused hazards. In California, earthquakes, floods, and fires are the most prominent natural hazards. Remember to also consider such things as a drastic loss of staff resources from an influenza epidemic.
- **Consider your vulnerabilities:** Are you next to a sensitive location? Are there chemicals or fuel stored nearby? Is your organization subject to bias crimes? Are you in a flood zone?
- **Plan for utility disruptions:** Loss of power, heat, water, communications and the loss of the use of your facility (this could be due to a number of hazards).

Identify impacts of hazards on your critical activities and their associated processes.

Determine what is already in place to help protect your resources:

- **Records:** Files, computer back-up, contracts, agreements
- **Insurance:** Explore disaster-related insurance options
- **Physical resources:** Assess your facility's security
- **Plans:** Fire safety, building evacuation, shelter-in-place
- **Support and resources:** Memorandums of Understanding or mutual aid agreements with other local organizations, assistance from your regional/national associates

Determine what other procedures and resources are needed to help carry out your critical activities:

- **Facilities:** Alternate sites for managing and delivering services, alternate record storage locations.
- **Equipment and supplies:** "Go-Kits", alternate suppliers for critical supplies
- **Communication:** Primary and alternate means of communicating with staff, management, outside resources, and clients
- **Timing:** Consider how your actions need to change at different times of the day/week/year.
- **Decision making and leadership:** What kind of organizational structure will you use? Consider who is making decisions, communicating with your clients and partners, and completing emergency actions.

Develop a Continuity of Operations Plan

From the data gathered during your operational assessment begin making a plan for what you will do if your facility is not accessible. Define crisis management procedures and individual responsibilities in advance. Talk with your staff or co-workers and frequently review and practice what you intend to do during and after a disruption. Your COOP should address two types of activities:

- **Emergency Actions:** Immediate response
 - ✓ Include actions that should be taken just before (if there is warning), or immediately after a disaster to prevent loss of life and property and to promote fast recovery. Make a checklist to ensure that steps are not missed or forgotten during stressful times.
 - ✓ Include a Communications Plan detailing who needs to be contacted, under what circumstances, how they will be contacted, and what steps they will take.
 - ✓ Address circumstances that force you to evacuate or shelter-in-place (stay where you are).
- **Continuity of Services:** Continuation, expansion, or suspension of existing daily programs

In addition, your plan should **integrate with other Community Disaster Response and Recovery Plans**. Include any services you offer during disasters that are not part of your regular programs. You should also identify how you will resume regular business operations and how your organization will contribute to the recovery of your community at large.

Sharing and Practicing

Reminder: Plans must be shared and practiced with all staff and volunteers. Clients should also be aware of the plan, especially alternate service locations. Use various methods to practice your plan to ensure it addresses all situations. Consider hosting monthly guided lunch time conversations or other regularly scheduled COOP discussions that cover all aspects of the plan.

Part 2: CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING (COOP) QUICK-CHECK FORM FOR COMMUNITY AND FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

PLAN ELEMENT		YES	NO	COMMENTS
General Information				
1	Personnel responsible for COOP are identified			
2	Organization has a mission statement			
3	Normal day-to-day operations, activities, and services are defined			
4	Disaster mission and services are defined			
5	Critical (essential) activities are identified and prioritized			
6	Hazards and impacts on operations and facilities are identified			
A. Emergency Activation and Decision Making				
7	Key functional personnel and their roles are identified			
8	Authority for key actions are defined			
9	Conditions, process and delegated authority are identified			
10	Order of succession for key functional roles is identified			
11	Limitations on delegated authority are identified			
12	Other organizations with whom the organization has commitments or MOUs are identified			
B. Emergency Management Procedures				
13	Primary and alternate facilities are identified			
14	Contact information for all organization personnel has been compiled			
15	A staff emergency communications procedure has been developed			
16	Emergency evacuation and/or shelter-in-place plans are in place for all facilities			
17	Responsibility for updating and maintaining emergency plans are identified			

PLAN ELEMENT		YES	NO	COMMENTS
18	An emergency evacuation team and responsibilities are identified			
19	Emergency evacuation team members are identified			
20	Crisis intervention counseling resources identified			
C. Management of Operations				
21	Vital resources and systems for each critical activity are identified			
22	Risks to vital resources and associated protection methods are identified			
23	Personnel required to carry out critical activities are identified			
24	Records required to carry out critical activities are identified			
25	Risks to vital records and associated protection methods are identified			
26	Primary and alternate communications systems are identified			
27	Client emergency communications process is in place			
D. Concept of Operations				
28	Procedures for carrying out operational activities are identified			
29	Training on and exercises of the COOP are conducted			
E. Disaster Relief Services				
30	Disaster services to be provided by the organization are identified			
31	Resources necessary to provide those services are identified			
32	Alternate means of providing those services are identified			
33	Unique/rare skills/resources of the organization have been identified			
F. Business Resumption/Recovery				
34	Insurance carrier and coverage are identified			
35	Business resumption requirements are identified			
36	Organization role in long term community recovery is identified			
37	Relationships with emergency organizations are identified			

Part 3: CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEETS FOR COMMUNITY AND FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

General Information and Business Activities

1. Which personnel at your organization are responsible for Community or Operations Planning (COOP)? This should include an individual primarily responsible for gathering the information and writing the COOP as well as representatives from all key elements of the organization to assist that individual as the COOP Planning Team. No one person can create and maintain an operational plan successfully.

Name:
Title/Role:
Organization:
E-mail Address:
Telephone Number:

COOP Planning Team Member	Organization Element/Department Represented	Contact Information
<i>Example: Jane Doe</i>	<i>Client Services</i>	<i>Work Telephone: (703) 555-1234 Work E-mail: janed@company.com</i>

2. What is your organization’s mission statement?

Please insert your organization's mission statement in this box.

3. During normal day-to-day operations, what activities does your organization carry out, and what services does your organization offer to clients, stakeholders, and the community in order to fulfill your mission?

List of All Business Activities
<i>Example: An organization serving the homeless community may provide meals, job counseling, social support groups, and shelter on a day-to-day basis.</i>

List of All Emergency Management and Relief Services

Example: a faith-based organization may provide emergency shelter and spiritual support services to its members or to the community in emergency situations.

5. Of the activities listed above (in both Question 3 and Question 4), which activities would you consider most critical in the event of an emergency (these are known as your “essential functions”)? Please list these activities in order of priority.

Organization’s Critical Activities

Example: A disaster relief organization may likely consider “management and distribution of relief funds” to be its most mission-critical activity. (Insert additional lines, if necessary).

1.

2.

3.

6. Identify the primary hazards that may impact your organization’s operations and facilities, resulting in a disruption of operations. Consider both community-wide hazards/events (such as an earthquake or flood) as well as events impacting only your building, neighborhood, or organizations (such as a local utility outage, building fire, or death of a key staff member).

Hazard	Impact on Operations	Impact on Facilities
<i>Example: Earthquake</i>	<i>Example: telephones may not be working; staff may not be able to get to work; clients will need additional services</i>	<i>Example: administrative offices are located in older building that could be subject to collapse; supplies stored on tall shelves that could topple</i>

Developing a Plan

Questions 7 through 29 of this worksheet focus on your “most critical activity” i.e. the highest priority critical activity of those listed above. After completing the following questions for Critical Activity #1, move to your next most critical activity and answer questions 7 through 29 for that activity. Repeat until you have captured the details for each of your critical activities. (Note: many of the answers will repeat as you cover additional activities).

A. Emergency Activation and Decision Making (When to Use the Plan)

Crisis Action Team

7. Use the chart below to designate key functional representatives who will be responsible for assessment and recommendations to leadership in the early hours of a crisis. (Note that contact information will be solicited in Question 14.)

Name	Role

Chain of Command and Succession Management (Who to Turn to)

8. For your organization’s most critical activity, what authority (e.g. decision-making, procurement) is required to sustain operations on a daily basis and in emergency situations?

Suggestion: Consider the positions that hold the authority required to make decisions around this activity as well as the support staff needed to carry out this activity.

9. What conditions would trigger delegation of authority in an emergency situation, how does your organization delegate the authority required to fulfill the organization’s key activity and to whom is it delegated?

Example: The CEO of a non-profit cannot be located following a major catastrophic event. Consequently, decision-making authority regarding the organization’s mission-critical activities is transferred to the General Manager until the CEO can be located or a new CEO is appointed by the Board of Directors.

10. What is your organization’s order of succession? (Note that contact information will be solicited in Question 14.)

Name	Title/Role

11. Indicate any limitations on the duration, extent, and scope of the delegation.

Example: According to organizational bylaws, authority in the above example may be transferred for up to two weeks, and requires Board approval to extend beyond that point.

Existing Service Commitments

12. To which organizations, if any, does your organization have service commitments or Memorandum of Understandings in place in the event of an emergency or disaster situation?

B. Emergency Management Procedures (Taking Care of Our Organization)

Primary and Alternate Facilities

13. Please indicate all facilities in which your organization operates, and designate those facilities that would be needed in an emergency or disaster situation.

Facility Type	Physical Address	Phone Number	Primary or Alternate Facility	Required for Essential Function? (Y/N)
<i>Headquarters</i>				
<i>Main Operating Facilities</i>				
<i>Support Facilities</i>				

Personnel Management

14. Please use the chart below to list the names, roles, and contact information for ALL of your organization's personnel. (Note: if you have all of this information captured in a separate document, attach that document).

Name	Role	Contact Information
<i>Example: Jane Doe</i>	<i>Director of Client Services</i>	<i>Office Location: Fairfax, VA (Headquarters)</i> <i>Work Telephone: (703) 555-1234</i> <i>Home Telephone: (301) 555-4321</i> <i>Cell Phone: (202) 555-1000</i> <i>Work E-mail: janed@company.com</i> <i>Home E-mail: jane@domain.com</i>
		Office Location: Work Telephone: Home Telephone: Cell Phone: Work E-mail: Home E-mail:
		Office Location: Telephone Number: E-mail address:
		Office Location: Telephone Number: E-mail address:
		Office Location: Telephone Number: E-mail address:

15. In the event of an emergency, how will employees communicate with the organization and with each other?

Example: The organization has a phone tree established to account for all personnel in an emergency situation. The organization also contracts with a third-party provider to establish an emergency hotline for disseminating critical information.

16. Reference your emergency evacuation plan and/or shelter-in-place plan, please describe the procedures of these plans, including how you determine where staff will go, how you communicate instructions to staff, how you account for staff, how you determine when it is safe to re-enter or exit the building, etc. (Include any supporting documents, such as protocols and escape route maps.)

Example: In the event of an emergency inside the organization's facilities, all staff are to report to a designated facility. Floor supervisors direct staff out of the building and maintain rosters to account for all staff once building evacuation is complete.

Emergency Evacuation Plan	Shelter-in-Place Plan

17. How frequently are your emergency procedures updated and emergency systems maintained? Who is responsible for maintaining these procedures?

Example: Procedures are updated monthly by the Director of Operations.

18. Do you have an emergency evacuation team (EET)? If so, how is that team staffed and what are their responsibilities?

Example: Floor supervisors provide direction to staff on their designated floors. The floor supervisor team consists of support staff trained in CPR and emergency situation management.

19. If you have an EET, list all team members and their roles. (Note: Contact information should already have been provided in Question 14).

Name	Jurisdiction
<i>John Doe</i>	<i>4th Floor of Headquarters</i>

20. Identify resources available to provide crisis intervention counseling, if needed/requested.

Example: In an emergency situation, the organization will provide services commensurate with the nature of the emergency, such as Critical Incident Stress Management support in the event of a terrorist attack.

C. Management of Operations (Taking Care of Our Clients)

Vital Resources and Personnel

21. For your organization's most critical activities, consider the actions required to fulfill the activities. What minimum resources and systems would be required to perform these actions on a daily basis and in an emergency situation?

Resource Type	Minimum Resources Required	Procedures for Accessing or Activating Resources (Protocols, location of resources, contact information for vendors)
Facilities	<i>Example: mostly located in flood-prone areas</i>	
Personnel	<i>Example: unavailable if incapacitated by event</i>	
Transportation	<i>Example: resources shared with other organizations, may not be available</i>	
Communication	<i>Example: all online networks supported by a single server</i>	
Information and Planning	<i>Example: all housed in one location in paper form</i>	
Food and Water	<i>Example: inaccessible if main operating facilities are closed</i>	
Energy	<i>Example: no back-up generator available</i>	
Security	<i>Example: current security and privacy protocols cannot be duplicated on unsecured networks</i>	
Shelter	<i>Example: resources shared with other organizations</i>	
Technology	<i>Example: all technology housed in one facility</i>	
Mass Care	<i>Example: insufficient resources for large-scale events</i>	
Health and Medical	<i>Example: all resources stored in one location</i>	
Search and Rescue	<i>Example: all resources stored in one location</i>	
Hazardous Materials	<i>Example: data sheets stored in hardcopy online, information is not transferable if paper records cannot be accessed</i>	
Public Information	<i>Example: key resources accessible only from office computers</i>	
Volunteers	<i>Example: volunteer resources shared with multiple organizations, may not be available if directly affected by disaster</i>	
Animal Protection	<i>Example: all resources are located in one facility</i>	
Other		

22. Please indicate any risks to which your organization’s vital resources and systems may be susceptible, and list the current protection method(s) in place, if any.

Resource Type	Vulnerability	Protection Methods Currently in Place
Facilities	<i>Example: mostly located in flood-prone areas</i>	
Personnel	<i>Example: unavailable if incapacitated by event</i>	
Transportation	<i>Example: resources shared with other organizations, may not be available</i>	
Communication	<i>Example: all online networks supported by a single server</i>	
Information and Planning	<i>Example: all housed in one location in paper form</i>	
Food and Water	<i>Example: inaccessible if main operating facilities are closed</i>	
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Public Information	<i>Example: key resources accessible only from office computers</i>	
Volunteers	<i>Example: volunteer resources shared with multiple organizations, may not be available if directly affected by disaster</i>	
Animal Protection	<i>Example: all resources are located in one facility</i>	
Other		

23. Please use the chart below to list the names, roles, and contact information for the minimum personnel required to perform your organization’s most critical activities. (Consider all key decision-makers, operational leaders, and support staff. You may add more rows to the table if needed.)

Name	Role
<i>Example: Jane Doe</i>	<i>Director of Client Services</i>

Records Management

24. What records are required to support your organization’s most critical activities? Are these in electronic or paper form?

Records Type	Storage Form & Location	Backup Protection	Staff Member Responsible for Records
<i>Example: Financial</i>	<i>Stored on network database</i>	<i>Backed up on flash drives weekly and hard copies stored in off-site facilities.</i>	<i>Chris Smith, Office Manager</i>
Financial Records			
Personnel Records			
Client Records			
Legal Documents			
COOP Plan			

25. Identify any risks to which the vital records or databases listed above may be susceptible, and list the current protection method(s) in place for the vital records or databases.

Resource Type	Vulnerability	Protection Methods Currently in Place
<i>Example: Financial</i>	<i>Privacy rules require storing records in one central location, may be inaccessible in event of emergency</i>	<i>Records are backed up on a secured network on a weekly basis; network is available to senior staff in alternate facility</i>
Financial Records		
Personnel Records		
Client Records		
Legal Documents		
COOP Plan		

Communications Systems

26. List the current vendors and services provided for all internal and external communication systems (e.g. telephone, internet) that your organization uses. Identify at least one alternative communication method and an alternative provider who may provide the communication system should the current provider be unable to do so.

Vendor & Contact Information	Service Provided	Alternate Service Provider	Alternate Method

27. In the event of an emergency, how will clients communicate with your organization?

Example: Company website supported by alternate server, company client hotline, walk-up service counter.

D. Concept of Operations (Activating and Implementing the COOP)

28. Identify the procedures that will be used to ensure continuation of the critical activities you identified above.

Activity	Procedures	Checklists (or other implementation tools)
Assess the impact of the event on your organization and facility(s); assess need to activate the COOP		
Activate the COOP		
Notify staff with COOP responsibilities; contact other key management		
Take immediate emergency actions (evacuate building, shelter in place, etc)		
Develop action plan		
Determine if relocation is needed; activate relocation plan if needed		
Take actions necessary to fulfill essential functions		
Take actions necessary to protect vital records/data		
Secure additional resources required to implement other actions		
Establish communication channel for clients/other external partners		

29. Establish and carry out a regular schedule for training staff, Board members, clients and other stakeholders on

the COOP and associated procedures. Establish a regular exercise schedule for staff with responsibilities in carrying out elements of the COOP and for management.

Audience	Date Training Scheduled/Held	Date Exercised Scheduled/Held
Staff with roles in carrying out COOP		
Other organization staff		
Board members and other management		
Clients		(optional)
Others		(optional)

E. Disaster Relief Services (Providing assistance to the broader community)

30. What services is your organization designed to provide to other businesses and to the community in emergency or disaster situations? Please indicate the core constituency(ies) that your organization would serve in such a situation.

Example: An organization may support another organization's services directly by augmenting staff or indirectly as a service provider or product vendor. Organizations that provide services to specific types of groups or individuals, such as the elderly and the homeless, should designate those groups or individuals as their core constituents.

31. On what outside resources and third-party vendors would your organization depend in order to provide critical services in an emergency or disaster situation?

Example: Specific names of transportation service providers, telecommunications vendors

32. If your organization's outside resources or third-party vendors were unavailable in the event of an emergency or disaster situation, how would your organization provide critical services?

Example: An organization may have back-up vendors, or may have alternative means of providing key services through arrangements with other organizations.

33. Does your organization possess any unique resources or services that could support an emergency situation or disaster relief management? (Please list any special supplies or capabilities in your organization that you think may be rare or limited in availability).

Resource Type	Resource	Location	Quantity
Facilities			
Personnel			
Transportation			
Communication			
Information and Planning			
Food and Water			
Energy			
Security			
Shelter			
Technology			
Vendors			
Mass Care			
Health and Medical			
Search and Rescue			
Hazardous Materials			
Public Information			
Volunteers			
Animal Protection			
Other	<i>Example: culinary, language skills, special needs services, faith-based and chaplaincy support.</i>		

F. Recovery/Business Resumption

34. Identify insurance carrier(s), coverage, and normal and emergency contact information

35. Identify requirements for business resumption, including accommodating services for which there will be an increased post-disaster demand

Function	Requirements	Increased Demand for Services?	Staff Member Responsible
Facility cleanup/repair (or relocation)			
Outreach to staff			
Restoration of utilities			
Recovery of data/records			
Restoration of supply chains			
Outreach to clients			

36. Identify organization's potential role in long term community recovery

37. With which emergency planning and management organization(s) does your organization have a working relationship?

Example: VOADs, Volunteer Centers, other non-profit service providers.

