



Why Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) is important to everyone

The first in a series of related articles, this week's COOP Chat will highlight the importance of Continuity of Operations Planning and why it's relevant to everyone's work here at Multnomah County.

Many of you may have participated in or contributed to the initial Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) initiatives that began in your office several years ago. Multnomah County Emergency Management is in the process of re-engaging and speaking with several stakeholders of the previous COOP Program. We are hearing one of the most common lessons learned is that there was not enough time spent educating and informing employees on what COOP really means, what it is all about, and why it is so important to response and recovery.

COOP is a critical component within any organization to ensure that its essential functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies until normal operations can be resumed. Today's threat and hazard environment and the potential for no-notice emergencies, including natural hazards, technological hazards, and man-made hazards, have increased the need for robust continuity capabilities and planning. Continuity planning not only increases the likelihood that the County can continue its essential functions, it also helps ensure that critical services continue to be provided to our community.

Over the course of this series, we will chat about essential functions, orders of succession, alternate facilities, communications, vital records, devolution and many more elements that are critical to a successful COOP for your department or division.

Start thinking about what you would do and where you would go when there is an interruption in your daily operations. Does your individual or department role significantly shift if there is a disaster or emergency? If you are an essential employee, do you have a family communications and preparedness plan ready so that you can focus and continue your role at the County in an emergency?

If this hasn't already been done, asking programs to identify who will be the COOP contact for your division or department will be one of our early requests. We are beginning to schedule short, informal meetings with various departments and divisions to establish our list of stakeholders or key decision makers. Several people have reached out and we will begin scheduling meetings soon.

If you are the COOP liaison/contact for your department/division and have not already done so please reach out to Emergency Management, we would love to hear from you.

For more information on COOP, please reach out to the COOP Program Manager Yvette Osborne. Her contact information and more details regarding COOP can be found on the [Emergency Management website](#).

Remember - it's always better to be COOPed up together!