



Getting back to Business:

Establishing A Disaster Preparedness Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)



Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council
for Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire Counties

“Almost 40% of small businesses that close due to a disaster never re-open.” – Harvard Business Review

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) helps a business prepare for continuation of critical operations in the event of a disaster.

- What would you do if the building your business is located within was damaged or destroyed in a disaster?
- What would you do if one third of your workforce could not come to work for 6 or more weeks?
- What would you do if your key suppliers were not available?
- What would you do if your computer system was unavailable?

You can do it yourself or there are companies that can help!

Resource Materials:

- Emergency Planning Guidebook and Sample COOP Plan:
www.ready.gov/business/plan/index.html
- Open for Business, a Disaster Protection and Recovery Planning Toolkit for the Small to Mid-Sized Business:
www.disastersafety.org/resource/resmgr/pdfs/OpenForBusiness_new.pdf
- Contact your local chamber of commerce
- Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council Resources:
www.wrhsac.org/Resources/resources

Don't Let Disaster Close Your Business.



MAKING A CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP) FOR YOUR BUSINESS

1. Determine what is absolutely necessary to keep the business operating.

- Identify key staff, materials, procedures, and equipment.

2. Create emergency communication plans and contact lists for staff and critical business contacts.

- Develop pre-arranged contracts or memorandum's of understanding with more than one company in case your primary contractor cannot meet your needs.

3. Identify locations where you can do business if your building is not accessible.

- Consider your home or other businesses with which you have relationships.
- Alternate location must have equipment necessary to continue operations and capacity to house key personnel.

4. Plan cash flow and payroll continuity.

5. Include all employees in emergency planning, but focus on those with expertise vital to daily business functions.

6. Define crisis management procedures, workforce protection measures, and individual responsibilities.

- Identify primary and backup emergency staff procedures.

7. Coordinate with others.

- Include businesses in your building, local emergency management directors and workers, utility providers, and businesses with which you regularly work.

8. Make a plan for returning to normal operations.

9. Keep COOP and related materials (contact lists, emergency procedures, payroll, and access to financial data) at an off-site location.

10. Communicate with Employees.

- Make sure personnel know what is expected of them in an emergency, and make this part of employee training.

11. Review your emergency plan annually.