

# Developing a Continuity of Operations Program

## An Overview



# COOP Overview: Benefits

COOP is a good business practice. It enables agencies to continue their essential functions across a broad spectrum of hazards and emergencies:

- Natural
- Manmade
- Technological
- National security emergencies

# What is COOP

## ■ Continuity Of Operations

- The continuation of essential functions and services

- Achieved through the use of:

- Continuity of Operations Program

- The development, maintenance, training, exercising and strategy of maintaining the COOP plan requires an actively managed program

- Continuity of Operations Plan

- the document that is geared towards ensuring that an entity is capable of carrying out its essential functions given some disruption

# Why COOP?

- Citizens have an expectation that government, especially public health and safety organizations, will continue to provide needed (or desired) services, regardless of the situation.

# Why COOP?: Planning Objectives

- Ensure continued performance of essential functions
- Reduce loss of life/minimize damage
- Ensure succession to office of key leadership
- Reduce/mitigate disruptions to operations
- Protect essential assets
- Achieve timely recovery/reconstitution
- Maintain TT&E program for validation

# Planning Considerations

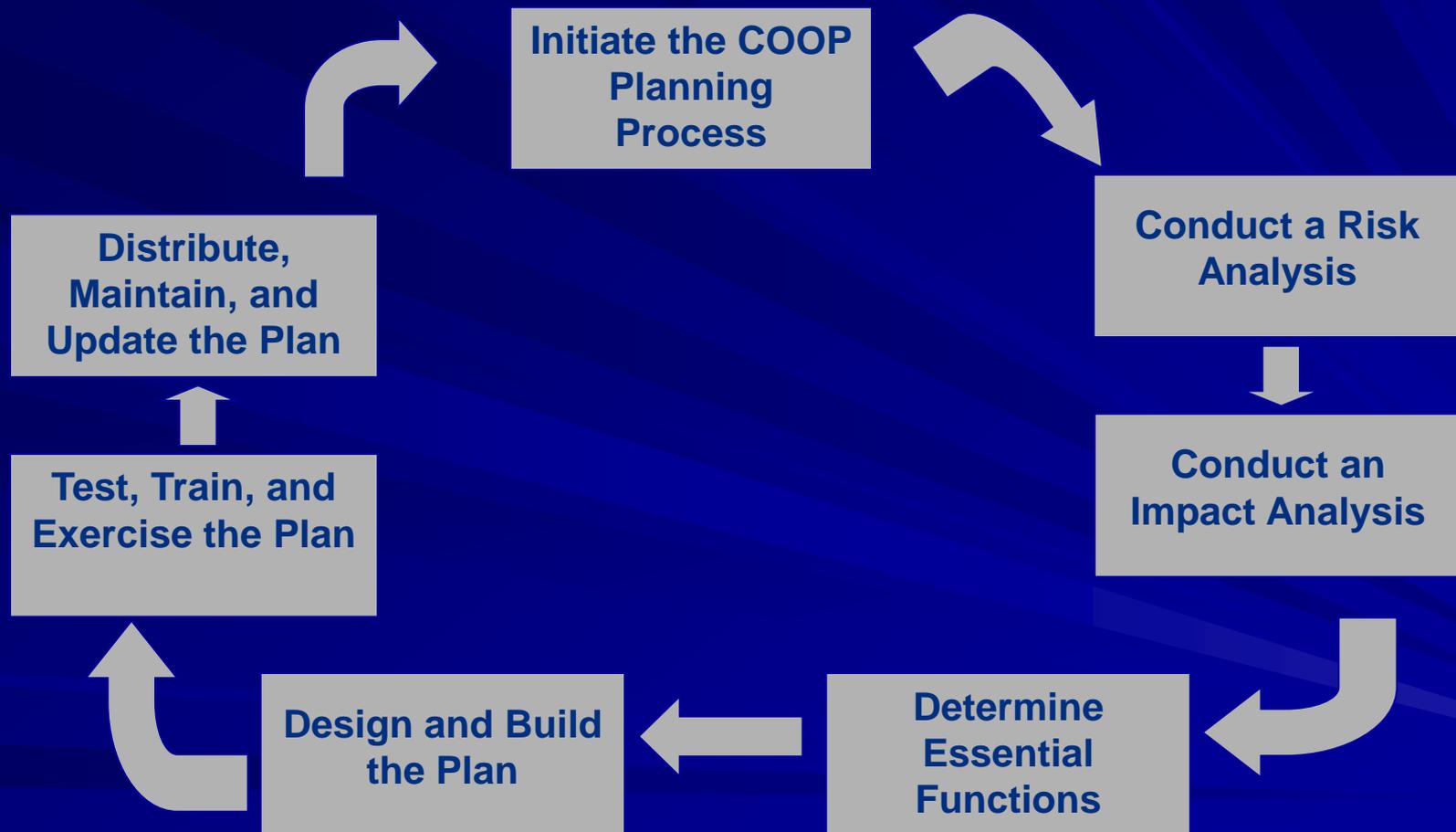
COOP plans must:

- Be capable of implementation anytime, with and without warning.
- Provide full operational capability for essential functions not later than 12 hours after activation.
- Be capable of sustaining operations for up to 30 days.
- Include regularly scheduled TT&E.

# How do we get there?

- Follow a planning process
- Use Project Management Framework
- Determine your risks
- Essential Functions
  - How do you do what you do?

# A COOP Planning Model



# STEPS TO COOP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

## Used for Court COOP Development

- Step 1 – Designate the COOP Planning Team, Identify Operating Unit Roles and Assign Responsibilities
- Step 2 – Develop Basis for Planning and Program
- Step 3 – Develop Planning Assumptions
- Step 4 – Determine COOP Activation Team
- Step 5 – Develop COOP Plan
- Step 6 – Develop Incident Specific Procedures for Priority Hazards, Threats and Events
- Step 7 – Coordinate with External Entities (Vendors, Stakeholders, Partners)
- Step 8 – Provide Education and Training to Staff on Emergency Operations and Personal and Family Preparedness
- Step 9 – Implement the COOP and Incident-Specific Procedures in Response to an Event
- Step 10 – Conduct On-Going Reviews and Corrective Actions for COOP

Table A.5.1 NFPA 1600, BCI &amp; DRII Professional Practices, and DHS/FEMA's FPC 65 COOP Elements Crosswalk

NFPA 1600 Chapter/Section	BCI & DRII Professional Practices (Subject Area)	DHS/FEMA FPC 65 COOP Elements
4, Program Management	1, Project Initiation and Management	—
5.2, Laws and Authorities	9, Public Relations and Crisis Coordination 10, Coordination with Public Authorities	—
5.3, Risk Assessment	2, Risk Evaluation and Control	—
5.4, Incident Prevention	2, Risk Evaluation and Control	—
5.5, Mitigation	2, Risk Evaluation and Control	—
5.6, Resource Management and Logistics	3, Business Impact Analysis	Human Capital
5.7, Mutual Aid/Assistance	4, Developing Business Continuity Strategies	—
5.8, Planning	1, Project Initiation and Management 2, Risk Evaluation and Control 3, Business Impact Analysis 4, Developing Business Continuity Strategies 5, Emergency Response and Operations 6, Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans	Plans and Procedures Essential Functions Orders of Succession Delegations of Authority Vital Records and Databases Human Capital
5.9, Incident Management	5, Emergency Response and Operations 6, Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans	Devolution of Control and Direction
5.10, Communications and Warning	5, Emergency Response and Operations 6, Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans	Interoperable Communications
5.11, Operational Procedures	5, Emergency Response and Operations 6, Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans	Plans and Procedures Orders of Succession Delegations of Authority Vital Records and Databases Reconstitution
5.12, Facilities	4, Developing Business Continuity Strategies 6, Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans 7, Awareness and Training	Alternate Operating Facilities
5.13, Training	7, Awareness and Training	Tests, Training and Exercises
5.14, Exercises, Evaluations, and Corrective Actions	8, Maintaining and Exercising Business Continuity Plans	Tests, Training and Exercises
5.15, Crisis Communication and Public Information	9, Public Relations and Crisis Coordination	—
5.16, Finance and Administration	1, Project Initiation and Management	—

BCI: Business Continuity Institute. DRII: Disaster Recovery Institute International.

DHS: Department of Homeland Security. FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

# Comparison from NFPA 1600

# FEMA COOP Program Management Guidelines

- Leadership and Staff
- Communication and Technology
- Facilities
- Planning and Program Management
- Continuity Program Management Cycle
  - Plans and Procedures
  - Tests, Training and Exercise
  - Evaluation and Lessons Learned
  - Corrective Action

# Planning Team

- Assign one person that is ultimately responsible
- Get the right people on your planning team
  - Senior personnel
  - Operational Staff
  - Support staff (Information Technology, Telephones, etc)
  - Stakeholder entities and partners
  - Balance between “do-ers” and “tell-ers”
- Assign specific responsibilities
  - Essential functions, personnel, etc
  - Alternate Locations
  - Vital Records and Systems
  - Training and Exercise

# Planning Basis

- Risk Assessment
  - Natural Hazards
  - Technological Hazards
  - Terrorism
  - Catastrophic
- Laws, Rules & Regulations
- Essential Functions
- Essential Personnel
- Vital Records & Systems
- Alternate Locations – Where do we go?

# Planning Basis – Essential Functions

- Loss of this function would have the following effect on the agency:
  - A. Catastrophic effect on the agency or some divisions
  - B. Catastrophic effect on one division
  - C. Moderate effect on the agency
  - D. Moderate effect on some divisions
  - E. Minor effect on the agency or some divisions

# Planning Basis – Essential Personnel

- Examine Consequences from a Vacancy.
  - This methodology examines consequences when leaving a position vacant for any amount of time. It may also help to identify how authority to make decisions was delegated to others. It is helpful to identify which decision-making authorities were delegated to others during the vacancy.
- Identify Key Positions by Questioning.
  - Using this methodology, the COOP Planner ask personnel and management what potential consequences exist if a position were left vacant or were determined to be non-essential during an emergency.
- Identify Key Positions by Historical Evidence.
  - Utilizing After Action Reports, other documentation, interviews and personal experience during an emergency the COOP Planner examines which positions and skill sets were most essential during an emergency.

# Essential Functions and Personnel

## ■ Orders of Succession

- Formal designation of who takes over a position that remains unfilled
- “3-Deep” Concept

## ■ Delegations of Authority

- “official documents by which the responsibilities and authorities of an office or official may be carried out by another office or designee(s) during an emergency condition or threat of such.”
- Delegations of Authority are not necessarily connected to formal rules of succession
- usually have triggers for activation, procedures outlining the delegation including notification of relevant staff of the transfer of power, and the limitations on the duration, extent and scope of the delegated authority/authorities

# Vital Records

- Those that, if lost or impaired, directly impact your organization's ability to carry out essential functions and otherwise conduct business
- Financial
- Human Resource
- Legal

# Critical Systems

- Systems that enable an entity to carry on its day-to-day business.
  - Information Technology
  - Communications
  - Security Resources

# Alternate Locations

- Space Requirements for Alternate Facility
  - How long can it be occupied?
- Accessibility
- Logistical Support
- Not affected by same event as primary facility

# Alternate Locations

- List them all
- Rank them by criteria
  - IT infrastructure
  - Accessibility
  - Comfort
  - Safety
  - Health
- MOU/MOA or Contract

# Assumptions

- Timeframes
  - 12 hour activation
  - How long AWL can be occupied
- What resources will be available
- What events or incidents will affect you
- Priorities
- Actions of Stakeholders and those organizations that you will rely on

# COOP Activation Team

- Rep from Senior Leadership
- IT Staff
- Communications Staff
- Operational Personnel
- Security Personnel
- Facilities Personnel
- Vendors?
- Can they be ready in 12 hours

# The COOP Plan

identify stakeholders that need to be notified, the critical and time-sensitive applications, alternative work sites, vital records, contact lists, processes, and functions that shall be maintained, as well as the personnel, procedures and resources that are needed while the entity is recovering. (5,8.3.8, NFPA 1600)

# COOP Plan

1. Ensure the performance of essential functions during a COOP event
2. Reduce the loss of life and minimize damage and losses
3. In the event a disruption renders leadership unable to assume their duties or responsibilities of office, successfully executing orders of succession,
4. Mitigate or reduce disruption to operations
5. Protect essential facilities, equipment, vital records and other key assets
6. Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency and reconstitution of normal operations that allows resumption of essential functions
7. Validate preparedness and COOP readiness through testing, training and exercising the programs that support the COOP plan
8. Ensure alternate facilities are available to continue performance of essential functions

# Sample Plan Outline

## Outline of COOP Plan Template from EMA Guidance

- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- II. INTRODUCTION
- III. PURPOSE
- IV. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE
- V. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS
- VI. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS
- VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES
- VIII. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS
  - A. PHASE I: ACTIVATION AND RELOCATION OR DEVOLUTION
    - 1. Decision Process
    - 2. Alert, Notification, and Implementation Process
      - a. With and Without Warning
      - b. Contacting Families
    - 3. Leadership
      - a. Orders of Succession
      - b. Delegations of Authority
    - 4. Devolution
      - a. Calling back: retired judges / contract judges
      - b. Devolving (surrendering to another jurisdiction or another court with authority) as dead.
  - B. PHASE II: ALTERNATE FACILITY OPERATIONS
    - 1. Mission Critical Systems
    - 2. Vital Files, Records, and Databases
  - C. PHASE III: RECONSTITUTION
    - 1. Reconstruction
    - 2. Recalling Personnel to Normal Work Location
    - 3. Reconstituting Normal Operations at Primary Facility
    - 4. Closing out Alternate Facility
- IX. COOP PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES
- X. LOGISTICS
  - A. ALTERNATE WORK LOCATION
  - B. INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS
- XI. TEST, TRAINING, AND EXERCISES
- XII. COOP PLAN MAINTENANCE (MULTI-YEAR STRATEGY AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN)

Annex A: Authorities and References

Annex B: Operational Procedures and Checklists (specific functions, systems or hazards)

Annex C: ~~Alternate Work Location/Facility Information~~

Annex D: Maps and Evacuation Routes

Annex E: Family and Individual Planning Resources

Annex F: Definitions and Acronyms

## Appendices

1 - Public Health Event (Pandemic)

2 - Catastrophic Incident

3- Additional Incident Specific Appendices as Needed (~~Building~~ Emergency, Power Outage, Bomb Threat)

# Implementation Phases of a COOP

- Readiness
- Activation and Relocation
- Continuity Operations
- Reconstitution

# Procedures

- For each position
  - Reduces need for cross-training
- COOP Team Opening the Alternate Facility (from 12 hours to 30 days)
- Security of Alternate Facility
- Moving necessary records
- Movement of incarcerated persons
- COOP Team Activation

# External Coordination

- Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement
- Contracts with Vendors (Contingency)

# Education and Training

- Emergency Operations
- Building Safety
- Personal and Family Preparedness

# Implementation

- Exercise your plan
- Activation
- Resumption of Normal Activities in Normal Setting

# Update and Review

- After use or exercise
- At set intervals
- With changes in personnel

# Conclusion

- Having a COOP Program in place enables your agency to meet the expectations of the public, especially in trying times when demands for your services may be especially high.
- Alternate facilities should be identified and coordinated
- Essential functions, and the times they are more critical, should be known and planned for.
- Essential personnel should be identified, orders of succession put in place, and delegations of authority issued and put in writing.
- Ensure you have procedures in place.