



CONTINUITY PLANNING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

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01

CONDUCT BUSINESS PROCESS AND IMPACT ANALYSES

The US economy is built on small business. Your operation is critical to the clients you serve and to a robust and vibrant marketplace. A critical first step in securing your business is understanding your essential functions. These are functions that must be in place in order for your business to be operational and will be the first to be restored after a disaster.

In order to plan for continuity, we recommend business process and impact analyses (BPA and BIA). During a BPA you will determine how business functions are carried out, and determine the required people, processes and systems. A BIA will uncover potential impacts that disasters might have on your functions.



02

PLAN FOR ABSENCES

Early in the continuity planning process your organization must identify key leadership positions and those positions responsible for carrying out essential business functions.

Consider:

- Who is active in the decision making process?
- Who participates in daily operations connected to critical processes?
- Who will have a critical role in restoring systems and records access?

You must consider what staff members carry out essential functions and plan for their absence. Cross-training and diverse competencies are critical to ensuring that your business stays operational. Ensuring readiness through cross-training is the best way to address personnel absences.

03

RESEARCH YOUR INTERDEPENDENCIES

Small businesses rely on a secure supply chain and reliable commerce practices. When these processes are interrupted, your business can experience shortages in inventory and delays in deadlines. You can prevent or reduce these effects by understanding the limitations and disaster response procedures of suppliers. You can also take steps to diversify your vendor relationships so that during an incident, you can reach out to more than one supplier.

Consider these steps:

- **Identify businesses that you rely on for supplies or services**
- **Identify supply chain vulnerabilities**
- **Identify clients that depend on your business for their continuity plans**
- **Determine how streamlined communications with suppliers or clients will occur during disaster**

04

PRACTICE RISK MITIGATION

You can act now to mitigate risks to your business:

- **Conduct a review of prior risk assessments or lessons learned and ensure that identified gaps have been met with action**
- **Ensure technical systems that you rely on are working well and that you have a plan to continue operations and avoid data loss**
- **Make sure that the equipment that your business relies on is maintained and that you are avoiding single points of failure where possible**



05 TRAIN ON AND EXERCISE CONTINUITY PLANS

Proficiency in continuity planning follows the Train-Test-Exercise approach. It is insufficient to have a plan; leadership and staff must understand it and determine its functionality in a test environment. Here are a few ideas:

- Feature continuity plan training with your employees
- Walk through scenarios during staff meetings
- Document and review lessons learned during disaster and incorporate them into your policy revisions



06 RESOURCES

Contact Anthem's COOP Experts



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FEMA's Continuity Resource Toolkit

<https://www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit>

FEMA's Continuity Assessment Tool

<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/158679>