



Continuity of Operations Plan

Guidance Document and Template Instructions

Instructions

This guidance and instructional document is intended for use with the accompanying template and can be completed by a jurisdiction as a whole, or done department by department, each determining its own needs. If completed by individual departments, each department should complete the requested information specific to that department. When the departmental information is completed, the jurisdiction can compile and coordinate the information into a jurisdiction wide COOP/COG plan.

A department can use existing Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and emergency response plans as building blocks for development of this COOP plan.

This document is designed as guidance and an instructional document for jurisdictions to follow in order to complete the accompanying template plan. In the process, modify, add, or delete any information in the template that may not apply to your department/jurisdiction. It's your plan, make it work for your jurisdiction. The template plan should begin the planning process and give the jurisdiction a plan to improve upon.

The following guidance should be followed while working through this COOP Template and Guidance document.

(This is a Word 97-2003 document. If you have a later version of Word, you should be able to make a conversion.)

1. In the Template and Guidance Document, there is text that is **HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW**. This indicates a section where information needs input, a choice should be made, or a table populated. Once you enter the specific information into the placeholders, remove the highlighting. (Use highlighting button on toolbar)
3. If you would like to replace the term "jurisdiction" with City, Village, or Township, use the Find and Replace feature in Word to do so.
4. Always use positions or titles rather than individual names to enter key positions information throughout the COOP Template. Individuals may change, but positions and titles tend to stay the same.
5. When inputting data into a table in the COOP Template, it is designed to be only one piece of data per row. Additional rows can be created by pressing tab while the cursor is in the last cell of the table.
6. Include any additional supporting departmental/jurisdiction documents applicable to the COOP as additional attachments.

Section 1- Background Information

Section 1 contains background information for the plan. The name of your city, village, or township should be entered where indicated in **yellow highlight**, along with the requested jurisdiction specific information. These sections allows you to speak to the reasoning for doing the plan and what your jurisdiction may face when trying to execute an actual COOP plan.

1.1 Introduction

Use this section to introduce why your jurisdiction has chosen to engage in Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning. Emphasize all hazards planning, mitigation, response, and recovery as the cornerstones to a great comprehensive emergency management program. Tell people reading the plan why engaging in this planning process is valuable.

1.2 Purpose

Determine the purpose of your COOP plan by selecting objectives from the list of sample objectives provided, or by creating objectives through your planning process. Your COOP plan is designed to provide a way for your jurisdiction to maintain essential operations under any circumstance using pre-identified alternate means when your primary operations are no longer possible.

1.3 Situation

- A. List population, geographic and demographic information.
- B. List governing and departmental structures.
- C. List facilities critical to operations or choose to list other situations on which your plan is based.

1.4 Assumptions

This section provides you a platform to list the reality on which your plan is written. Should your jurisdiction assume that all first responders will be trained and knowledgeable regarding COOP and the plan will not function without that, it is an assumption. The template lists assumptions for you to utilize or you can add your own unique assumptions based on your planning process.

1.5 Risk Analysis

A risk analysis is the process of collecting and evaluating information on risks and hazards that may impact jurisdiction operations. These risks are categorized into three groups:

1. Natural hazards, such as tornadoes, floods, snowstorms;
2. Technological events, such as electrical power failures, transportation failures;
3. Man-made, deliberate actions by individuals or groups to cause harm; bomb threats, civil disturbances, workplace violence.

According to the 2013 Risk Assessment for Franklin County prepared by Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the hazards most likely to occur in Franklin County are the following:

1. Tornadoes
2. Dam Failure
3. Flooding
4. WMD Terrorist Incident
5. Cyber-Terrorism
6. Infectious Disease
7. Severe Winter Weather
8. Hazardous Material Incident
9. Transportation Accident - Aircraft
10. Severe Summer Weather

The major change since this assessment has been increased vulnerability to terrorism, both domestic and foreign based.

The hazards with the top six scores: flooding, tornadoes, hazmat spills, terrorism, severe thunderstorm, and winter storms accounted for 86% of incidents reported to FCEM&HS over a ten year period. Any of these events could lead to the following scenarios:

- Local facility disruptions, typically single buildings;
- Region-wide disruptions affecting all or many government buildings in the region;
- Disruption of access to vital records or databases;
- Disruption of availability of specialized equipment or systems, including computing systems.
- Loss of services from a vendor or another government agency; and
- Personnel availability issues.

These scenarios, in turn, could have a major impact on the jurisdiction's ability to deliver its essential functions. In addition to the hazards listed above, many day-to-day incidents could threaten normal jurisdiction operations, such as employee absence, workplace violence, power outages, and other common events.

Your jurisdiction must be prepared to handle three types of emergencies: localized emergency requiring relocation to an alternate site; widespread emergency requiring relocation to an alternate site; and widespread emergency not requiring relocation to an alternate site. These scenarios are detailed in the template. List some of the hazards that correspond to the three scenarios in your plan.

Section 2- COOP Information

2.1 Essential Functions

2.1.1 Identifying Essential Functions

Essential functions are defined as those functions, stated or implied, that jurisdiction departments are required to perform by statute, executive order, or jurisdiction policy and are necessary to provide vital services, exercise civil authority, maintain the safety and well-being of the general populace, and sustain the industrial/economic base in an emergency.

The foundation of COOP planning is identifying and prioritizing essential functions. While all jurisdiction departmental functions are important, each departmental activity may not be an essential function that must be sustained in an emergency. Steps in identifying essential functions are:

1. Identify all departmental functions.
2. Determine which must be continued under all circumstances.
3. Prioritize these essential functions.
4. Establish staffing and resource requirements for each function.

Attachment B to the Template contains brief descriptions of local government departmental responsibilities.

2.1.2 Prioritizing Essential Functions

Each essential function has a critical time, or the amount of time a particular function can be suspended before its absence has an adverse effect on the department's core mission. Essential functions with shorter critical times are generally ranked higher than essential functions with longer critical times. Essential functions are prioritized using a Recovery Time Objective (RTO). The RTO is the maximum time period that a function or service can be interrupted before it must be restored to an acceptable level of operation. Taking into account the RTO for each essential function, the functions are classified into tiers. Tiers represent blocks of time available to recover operations during an event. The following table details the RTO tiers used to classify the essential functions.

Essential Function RTO Tiers

Tier	Ratings	RTO
I	IMMEDIATE These functions involve those with the direct and immediate effect on the jurisdiction to preserve life, safety, and protect property. These functions preserve the institution of government through command and control.	0 to 12 hours
II	NECESSARY Tier II functions must reach an operational status within 12-72 hours, and be sustained for a minimum of 30 days	12-72 hours

Tier	Ratings	RTO
III	IMPORTANT It is not necessary for Tier III functions to reach full operation within the first week following an event.	72+ hours to one week
IV	POSTPONED These functions can be delayed until Tiers 1, 2 and 3 are operational	One week to 30 days
V	EXTENDED These functions can be postponed for 30 days or more	30+ days

2.1.3 Staff and Resource Requirements

After essential functions are identified and prioritized, staffing and resource requirements are determined for each function. Resources that support essential functions include the following:

- **Human Resources (Staffing).** The number of personnel with specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities that each essential function will require.
- **Information Technology.** Workstations, personal computers, and software that may be required to perform an essential function.
- **Vital Records and Data.** Vital records and data must be on hand for personnel to perform certain essential functions, e.g. contact lists, personnel records.
- **Communications.** Both voice and data communications will be needed to support essential functions.
- **Supplies.** Basic resources such as equipment and office supplies will be required at the alternate facility.
- **Physical Infrastructure.** The space requirements needed to staff and perform essential functions.

Table 2A – Instructions: Essential Functions, Priority, and Resource Requirements

In Table 2A in the template list each department’s essential functions, the priority RTO tier level, and resources required for each one. Specific instructions for completing Table 2A are found below.

Column 1 – list your department’s essential functions. Remember, essential functions are those that must be continued under all circumstances.

Column 2 – assign a priority tier level for each function using the information in the chart on Essential Function RTO Tiers.

Column 3 – enter the number of personnel with specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities that each essential function will require.

Column 4 – list workstations, personal computers, and software that may be required to perform each essential function.

Column 5 – list any vital records and data that must be on hand for personnel to perform each essential function.

Add tables as necessary for each department with essential functions.

2.2 Orders of Succession

One of the fundamental principles of continuity planning is to maintain leadership in the event of an emergency by establishing an order of succession.

During a COOP event, operations and activities will not be “business as usual.” Under normal circumstances, Department Heads would be in charge of making major decisions affecting their departments. However, immediately following an event, jurisdiction officials, including Department Heads, may be part of an Emergency/Department Operations Center Management Team engaged in immediate incident management; may be incapacitated, or unavailable for other reasons. As a result, these Department Heads may not be available to oversee the continuity of operations process and execution of essential functions. However, COOP activities and essential functions must proceed without interruption regardless of availability of any one individual.

Initial COOP delegation of authority will follow basic Incident Command System (ICS) principles with the highest ranking person present on the scene assuming command and maintaining it until the Department Head or a designated alternate is able to assume the responsibility for COOP processes. All involved must be made aware of the changes in leadership and the order of succession prior to the event. Occasionally an organization may choose to delegate authority in a manner other than highest ranking official to ensure the requirements for competency related to essential functions are met.

Table 2B– Instructions: Order of Succession

In Table 2B in the Template designate the order of succession in the event the Department Head is unavailable to ensure that the department is capable of responding rapidly to emergency situations requiring COOP implementation.

Unless otherwise stated, the persons listed in Table 2B are designated to accept and maintain full authority and responsibilities of the Department Head.

Column 1 – enter the title of the department head.

Columns 2-4 – enter alternates who will replace the department head in case the primary individual is unavailable.

2.3. Alternate Facility/Locations

2.3.1 Current Inventory

Emergencies or potential emergencies can affect the ability of any jurisdiction department to perform essential functions from its primary facility/location. A critical element in COOP planning is identification and preparation of alternate facilities/locations. The purpose of an alternate facility/location is to provide each department with means of accomplishing its essential functions if the primary location is unavailable due to an emergency.

Table 2C – Instructions: Inventory of Current Jurisdiction Facilities/Locations

In Table 2C in the Template list the current facilities in use by jurisdiction departments.

2.3.2. Alternate Facilities

The term alternate facility/location can include anything from a borrowed conference room for a few key people on a temporary basis, to a complete facility used to house the entire department. In most cases, it will probably be something in between, depending on the circumstances of any given event and available resources. It is recommended that each department select at least two alternate sites. Prior to selecting a facility, complete a risk assessment of each possible facility, identifying advantages and disadvantages of each location.

Consider the following when identifying your alternate locations:

- Sufficient space and equipment to sustain the relocating department;
- Availability of interoperable communications with all identified essential internal and external organizations, other departments, critical customers, and the public;
- Reliable logistical support, services, and infrastructure systems, including water, electrical power, heating and air conditioning;
- Ability perform essential functions within 12 hours and sustain operations for up to 30 days;
- Consideration for the health, safety, and emotional well-being of relocated employees; and

- Appropriate physical security and access controls (e.g., fencing, 24/7 security).
- Appropriately equipped for the necessary computer equipment and software that will be utilized.

Generally there are four common alternate facilities options each department should consider:

- Existing department-controlled space
- Co-location with another department
- Participating in a shared alternate facility agreement
- Acquiring independent space exclusively for an alternate facility

Table 2D – Instructions: Departmental Alternate Facility/Locations

In Table 2D in the Template, list an inventory of all the alternate locations designated by individual departments. Each department can enter their alternate locations, then the jurisdiction can compile the complete list. Completing this table will show which departments are planning on using the same facilities as alternate locations.

2.3.3 Telecommuting

Another alternate facility option that may be appropriate for some departments is telecommuting. Telecommuting is an arrangement that allows employees to work from home or some other satellite office. A specially equipped vehicle could serve as an office and wireless hub.

Telecommuting allows employees to remain with families during a crisis. It may be highly applicable to a pandemic event. Telecommuting also reduces reliance on transportation infrastructure and may be particularly effective for disabled employees.

One thing to keep in mind, network security measures would be necessary to ensure that remote access by employees does not compromise the records or systems of the department. Telecommuting procedures should be tested to ensure that systems will not be overloaded.

Insert in this section your jurisdictions policy on telecommuting. This policy may differ during emergencies more so than it would day-to-day.

Table 2E – Instructions: Department Essential Functions - Telecommuting

In Table 2E of the Template, list the telecommuting capabilities for departmental essential functions.

This table is designed to identify which essential functions can be carried out via telecommuting.

Column 1 – list essential function.

Column 2 – evaluate whether the essential function is amenable to telecommuting.

Column 3 – identify the number of employees needed to perform the essential functions via telecommuting.

Column 4 – identify the equipment/records/databases that would be necessary for an employee to have to perform this function via telecommuting.

Column 5 – identify the number of employees that currently have the proper equipment and access to vital records/databases to perform this function via telecommuting.

2.4. Vital Records, Files, Databases, Systems and Equipment

Identification and protection of vital records, files, and databases necessary to perform essential functions and activities and to reconstitute normal department operations following an emergency are critical to successful continuity of operations.

While each department has a number of important records, files, and databases that should be protected, this COOP only addresses the protection of vital records, files and databases that support essential functions. Vital records, files, and databases represent a small fraction of the records most departments retain and they can be in any form, but are usually either paper or electronic.

To the greatest extent possible, departments should back-up electronic records, files and databases and position them at alternate facilities/locations. If these items are not available at the alternate facility/location, departments should develop a procedure to access these from the alternate facility/location.

Three types of files should be the primary focus of the back-up process: anything used during emergency operations of any kind, legal and financial records, and any records of national significance.

Extensive protective measures can sometimes be prohibitively expensive. Some options to consider:

- Replicate department server at an off-site facility/location;
- Scan paper records and files and store on a secure computer;

- Store duplicate records and files in fireproof filing cabinets, vaults, and safes at the primary location;
- Identify specific individuals responsible for maintenance, retrieval, and security of vital records, files, and data bases; and
- Back server up using tape or disk back-up systems.

Table 2F – Instructions: Vital files, Records, and Database Inventory

In Table 2F of the Template, review the essential functions identified in Table 2A and identify the records, files, and databases which support those essential function.

Column 1 – list the name of each vital record, file and database.

Column 2 – list the current location of each essential record, file, and database. Be specific in your descriptions of locations.

Column 3 – indicate the primary format in which document is stored (e.g., electronic, paper, microfiche, etc.). If a record is stored in more than one form, include information about both of these forms in column 3.

Column 4 – enter a brief description of how the record, file, or database is backed-up (e.g., server at the end of each day or a duplicate paper copy is filed, etc.) You may need to work with your IT person to identify this information.

Column 5 – indicate the position title of the individual responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and security of the vital record, file , or database, as well as for its emergency retrieval.

Column 6 – indicate whether or not the record, file, or database can be accessed from an alternate location.

Column 7 – indicate the security considerations, if any, these vital records, files, and databases require under your departmental policies and standard operating procedures. In general these records, files, and databases will require the same level of security at the alternate facility/location as they do at the primary facility.

2.5 Vital Systems, Applications, and Equipment

Just as records are vital to a jurisdiction department’s essential functions, the systems, computer applications, and equipment are essential for departments to maintain critical services. A system, application, or piece of equipment is vital if it is necessary to perform essential functions. Many critical systems, applications, and equipment support essential department functions. However, not every system, application, or piece of equipment is vital, even if it is important.

Information Technology Departments usually have disaster recovery plans and protective measures already in place. In addition to IT systems, each department may use other equipment unique to the department.

Table 2G – Instructions: Vital Systems and Equipment

Review essential functions in Table 2A. Identify vital systems and equipment which support those essential functions. Enter this information into **Columns 1 and 2**.

Column 3 – denote current locations at which these systems and equipment are stored.

Column 4 – enter a brief description of how this system or equipment is backed-up/made redundant at your primary location.

2.6 Interoperable Communications

The success of operations at an alternate facility/location depends on the availability and redundancy of critical communications systems to support connectivity to internal and external organizations, other departments, and the public. Interoperable communications should provide the following:

- Capability to adequately support essential functions and COOP operational requirements;
- Ability to communicate with Key COOP staff, Contingency staff, management and other jurisdiction personnel;
- Ability to communicate with other agencies, the public, and emergency personnel;
- Access to data and systems necessary to conduct essential functions; and
- Ability to operate in the alternate facility/location within 12 hours, and for up to 30 days in a situation with and without warning.
- Ability to communicate with existing field infrastructure

Interoperable communications include a wide range of equipment and systems, including; radio, phone, fax, email, internet, intranet, messaging systems, video conference, notification systems such as Emergency Alert System (EAS), and Telephone notification systems.

Because only a contingency staff will be asked to report to an alternate facility and because financial and logistical constraints will limit the quantities of the communications equipment available at alternate facilities, the numbers of communications equipment needed at an alternate facility may be smaller than the number of communications equipment currently available at the primary location.

Table 2H – Instructions: Interoperable Communications

Work with your IT department/personnel to identify communications equipment and systems currently utilized by your department. Review the communications equipment available at the alternate locations your department identified.

Review the communications equipment/systems already listed in **Column 1**. If necessary, add additional equipment/systems unique to your department.

Column 2 – identify the quantity of communications equipment currently available at the primary location.

Column 3 – identify the name of current equipment service provider. This information will be helpful if the primary building is not available and the service offered by these providers must be temporarily suspended or relocated.

Column 4 – enter your department’s minimum acceptable requirements for communications equipment.

In **Columns 5 and 6** enter the actual number of equipment available at alternate facilities/locations. Information from Columns 4, 5, and 6 will help your department determine the communications equipment needs, or possible surpluses.

2.7 Initial COOP Contingency Staff and Responsibilities

A number of critical tasks must be initiated and completed as part of the initial COOP activation and implementation process. Such critical tasks as employee notification and communication, retrieval of essential records and equipment, and prompt relocation will ultimately ensure the continuity of operations and minimal disruption of essential functions.

Each department is unique and the contingency staff and the critical tasks will vary among departments. However, there are a number of basic steps which must be completed by each department as part of the initial COOP activation and implementation process:

- Notify department personnel of COOP activation;
- Notify other departments and jurisdiction leadership of COOP activation;
- Make a reasonable attempt (without endangering human life) to back up, secure, and retrieve vital records, files, and databases from the primary location; and
- Communicate with the public about the status of services provided by the department.

These responsibilities are not all inclusive, but outline the basic actions which must be completed by contingency staff to ensure successful COOP activation and implementation.

Table 2I – Instructions: Key COOP Staff and Assigned Responsibilities

Review critical tasks listed in **Column 1**. These tasks are only suggestions and should be customized for each department. Use your knowledge of the internal workings of your department to identify additional critical tasks which must be accomplished by your department’s staff in order to continuously perform your department’s essential functions from another location and/or with reduced number of employees.

Columns 2 and 3 – assign individuals from your department who will re responsible for completing these critical tasks. List position title instead of an individual’s name.

2.8 Essential Functions Staff and Responsibilities

In addition to completing the critical tasks associated with COOP activation, notification and relocation, each department must continue to perform its essential functions.

Table 2J – Instructions: Essential Functions and Assigned Personnel

This table lists the essential functions identified by the department and assigned staff and alternates responsible for ensuring the continuity of these functions.

Column 1 – list the essential functions identified in Table 2A.

Column 2 – identify the department’s primary staff, by position, who will be responsible for this essential function following the COOP plan activation.

Column 3 – identify one alternate, by position, for each essential function who will be responsible for this function if the primary staff is not available.

2.9 Devolution

In some cases, it may be necessary to implement COOP through devolution. Devolution is the capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from a department’s primary operating staff and facilities to employees and facilities of other departments within the jurisdiction and even to other jurisdictions.

Use this opportunity to prearrange departments that can cross-train to each other’s essential functions. Also, consider a Memorandum of Understanding with another jurisdiction that may be able to take over for you in the event that you are unable to fulfill your statutory requirements.

Table 2K – Instructions: Devolution

Identify other departments in your jurisdiction that can fill your department’s role and identify any additional training that alternate personnel would require to perform/maintain essential functions. If no other department could fill your department’s role, then indicate so in Column 1.

Section 3- Concept of Operations

3.1 Phase I – Activation and Relocation (0-12 Hours Following an Incident)

Determine who has the authority to call for COOP activation and who will direct COOP related activities. As soon as employees receive an announcement, all employees will assume their COOP responsibilities outlined previously.

Upon activation of the COOP, the department should consider the following:

1. Utilize the checklist *in Attachment C – Plan Implementation Checklist*
2. Notify COOP Contingency Staff and the rest of the Department's employees of COOP activation and provide them with basic instructions. Refer to Table 2I, Section 2.7.
3. Notify the point of contact at the alternate facility/location of impending activation and actual relocation requirements. Refer to Table 2D, Section 2.3.1.
4. Arrange security at the alternate facility/location for vital records at the same level as the primary facility/location to the extent possible.
5. Notify the appropriate internal and external organizations listed in Table 3A below of relocation status.

Table 3A – Instructions: Internal and External Organizations Notification Contact Information

Complete with internal and external contacts that should be notified when the department or jurisdiction activates the COOP.

6. Implement plans, procedures and schedules to transfer essential functions, personnel, records, and equipment to alternate facility/locations.
7. Provide guidance to contingency staff and other departmental staff.
8. Assemble necessary documents and equipment required to continue performance of essential operations at alternate facilities/locations, including communications equipment, computer equipment, contact lists, vendor numbers.
9. Order equipment or supplies, if not already in place at the alternate facility or easily transferred.
10. Transport vital records and files, supporting communications, IT framework and other necessary equipment to the alternate facilities/locations, if applicable.
11. Arrange security for the abandoned primary facility/location and non-moveable equipment and records, to the extent possible.
12. Provide instructions for personnel not relocating to the COOP site.

A list of 24-hour contact information for Key COOP staff and other departments, key jurisdiction officials, customers, and suppliers should be maintained by each department. (This information may be included in the COOP plan or maintained as a separate document that is easily accessible during an emergency.)

Useful Attachments for reference in this section:

Attachment D – Employee Contact Information

Attachment E – Vendors/Suppliers Contact Information

Attachment F – Go-Kits

Attachment G – Alternate Facility Information

**3.2 Phase II – Alternate Facility/Location Operations
(12 Hours Following an Incident through Termination)**

1. Provide further guidance to Contingency Staff and other departmental staff.
2. Identify replacements for missing personnel and request augmentation as necessary.
3. Begin full execution of essential functions at alternate facilities/locations.
4. Develop plans and schedules to phase down alternate facility operations and return essential functions, personnel, records, and equipment to the primary facility or to other temporary or permanent facilities when appropriate.
5. Develop a staffing plan and determine responsibilities to implement reconstitutions.

**3.3 Phase III – Reconstitution
(Termination of COOP Operations and Return to Normal Operations)**

1. When notified that the threat or actual emergency no longer exists, inform all staff and provide instructions for resumption of normal operations.
2. Supervise an orderly return to the primary facility, or movement to other temporary or permanent facility using a phased approach if conditions necessitate.
3. Inform the point of contact at the alternate facility and other points of contact that your staff and functions will be leaving the alternate facility, if applicable.
4. Conduct an after action review of COOP operations and effectiveness of plans and procedures as soon as possible; identify areas for correction.
5. Develop lessons learned into an improvement plan. (Refer to Attachment H for After Action Report Template.)

Section 4- COOP Training, Exercises and COOP Maintenance

4.1 Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management Plan (MYSPMP)

Viable COOP programs must include the development, maintenance, and annual review of organization COOP capabilities using a MYSPMP. The MYSPMP will outline the process the organization will follow to:

- (1) Designate and review essential functions and resources,
- (2) Define short and long-term COOP goals and objectives,
- (3) Forecast COOP budgetary requirements,
- (4) Identify COOP program issues, concerns, potential obstacles, and the strategy for addressing these, as appropriate, and
- (5) Establish COOP planning, training, and exercise activities and milestones for these activities.

4.2 Training and Exercises

A COOP Training and Exercise Program includes the following objectives:

- Assessing and validating the COOP plan, policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that staff personnel are familiar with COOP procedures.
- Ensuring that key personnel are sufficiently trained to carry out essential functions during plan implementation.
- When agencies overlap, conducting joint interagency COOP exercises.

This training and exercise program will ensure that staff personnel are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the execution of the COOP plan. Regularly scheduled exercises will discover and document necessary modifications to the plan and will also help personnel gain confidence in their ability to implement the plan.

4.2.1 Training

All staff members should be trained and equipped to perform their emergency duties. COOP training should include:

- Individual and team training to make sure staff members have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out essential functions.
- Just-in-time training/orientation for relocated personnel as they arrive at the alternate facility.
- Training courses and materials designed to improve knowledge and skills related to carrying out COOP responsibilities.

4.2.2 Exercises

Exercises serve to validate or identify improvements to COOP policies, procedures, systems, and locations. Periodic exercises also help to ensure that equipment and procedures are maintained in a constant state of readiness.

After exercising the plan, departments should complete an After Action Report (AAR) to identify issues found during the exercise and identify recommendations as to how those issues

can be resolved. The COOP plan will then be reviewed and modified to reflect any necessary changes.

Attachment H is a sample After Action Report Template

Table 4A – Instructions: COOP Training and Exercise Program

Table 4A is a suggested exercise and training program. Additional department specific exercises can be added as appropriate.

4.3 Plan Maintenance

The COOP Plan should be updated and maintained according to an established schedule. Whenever the plan is updated, it should be reissued with the update recorded on the Record of Changes Page. This ensures all staff are aware of the changes and outdated versions are discarded.

Plan revisions due to changes in department structure, essential functions or mission should be made promptly. Long-term plan maintenance should be undertaken carefully, planned for in advance and completed according to the schedule.

Table 4B– Instructions: COOP Plan Maintenance Schedule

Table 4B describes suggested plan maintenance activities.

Attachments

The attachments contain additional information, checklists and forms that can be used to assist you in the planning process. Some attachments require department specific information (e.g. Employee Contact Information). Any additional department information you feel is needed can be added as an attachment.