

**Department of the Interior
Departmental Manual**

Effective Date: 1/15/2021

Series: Emergency Management

Part 900: Emergency Management Program

Chapter 4: Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program

Originating Office: Office of Emergency Management

900 DM 4

4.1 Purpose. This Chapter establishes Department of the Interior (Department/Interior/DOI) policy and uniform guidance for the development and implementation of contingency plans for Continuity of Operations (COOP). COOP planning facilitates the performance of the Department's essential functions during the full range of human-caused, natural, technological, and national security emergencies.

4.2 Scope. These policies apply to all Bureaus/Offices and to all locations where Department employees are assigned or where functions and activities of the Department are conducted.

4.3 Authorities and References. The list of core authorities and references used for the Departmental Emergency Management Program are listed in 900 DM 1. The following authorities and reference are specific to this Chapter:

- A. The National Security Act of 1947, 50 U.S.C. § 3042.
- B. 41 CFR §102-74, General Services Administration Federal Management Regulation, Facility Management.
- C. 36 CFR § 1223, Vital records during an emergency.
- D. Executive Order 12656, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities.
- E. Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions.
- F. Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 21, Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience.
- G. Presidential Policy Directive 40, National Continuity Policy.
- H. Federal Continuity Directive (FCD) 1, Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Programs and Requirement.

I. Federal Continuity Directive 2, Federal Executive Branch, Mission Essential Function and Primary Mission Essential Function Identification and Submission Process.

J. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Revised, Management of Federal Information Resources.

K. Departmental Manual Part 444, Physical Protection and Facility Security.

4.4 Policy. The Department and its subordinate organizational units must have in place a comprehensive and effective continuity program to ensure continuity of essential Federal functions under all circumstances. The Department as a whole and its constituent Bureaus/Offices must provide necessary resources to prepare for, operate during, and reconstitute after an incident or situation that disrupts normal operations.

4.5 Objectives.

A. Ensure the performance of Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs), Mission Essential Functions (MEFs), and Essential Supporting Activities (ESAs) during a COOP event.

B. Reduce loss of life, minimize damage and losses.

C. Execute as required, in the event of a disruption that renders agency leadership unable, unavailable, or incapable of assuming and performing their authorities and responsibilities of office, successful succession to the office with accompanying authorities.

D. Reduce or mitigate disruptions to operations.

E. Ensure that Bureaus/Offices have alternate sites from which to continue to perform their essential functions during a COOP event.

F. Protect essential facilities, equipment, records, and other assets.

G. Achieve a timely and orderly reconstitution from an incident, resume essential functions to both internal and external clients, and transition to normal operations as quickly as possible.

H. Ensure and validate COOP readiness through an integrated testing, training, and exercise program to support the implementation and validation of COOP plans.

4.6 Responsibilities.

A. Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget (A/S – PMB) is responsible for overall leadership and coordination of the Department's COOP Program, approves the *DOI COOP Plan*, and serves as the Departmental Continuity Coordinator.

B. Deputy Assistant Secretary – Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS – PSRPES) provides direct oversight of the COOP Program and approves strategic continuity planning to ensure and improve continuity capabilities.

C. Director, Office of Emergency Management (Director, OEM) provides direction for the COOP program and serves as the Alternate Continuity Coordinator for the Department.

D. Assistant Director for Continuity Programs, Office of Emergency Management

(1) Serves as the COOP Program point of contact for interagency coordination, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Security Council Staff.

(2) Develops COOP policy and provide policy interpretation and guidance for the Department.

(3) Provides oversight to ensure COOP policy compliance.

(4) Develops and maintains the *DOI COOP Plan*.

(5) Provides for COOP readiness.

(6) Coordinates operational COOP activities.

(7) Serves as the Departmental Continuity Manager.

E. Heads of Offices within the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Solicitor, and the Office of the Inspector General

(1) Direct their organizational COOP Program.

(2) Promulgate guidance on COOP planning requirements to subordinate organizational units and ensures readiness to implement its COOP Program.

(3) Ensure assigned personnel will execute responsibilities under the *DOI COOP Plan*.

(4) Develop appendices and annexes to the *DOI COOP Plan*.

F. Assistant Secretaries provide leadership and oversight to ensure that Bureaus under their jurisdiction manage and execute the COOP Program and ensure readiness of their immediate office to execute the *DOI COOP Plan*.

G. Heads of Bureaus

(1) Oversee, resource, and approve the Bureau COOP Program and the Bureau COOP Plan, which include organizational direction for the entire Bureau as well as continuity planning for the Headquarters element.

(2) Promulgate guidance on COOP planning requirements to subordinate organizational units.

(3) Ensure readiness of the Bureau to implement the Bureau COOP Program and Plan.

(4) Ensure assigned personnel are prepared to execute responsibilities under the *DOI COOP Plan*.

4.7 Definitions.

A. Essential Functions. Essential functions are a subset of Government functions that are determined to be critical activities. These essential functions are then used to identify supporting tasks and resources that must be included in the organization's continuity planning process. In this policy, the term "essential functions" refers to those functions an organization must continue following a disruption to normal operations, whether the functions are Primary Mission Essential Functions, Mission Essential Functions, or Essential Support Activities. FCD-2 documents the development of essential functions.

(1) Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs). As defined in PPD-40, "Those mission essential functions that must be continuously performed to support or implement the uninterrupted performance of the National Essential Functions (NEFs)." Organizational PMEFs, validated by the National Continuity Coordinator, must be performed to support the performance of NEFs before, during, and in the aftermath of an incident. PMEFs need to be continuous or resumed within 12 hours after a disruption of normal operations and must be maintained for at least 30 days or until normal operations can be resumed.

(2) Mission Essential Functions (MEFs). As defined in PPD-40, "The essential functions directly related to accomplishing the organization's mission as set forth in its statutory or executive charter. Generally, MEFs are unique to each organization." MEFs are a limited set of organization-level Government functions that must be continued throughout, or resumed rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities.

(3) Essential Supporting Activities. Critical functions, which do not meet the threshold for MEFs or PMEFs, but which an organization must continue during a continuity activation in order to support the performance of PMEFs and MEFs.

B. Essential Facilities. Facilities that are critical for the execution of the Department's essential functions.

C. No-Warning Scenario. Situation in which an incident occurs with no advance indication that activation of COOP plans is necessary. May require automatic deployment of personnel to designated alternate facilities.

D. Warning Scenario. Situations in which there are indications that COOP activation may be required and deliberate decisions are undertaken to activate the COOP plan.

E. Organizational Unit. A group of employees under common management that comprise a logical unit for developing a COOP plan, such as a regional office, a service center, an administrative unit, a research station, or a park, refuge, district, or agency. An organizational unit may consist of one or more facilities.

F. Essential Record. Electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity event. Essential records are divided into two categories: (1) emergency operating records and (2) legal and financial rights records.

G. Continuity Coordinator. PPD-40 requires appointment of a Continuity Coordinator at the Assistant Secretary level or higher and is defined as the senior official responsible for coordinating with the Organization Head and national continuity leadership to ensure the organization maintains a viable and effective continuity capability.

H. Continuity Manager. A Continuity Manager handles day-to-day management of the continuity program for a Department or Agency and administers support to components to ensure that the Organization leadership and continuity personnel are properly trained and facilities properly equipped to execute continuity plans with little or no notice.

4.8 Elements of a Viable COOP Program. A viable COOP program requires adequate planning, staffing, and funding to address 11 essential elements outlined in FCD-1 and further elaborated in subsections A. through K. below. At a minimum, COOP programs, capabilities, and plans will be reviewed annually.

A. Program Management, Plans, and Procedures. At the Departmental and Bureau level, planning must (1) Include a multi-year strategy to 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, obstacles, and strategy for addressing these shortfalls; and (5) Establish milestones for COOP planning, training, and exercise activities.

To minimize disruption of normal business activities and provide for continued performance of essential functions under all circumstances, written COOP plans must be developed and document, at a minimum, the 11 essential elements of a COOP Program. They should also:

- (1) Have the capability of being implemented both with and without warning.
- (2) Document the decision process for activation of COOP plans during “no-warning” and “warning” scenarios.

- (3) Include rosters for continuity team positions and site liaisons and other information needed to implement critical communications system.
- (4) Include the locations of electronic and hardcopy contact lists for all continuity personnel.
- (5) Outline procedures and provide checklists as needed for notification of COOP team members, alternate facility staff, senior leadership and others upon COOP activation.
- (6) Provide instructions for movement of personnel and other resources to the alternate facility.
- (7) Outline procedures and provide reference material and checklists as needed to ensure COOP team and alternate facilities reach operational status and resumption of essential functions within 12 hours of activation.
- (8) Include delineation of responsibilities for COOP team members, alternate facility reception and orientation, and establishment of communications.

B. Essential Functions. Identify and prioritize essential functions required to provide essential services, exercise civil authority, save lives, and protect the health and safety of the public and employees during an event that disrupts or has the potential to disrupt normal activities and that necessitates the activation of continuity plans.

C. Orders of Succession. Establish, promulgate, and maintain orders of succession to key positions.

D. Delegations of Authority. Document pre-delegated authorities for making policy determinations and other decisions. Clearly established delegations of authority are vital to ensuring all Departmental personnel know who has authority to make key decisions to execute essential functions in a COOP event.

E. Interoperable Communications and Information Systems. Identify, install, maintain, and test critical communications and information technology systems to support connectivity between leadership, internal organizational units, other agencies, critical customers, and the public.

F. Essential Records Management. Identify, protect, and ensure availability and access to electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, databases, and information required to maintain essential functions.

G. Alternate Operating Facility(ies). Identify alternate location(s) where the organization can conduct essential functions. At least one location should be physically and geographically separate from the primary location to ensure that operations can be conducted regardless of the disruption and should account for potential threats and hazards. When necessary, agreements for

the use of physically and geographically separate locations should include delegations of authority for leadership and staff. If appropriate, organizations may consider telework as an alternate location. A completed security review of alternate operating facility(ies) should be conducted in accordance with 444 DM, Physical Protection and Facility Security.

In managing an alternate operating facility, the following should be considered:

- (1) Maintaining procedures and/or checklists as needed to order necessary equipment and supplies that are not pre-positioned.
- (2) Managing situation tracking and status of essential functions.
- (3) Providing ongoing communications with other organizational units, non-deployed personnel, other agencies, critical customers.
- (4) Sustainment of continuity operations for 30 days or longer.

H. Human Capital.

- (1) Designate emergency or other special categories of employees.
- (2) Promulgate dismissal or closure procedures.
- (3) Publicize announcements on operating status; document employee accountability.
- (4) Provide systems to maintain employee communications to facilitate employee awareness of operating and facility conditions.
- (5) Issue guidance on pay flexibilities and benefits.

I. Devolution of Control and Direction. As applicable or relevant, establish procedures to transfer statutory authority and responsibilities from primary operating staff and facilities to another designated staff and one or more facilities for the purpose of sustaining essential functions. Devolution may be temporary or may endure for an extended period. A devolution plan is activated upon the threat of, or in response to a catastrophic emergency that either renders primary leadership and operating staff unavailable or leaves them incapable of sustaining essential functions from primary facilities.

J. Reconstitution. Identify procedures for restoring normal operations after a catastrophic event. This includes designation of a reconstitution team, development of a plan to resume normal operations, consolidation of resources to allow the organization to become fully functional, establishment of a new permanent operating site if needed, movement of personnel, equipment, records, and notification of non-deployed personnel to assure an orderly transition to normal operations. Reconstitution program element should address leadership, staff, communications, and facilities.

K. Testing, Training, and Exercising. Provide a program for annual testing, training, and exercising of COOP capabilities, personnel, equipment, systems, processes, and procedures. Training familiarizes personnel with procedures they must perform in executing COOP plans. All COOP plans must be tested and exercised to ensure the plan's viability and identify deficiencies.

4.9 Development and Coordination of COOP Plans.

A. A COOP Plan(s) must be prepared and maintained for the Department and each Bureau.

B. The *DOI COOP Plan* incorporates COOP planning for all organizational units within the Department. Bureau COOP Plans are published separately from the *DOI COOP Plan*. Plans for Offices within the Office of the Secretary are incorporated as appendices to the *DOI COOP Plan*.

C. COOP plans provide for continuity of essential functions. Therefore, they may encompass multiple units or facilities in a single plan. COOP plans must clearly specify subordinate units that are required to prepare an individual COOP plan, or whether COOP Program requirements of subordinate units can be met by appending information to the plan of the parent office.

D. Continuity planning that addresses leadership, staff, communications, and facility requirements will be developed for all organizational units that support essential functions to ensure the transition from normal operations to continuity operations.

E. Each organization preparing a COOP plan must identify, prioritize, assess, and protect their internal critical infrastructure and facilities to minimize disruptions. Facilities and critical infrastructure required to perform essential functions must be protected in accordance with 444 DM.

F. Alternate facilities must have a current risk analysis and must have physical security protective measures in accordance with 444 DM. In some instances, the ongoing mission of a facility will require a lesser level of protection than required when the facility is activated for COOP. The facility must plan for and be capable of upgrading protective measures commensurate with its COOP function within 12 hours of activation. Alternate locations for the Department, Bureaus, and other organizational units must be protected to the standards listed in 444 DM. Required physical security capabilities for an alternate headquarters must be tested and/or exercised annually.

4.10 Reports.

A. Activation of the *DOI COOP Plan* must be reported to FEMA's National Continuity Programs division, through the Continuity Status Report.

B. Activation of any continuity plan must be reported to the Office of Emergency Management, through the Interior Operations Center. Reports must include:

- (1) Location of primary facility and activated alternate facility.
- (2) Impact to essential functions.
- (3) Changes in key leadership.
- (4) Communications information.
- (5) Shortfalls, needs, or other requests for assistance.
- (6) Employee accountability.