

Simple Pandemic Continuity Planning

Overview

Pandemic events may require organizations to operate differently due to high absenteeism or the need to implement social distancing measures. This document presents a simplified planning approach so organizations can continue to deliver critical services during pandemic events.

Mission Essential Functions

Mission Essential Functions (MEF) are those functions that must continue during an emergency or other disruption, including a pandemic event. If a function can be postponed for up to 30 days without causing health or life-safety issues, it is probably not a MEF. A good starting point for developing MEFs is to review your organizations Mission Statement. Most organizations, including large government agencies, will have five (5) or fewer MEFs. Some may have only one.

Mission Essential Functions

Assumptions

Each organization should identify any organization-specific assumptions that would impact the planning for pandemic. Examples are listed below:

Identify and list additional organization-specific assumptions
1. <i>(Insert organization name)</i> will be operational during a pandemic outbreak.
2. <i>(Insert organization name)</i> will support social distancing practices to the greatest extent possible, as directed by health officials. This might include authorizing staff to work off-site or establishing alternate shifts to reduce staff interaction.
3. <i>(Insert essential function)</i> that is normally performed face-to-face, might be performed via electronic means in order to reduce contact between persons.

Essential Personnel & Cross- Training

List the organization’s Mission Essential Functions in their prioritized order. In the next column, identify the positions that can perform the function. When considering upwards of a 40 percent absenteeism rate, strive to have four to five persons who can perform essential functions. In the event four to five persons cannot perform the essential function, identify which positions could easily be cross-trained to perform the function. The number of people that need to be cross-trained will depend on how many people already know how to perform the function. For example, three people know how to do payroll. It is suggested that you identify two additional people that can be cross-trained that could perform payroll functions. An example is provided on the first line. Each organization will need to determine how many people need to be cross-trained and realistic expectations for cross-training.

Essential Function	Positions/Persons who can perform this function	Positions/Persons who can be cross-trained for this function
<i>Payroll</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>HR Manager</i> 2. <i>HR Coordinator</i> 3. <i>Benefits Coordinator</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Finance Coordinator</i> 2. <i>Finance Manager</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Closure of Service Locations

If the organization does not have more than one service location or does not provide services at more than one location, skip this worksheet. If the organization provides services at more than one location, list the order in which service locations should be closed for the purposes of consolidating staff. This is applicable to similar services that are offered in multiple locations. The plan will need to include procedures for re-assigning staff to work at another location when their normal work location is closed.

Location to Close	Priority (1 st to close, last, etc.)	Address
<i>Example: Main Office</i>	<i>Last to close</i>	<i>1 Main St.</i>

Off-Site Functions

Review the Mission Essential Functions (MEF). Determine which of these functions might be performed off-site (i.e., from home or alternate worksite), with the proper equipment and/or remote access to internal computer systems, and list them below. Indicate if a home computer can be used or if the organization requires issue of their computer to grant access to internal computer systems.

Function that might be Performed at Home or Off- site	Equipment / Software to Support Function	Remote Access to Network System Required (yes/no)	Use Home Computer (yes/no)	Access Already Granted (yes/no)

Alternate Work Schedules

In addition to staff working from alternate locations, consider assigning staff to alternate work shifts to support social distancing. In work areas where staff is confined to a small space, such as cubicles, consider assigning half of the staff to work from 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and the other half of the staff to work from 3:30 p.m. – midnight.

Identify functions that are performed by staff working in close proximity to each other.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify work shifts that are suitable for the organization.

Shift A _____

Shift B _____

Function	Position and Name of Staff	Shift A or B

Pandemic Continuity Checklist

- Organize continuity planning group
- Develop and review planning assumptions for pandemic
- Review essential functions
- Identify cross-training needs to ensure 3 to 5 persons can perform essential functions
- Identify functions that can be performed off-site
- Establish procedures associated with staff working off-site
- Identify orders of succession 5 to 6 deep for key personnel
- Determine the order of service location closures (for multiple locations)
- Identify staff who can work alternate work schedules.
- Establish alternate work schedules (i.e., staggered hours to support social distancing).
- Identify vendor or organization needs and contingency options
- Review human resource management guidance and policies
- Establish human resource procedures as needed
- Review and implement infection control measures
- Distribute and train staff on organization's plan

Plan Execution and Pandemic Phases

List the organization’s identified actions based on the pandemic phases. Identify and list additional actions as appropriate. The first stage has been completed as an example.

STAGE 1 – Suspected Human Outbreak Overseas	
ACTION	Develop, train, and exercise continuity and emergency plans
ACTION	Develop communications plan.
ACTION	Review resource inventories and sustainability of supply chains.
STAGE 2 – Confirmed Human Outbreak Overseas	
ACTION	
ACTION	
ACTION	
STAGE 3 – Widespread Outbreaks Overseas	
ACTION	
ACTION	
ACTION	
STAGE 4 – 1st Human-to-Human Case in North America	
ACTION	
ACTION	
ACTION	
STAGE 5 – Spread throughout U.S.	
ACTION	
ACTION	
ACTION	
STAGE 6 – Recovery/Preparation for Subsequent Waves	
ACTION	
ACTION	
ACTION	