

## The Four Phases of Continuity

**Phase I: Readiness and Preparedness** - includes all organization continuity readiness and preparedness activities including development, review, and revision of plans; TT&E; and risk management.

**Phase II: Activation** - includes the activation of organizational continuity plans and all associated procedures necessary to support the continued performance of essential functions.

**Phase III: Continuity Operations** - includes activities to continue essential functions, including communicating with supporting and supported organizations, customers, and stakeholders.

**Phase IV: Reconstitution** - is implemented when the emergency, or threat of emergency, is over, and organizations initiate operations for resuming normal business operations. Organizations can plan for reconstitution prior to activation of their continuity plan and concurrently with continuity operations.

### About FEMA NCP

NCP's vision is to be the Nation's center of excellence for government continuity planning, guidance, and operations. Our mission is to serve the public by protecting our Nation's constitutional form of government. To accomplish this, the COOP Division provides guidance, technical assistance, planning, training and workshop support to other DHS and FEMA Components, Federal departments and agencies, States, territories, Tribes and local government jurisdictions.

### Workshops Website

Continuity news, tools, guidance, and other useful resources can be found on our website at:  
<http://www.fema.gov/continuity-operations>:

### Continuity Updates

To receive free continuity e-bulletins, register at:  
<http://www.fema.gov/subscribe-receive-free-email-updates>

## Contact Information

Please contact HQ FEMA National Continuity Programs, Continuity of Operations Division for more information. For regional specific information, contact the appropriate Regional Continuity Coordinator from the list below.

FEMA Region	Location	Phone Number
FEMA HQ	National Capital Region	202.646.4145
Region I	CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT	617.832.4745
Region II	NJ, NY, PR, VI	212.680.8504
Region III	DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV	215.931.5223
Region IV	NC, SC, KY, TN, GA, AL, MS, FL	770.220.5614
Region V	MN, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH	312.408.5590
Region VI	LA, AK, OK, TX, NM	940.898.5131
Region VII	IA, KS, MO, NE	816.283.7082
Region VIII	CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY	303.235.4800
Region IX	AZ, CA, NV, HI, Guam, Pac. Is.	510.627.7009
Region X	AK, ID, OR, WA	425.482.4500

Regional offices can also be contacted via:  
[www.fema.gov/regional-operations](http://www.fema.gov/regional-operations)

1 (800) 621-FEMA (3362)

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# Continuity Programs Overview

Continuity of Operations



# FEMA

## What is Continuity of Operations?

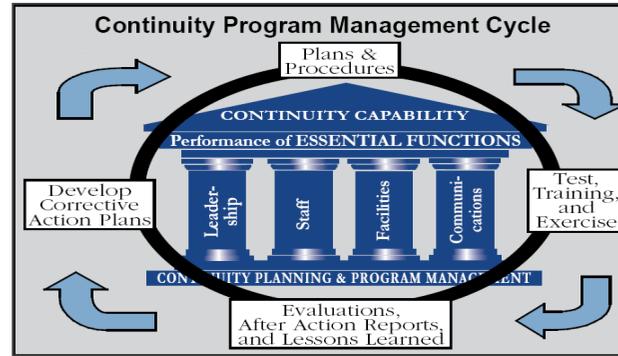
Today's threat environment and the potential for both notice and no-notice all hazards incidents have increased the need for continuity capabilities and planning across all levels of government and the private sector. Continuity planning is simply the good business practice of ensuring the execution of essential functions through all circumstances, and it is a fundamental responsibility of public and private entities responsible to their stakeholders. This includes plans and procedures that delineate essential functions, specify orders of succession and delegations of authority, provide for the safekeeping of essential records and databases, provide for continuity communications, and validate these capabilities through test, training, and exercise (TT&E) programs.

## What is the Goal of Continuity?

It is the policy of the United States to maintain a comprehensive and effective continuity capability. It is recommended that organizations incorporate continuity requirements into their daily operations to ensure seamless and immediate continuation of Essential Functions. Continuity planning will occur simultaneously with the development and execution of day-to-day organizational programs. The goal of continuity is to ensure resiliency and continued performance of an organization's essential functions under all conditions.

## Continuity Program Management

An organization's continuity capability – its ability to perform its essential functions continuously – rests upon key components and pillars. These pillars are leadership, staff, communications, and facilities. The key pillars are built on the foundation of continuity planning and program management. A standardized continuity program management cycle ensures consistency across all continuity programs and establishes consistent performance metrics, promulgates best practices, and facilitates consistent cross-organization continuity evaluations.



Organizations should use this continuity program management cycle to develop and implement their continuity programs.

## Elements of a Viable Continuity Capability

**Essential Functions:** the term “essential functions” refers to those functions an organization must continue in a continuity situation. These essential functions are then used to identify supporting activities and resources that must be included in the organization's continuity planning process.

**Orders of Succession:** orders of succession are a formal, sequential listing of organization positions (rather than specific names of individuals) that identify who is authorized to assume a particular leadership or management role under specific circumstances.

**Delegations of Authority:** identification, by position, of the authorities for making policy determinations and decisions at HQ, regional and field levels, and all other organizational locations. Generally, pre-determined delegations of authority will take effect when normal channels of direction have been disrupted and will lapse when these channels have been re-established.

**Continuity Facilities:** is a comprehensive term, referring to both continuity and devolution sites, places other than the organization's normal operating location, where essential functions are continued or resumed during a continuity event.

**Continuity Communications:** an integrated, comprehensive, interoperable information capability, that describes the data, systems, applications, technical standards, and underlying infrastructure required to ensure that organizations can execute their essential functions and under all circumstances.

**Essential Records:** information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity event.

**Human Resources:** provides guidance to all employees and specifically to employees who are activated by an organization to perform assigned duties during continuity operations.

**Tests, Training, and Exercises (TT&E):** measures to ensure that an organization's continuity plan is capable of supporting the continued execution of the organization's essential functions throughout the duration of a continuity event. TT&E activities are designed to familiarize, impart skills and ensure viability of continuity plans.

**Devolution:** requires the transition of roles and responsibilities for performance of essential functions through pre-authorized delegations of authority and responsibility. Devolution is a continuity option instead of or in conjunction with relocation in order to ensure the continued performance of essential functions.

**Reconstitution:** the process by which surviving and/or replacement organization personnel resume normal organization operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility.