

Every Florida Business Should Have a Disaster Preparedness Plan

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ORLANDO, Fla. – There is much that a business leader can do to prepare his or her organization for likely hazards. Many parts of the United States, including Florida, may be directly affected by tropical storms and hurricanes.

The Ready Business program helps business managers make a disaster plan before the June 1 start of the hurricane season. Learn more online at go.usa.gov/xQbam.

A business must be able to respond promptly, accurately and confidently in the hours and days after a disaster. Many different audiences—employees and their families, customers, news media, neighbors, business management directors and investors, suppliers and government officials—must be reached

with information specific to their interests and needs.

A business' handling of a disaster can positively or negatively affect public perception. Learn about developing a crisis communication plan online at go.usa.gov/xQb4e

It is important everyone associated with the business knows what to do when there is an emergency or disruption of business. Employees and others need training to become familiar with what is necessary

in case of an order to evacuate, lockdown or shelter in place. Learn about training online at go.usa.gov/xQb2c.

The Ready Business Hurricane Toolkit provides information on protecting employees and customers. Learn more online at go.usa.gov/xQbay.

When business is disrupted, it can cost money. It is important to have a business continuity plan in place. Lost revenues plus extra expenses mean reduced



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profits. Insurance does not cover all costs and cannot replace customers that defect to the competition. Learn about continuity plans online at go.usa.gov/xQbad

Hurricanes can be forecast well before they arrive, providing valuable time to implement a plan to protect a facility. Other severe weather events such as tornadoes provide far less time to put the plan into effect. Establish a plan so resources are on hand or quickly available to prepare for the storm.

Include a process for assessing damage, to salvage, to protect undamaged property and do cleanup.

Emergency Planning for Employees: Two-way communication is central before, during and after a disaster. Include emergency preparedness information in newsletters, on company intranet, periodic employee emails and other internal communications tools.

Consider setting up a telephone calling tree, an email alert or a call-in voice recording to communicate with employees in an emergency. Designate an out-of-town phone number where employees can leave an “I’m ok” message.

Talk to Co-Workers with Disabilities: If you have employees with disabilities or access and functional needs ask them what assistance, if any, they require. People with disabilities typically know what they will need in an emergency.

Ask about communication difficulties, physical limitations, equipment instructions and medication procedures. Identify people willing to help co-workers with disabilities and be sure they are able to handle the job. This is particularly important if someone needs to be lifted or carried. Plan how you will alert people who cannot hear an alarm or instructions. Be sure to engage people with disabilities in emergency planning.

FEMA’s Every Business Should Have a Plan is an in-depth plan for all emergencies. Learn more online at go.usa.gov/xQbaA. There is a shorter brochure with the same title available online at go.usa.gov/xQbae. Also, a printable poster available online at go.usa.gov/xQbCq.

For more Hurricane Irma recovery information, visit www.FEMA.gov/IrmaFL and www.FloridaDisaster.org/info/irma



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FEMA's mission: Helping people before, during and after disasters.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

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