

Exercise Starter Kit for Tabletop Exercise on Federal Mission Resilience and Continuity

Use this Exercise Starter Kit (ESK) with sample documents to conduct your own tabletop exercises (TTXs) on Federal Mission Resilience and Continuity.

About the Exercise Starter Kit

FEMA maintains a series of ESKs as part of the [National Exercise Program](#). These kits help organizations facilitate their own exercises, such as workshops and TTXs, to examine their readiness for a range of threats and hazards. The kit includes a facilitator/evaluator guide, sample conduct slides, a situation manual and exercise evaluation guides (EEGs). Customize the ESK materials to develop an actionable roadmap for a TTX guided by a facilitator within your own organization, tailored to your unique needs and missions.

This ESK helps organizations across the Federal Executive Branch prompt conversations in a TTX format around planning considerations for a continuity event. The kit's considerations and discussion questions focus on Federal Executive Branch Mission Resilience and Continuity, building on continuity principles and relevant guidance in Presidential Policy Directive 40, [Federal Continuity Directive 1](#) and [Federal Continuity Directive 2](#).

This TTX provides a scenario and framework to assess your current status and begin planning for a cyberattack on critical infrastructure. Each organization should establish unique criteria to defend against a cyberattack.

Suggested discussion questions focus on three themes: Continuity of Operations, Devolution, and Reconstitution. The desired outcome is an understanding of gaps and potential mitigation strategies in a department's or agency's ability to implement continuity measures in response to a cyberattack that impacts critical infrastructure.

Using the Exercise Starter Kit Materials

Review Relevant Materials

1. Facilitator/Evaluator Guide
2. Sample Conduct Slides
3. Situation Manual
4. Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs)



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Suggested Tabletop Objectives

- Identify how continuity planning is integrated throughout all existing plans, policies and procedures.
- Review the following:
 - Existing general agency operations plans, policies and/or practices;
 - Existing continuity of operations plans, policies and/or practices;
 - Existing devolution plans, policies and/or practices; and
 - Existing reconstitution plans, policies and/or practices.
- For each, discuss the decisions and actions to implement these plans, policies and practices and identify gaps and challenges with their current structure and contents.
- Identify potential solutions or mitigation strategies, both short- and long-term, for identified issues.

Tabletop Exercise Design Considerations

- Add, tailor or augment the suggested questions in the sample exercise materials as appropriate for your organization.
- Determine the TTX's duration and structure based on your organization's internal needs. The sample materials are designed for a half-day in person or virtual TTX; however, dividing content into multiple tabletop sessions may be a better approach for your organization.
- Consider building a team with expertise across relevant disciplines (e.g., continuity, leadership, information technology, human capital, management, facilities and other key stakeholders as appropriate) to help plan the TTX sessions and participate in the discussions.

Additional Resources

The following webpages, in addition to websites for relevant state and local authorities, provide additional resources to ensure your TTX reflects the most recent developments and guidance:

- Presidential Policy Directive 40
- Federal Continuity Directive 1: <https://www.gpo.gov/docs/default-source/accessibility-privacy-coop-files/January2017FCD1-2.pdf>
- Federal Continuity Directive 2: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1499702987348-c8eb5e5746bfc5a7a3cb954039df7fc2/FCD-2June132017.pdf>