Preparedness in a Pandemic Workshop Exercise Starter Kit

Facilitator Guide | May 2021



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Preparedness in a Pandemic Workshop — Facilitator Guide

The nation continues to face the challenge of preparing to respond to additional disasters while operating in a COVID-19 environment. Although the operating environment has changed, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mission of helping people before, during, and after disasters remains the same. Federal, state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) officials, private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) partnerships remain integral to helping and supporting disaster survivors. As we continue to respond and recover from COVID-19, the framework of a locally executed, state-managed and federally supported approach to incident stabilization remains.

FEMA developed this Exercise Starter Kit (ESK) with sample documents for your organization/jurisdiction to use to conduct your own workshop exercise on preparedness in a pandemic. This facilitator guide provides planning considerations and discussion questions for internal conversations and decisions around conducting operations following an incident in a pandemic to develop an actionable roadmap tailored to your organization’s/jurisdiction’s unique needs and missions. The kit also includes sample conduct slides and a placemat.

Suggested discussion questions build on “[COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance- All-Hazards Incidents Response and Recovery](https://www.fema.gov/media-collection/covid-19-pandemic-operational-guidance-all-hazards)”. Links to additional resources to help you customize your exercise can be found in the “Appendix A. Additional Resources” of that document.

**Review this document and tailor the material as necessary to meet the needs of your specific organization/jurisdiction.** Update the content that is [bracketed, red font, highlighted in yellow] for individual deliveries of this workshop.

Submit your After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) or exercise results following the use of this ESK, as well as any feedback concerning the use of this ESK, to the HSEEP inbox at [HSEEP@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:HSEEP@fema.dhs.gov).

Workshop Conduct Recommendations

* This workshop is intended to be guided by a facilitator and is effective both in person or via remote delivery (webinar or conference call).
* Use this facilitator guide in conjunction with the associated **sample conduct slides and placemat**.
* Items in this facilitator guide that are *highlighted in blue italics* do not appear on the **sample conduct slides**. The blue items are directions to facilitator(s) and additional questions or topics that may help navigate participant discussions.
* Update the slide numbers in this guide after the conduct slides are final (with the blue instruction slides removed).
* These sample materials are designed for in-person or virtual workshop that can conducted in multiple sessions. Your organization’s/jurisdiction’s needs should determine the workshop duration and structure.
* Options for flexible delivery of this workshop include:
  + A streamlined session that eliminates areas that other planning efforts have addressed.
  + One session, either a plenary session or incorporating breakout groups, to address the full workshop content.
  + An overview meeting for all participants, followed by smaller team meetings organized by focus area. Once all team meetings have been completed, hold a concluding plenary session to share and deconflict plans for each focus area.
  + An overview meeting for all participants followed by a series of plenary sessions by focus area.
* Recommended participants for this workshop may include emergency managers, public safety representatives, healthcare professionals, public health officials, psychosocial support teams, education professionals, security professionals, continuity managers, human resources, facilities managers, budget/financial officers, contracting personnel, legal counsel, energy sector partners, critical infrastructure and private sector partners, other leadership and staff, and other organization/jurisdiction participants as appropriate.
* Before the workshop, participants should review “COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance - All-Hazard Incidents Response and Recovery.” “Appendix A. Additional Resources” of that document provides links to additional resources to help you customize your exercise.
* Once the conduct slides and placemat have been customized and approved, send them to participants in advance along with the Operational Guidance. This helps familiarize participants with the questions to prepare them for the discussion. Questions can be distributed to different groups of staff to address each of the discussion themes.
* REMINDER: Any changes to the sample conduct slides must also be made to this facilitator guide.

Facilitator Instruction Table

*NOTE: Add slide numbers after the conduct slides are finalized.*

Exercise Overview

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Slide # | Time | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert time] | **Title Slide** |  |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert time] | **Welcome and Introductions** | When participants are ready:   * Provide initial remarks. * Explain that the purpose of this workshop is to facilitate a discussion within SLTT governments around preparedness, response and recovery considerations during COVID-19. * Introduce yourself as the facilitator and explain that you will help keep the discussion focused on workshop objectives and explore all issues within the time allotted. * Explain that this ESK helps SLTT governments evaluate current all-hazards response and recovery capabilities during COVID-19. * Introduce any additional speakers and allow time for welcoming remarks. * With small participant groups, allow time for participants to introduce themselves. * If you are conducting this workshop remotely, address specific protocols (e.g., muting microphones when not speaking, using a “raise hand” feature) to provide an effective virtual meeting. * If you are conducting this workshop in person, address specific protocols for how you recognize participants to speak (e.g., recognizing raised hands, proceeding in a certain order). * Indicate time limits as necessary for timely, relevant and balanced discussion among all participants. |
| [Insert slide #] | [Insert Time] | **Workshop Schedule** | Briefly go over the Workshop Schedule  **Workshop Schedule**   * Welcome and Introductions * Workshop Schedule * Workshop Overview * Current Situation * Module 1: Preparedness Considerations * Facilitated Discussion * Break * Module 2: Response Considerations * Facilitated Discussion * Break * Module 3: Recovery Considerations * Facilitated Discussion * Developing an Action Plan * Closing Remarks |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Workshop Overview** | Provide an overview of the workshop:  **Purpose:** Provide [your organization/jurisdiction name] an opportunity to discuss and evaluate current preparedness, response and recovery capabilities while operating in a COVID-19 environment.  Explain that the Preparedness in a Pandemic ESK provides SLTT partners with preparedness solutions to discuss internally, as well as considerations, action items and discussion questions for evaluation of their preparedness capabilities while operating during COVID-19. Planners need to remain flexible to continually reassess workplace conditions, the implications of new public health recommendations and additional guidance.  **Scope:**   * This is a [Insert exercise duration] discussion-based workshop. * Following an overview of the current situation, participants engage in a discussion based on “COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance – All-Hazards Incidents Response and Recovery” * Discussion questions are organized based around three discussion themes: **Preparedness, Response** and **Recovery Considerations**.   Explain that the Preparedness in a Pandemic ESK provides SLTT partners the opportunity to validate capabilities identified during preparedness, response and recovery.  Participants in this workshop discuss questions developed in the context of COVID-19 to thoroughly review their current all-hazards plans.  Explain that today’s workshop validates current capabilities and discusses the challenges you face as your organization prepares for, responds to and recovers from a simultaneous event (e.g., hurricane and pandemic).  Ask whether participants have any questions. |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Workshop Objectives** | Review the workshop objectives.  **Workshop Objectives**   1. Discuss the challenges of conducting preparedness, response and recovery operations during COVID-19. 2. Determine if current preparedness, response and recovery capabilities are sufficient to support simultaneous disasters, one being COVID-19. 3. Identify how you may need to adapt plans, policies and practices to support scalable and flexible operations. 4. Develop an action plan that defines the next steps required to adapt response and recovery plans.   ***Customizer Note:*** *Add, tailor or augment suggested objectives as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.* |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Workshop Guidelines** | Review the workshop guidelines with participants. Tell participants that identifying issues is less valuable than making suggestions and recommending actions that could improve efforts; problem-solving is the focus.  **Workshop Guidelines**   * Our desired outcome from this workshop is [Insert organization/jurisdiction-specific outcome(s).] * This is an open, no-fault environment – varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected. * Base your responses on current guidance and plans, policies, procedures, capabilities and resources. * Consider different approaches and suggest improvements. * There is no “hidden agenda,” nor are there any trick questions. * [Insert additional guidelines as appropriate.] |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Current Situation** | Review current situation and status of [Insert the organization/jurisdiction].  **Current Situation**   * [Refer to the most recent information regarding the pandemic. * [Provide specific information regarding the status of jurisdictions or areas where your organization has facilities, as appropriate.] * [Provide specific information regarding the status of your organization.]   Explain that FEMA released “COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance- All-Hazards Incidents Response and Recovery” to:   * Help emergency managers and public health officials prepare for disasters while continuing to respond to and recover from coronavirus; * Outline how FEMA plans to adapt response and recovery operations to the realities and risks of COVID-19 to:   + *Prioritize life safety, life sustainment and workforce protection;*   + *Maintain the delivery of FEMA’s programs and help to solve complex problems by using whole-of-community disaster assistance to the highest level possible; and*   + *Allow SLTT emergency managers to prepare and plan accordingly based on FEMA’s operational posture and create a shared understanding of expectations between FEMA and SLTTs.* |

Module 1: Preparedness Considerations

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Slide # | **Time** | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| [Insert slide #] | [Insert Time] | **Module 1: Preparedness Considerations** | Explain that you are starting the workshop with preparedness considerations. |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (1/3)** | Explain that you are starting to discuss preapredness considerations.  Ask participants to engage in the facilitated discussion portion of this workshop:   * Review existing plans, policies and practices. * Discuss the decisions and actions to implement these plans, policies and actions. * Identify gaps and challenges and discuss potential solutions and mitigation strategies.   Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  Explain that this section focuses on preparedness considerations as outlined in Appendix B of the Operational Guidance.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (1 of 3)**   1. Has your jurisdiction reviewed and modified your emergency operations plan to align with COVID-19 guidance, to include social distancing limitations, mask requirements and travel restrictions? 2. Does your emergency operations plan consider potential impacts to your supply chain, a reduction of government services and fiscal impacts to the jurisdiction due to lost revenue because of COVID-19 impacts on businesses? 3. Have you reviewed your jurisdiction’s orders concerning any potential stay-at-home orders?    1. Do any legal considerations require you to adjust your law enforcement, fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), or emergency operations? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (2/3)** | Review the following workshop exercise discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (2 of 3)**   1. Have you coordinated updates to plans with the whole community planning partners in your jurisdiction (e.g., public/private sectors, community-based service and advocacy organizations, NGOs, faith-based organizations, nonprofits and individuals and families) to equitably distribute information, resources and services? 2. Have you reviewed and modified your plans to promote equity in a COVID-19 environment, including considerations for individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency and others with access and functional needs? 3. Have you reviewed and updated your continuity plans to successfully continue essential functions and tasks with little to no interruption in a COVID-19 environment? 4. Have you updated your resource management inventory to make response personnel available to support non-COVID-19 incident response? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (3/3)** | Review the following Workshop exercise discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Review and Modify (3 of 3)**   1. Have you reviewed and updated your continuity plans based on COVID-19 to include:    1. Continuation of essential functions and tasks with little to no interruption?    2. Business analysis to identify mission-essential personnel and potential shortfalls or limitations?    3. Orders of succession for key personnel and leadership?    4. Delegations of authority for critical tasks and decision making?    5. Alternate sites and capabilities to enable continuity of operations (COOP), to include telework? 2. Have you reviewed the limitations that COVID-19 might put on current mutual aid agreements and the available resources of your own and neighboring jurisdictions? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Consider and Identify (1/2)** | Review the following workshop exercise discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Consider and Identify (1 of 2)**   1. Do the impacts of COVID-19 within your, and neighboring, jurisdictions warrant the revision of mutual agreements with new partners? 2. Have COVID-19 response and recovery efforts identifed new partners, resources, planning shortfalls or solutions to include in emergency operating plans and annexes, including private sector partners in grocery, fuel, home mitigation supplies and medical supplies? 3. Has a pre-disaster recovery plan been written for your state, local or tribal jurisdiction? 4. Have you assessed your personnel requirements and planning for contingency staffing? 5. Have you determined alternate communication capabilities, information technology support, and remote platforms to operate your EOC virtually, including accessibility and equity considerations? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Consider and Identify (2/2)** | Review the following workshop exercise discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Consider and Identify (2 of 2)**   1. Have you considered cross training for emergency management roles and responsibilities to support concurrent disasters with extended timelines and limited resources? 2. Have you coordinated with public health officials to identify guidelines for workforce response? 3. Have you considered incorporating remote platforms to overcome the challenges of limited in-person interactions? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Message and Engage (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer and Facilitator Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Message and Engage (1 of 2)**   1. Have you developed and disseminated accessible, multilingual and culturally appropriate messaging in alternative formats, to:    1. Inform the public of changes in expected services and procedures (e.g., changes to shelter locations, evacuation routes, available transformation methods)?    2. Address increased personal preparedness measures, encourage your community to evaluate personal emergency plans and familiarize themselves with guidance from their local jurisdictions?    3. Communicate to employees and stakeholders? 2. Have you updated pre-scripted messages to incorporate the current recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) posture for disaster survivors (e.g., recommend wearing a mask) based on CDC and/or local health guidance? 3. Have you considered how to coordinate state and local messaging? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Message and Engage (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Message and Engage (2 of 2)**   1. Have you met with leaders from underrepresented, multilingual and cultural groups to discuss possible barriers and solutions to effective COVID-19 management in disaster situations? 2. Have you advised individuals and households to track their critical financial, medical, and household information by using the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit ([EFFAK](https://www.fema.gov/media-collection/emergency-financial-first-aid-kit)) tool as a guide?    * Point out that additional information on the [EFFAK tool](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/96123) is available on the FEMA website. 3. Have you engaged with public health officials to identify guidelines for workforce response in a COVID-19 environment and to plan for public health support for evacuations and sheltering? 4. Have you identified the essential workforce necessary to continue critical infrastructure viability?    1. Did you use the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency advisory list as a guide? 5. Have you engaged nonprofits and small businesses in your jurisdiction to discuss how to respond to and recover from a natural hazard event in a COVID-19 environment? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Break**  [Remove or adjust timing as needed] | Explain that you are now taking a [Insert the number of minutes] break and attendees should return by [Insert time]. |

Module 2: Response Considerations

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| Slide # | **Time** | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Module 2: Response Considerations** |  |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Response (1/5)** | Explain that you are starting to discuss response considerations.  Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  Explain to participants that this section focuses on response considerations as outlined inAppendix C of the Operational Guidance.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Response (1 of 5)**   1. Have you purchased and stockpiled appropriate PPE for personnel required to be in the field, including shelter staff? 2. Have you reviewed and modified your logistics contracts to confirm you have [adequate PPE](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html) and necessary commodities during response operations, especially if available resources have been allocated for COVID-19 response? 3. Have you determined if you need to update vendor contracts and agreements to procure and deliver supplies and equipment in case of a shortage? 4. Are any resources that you need for a potential response currently unavailable or in short supply? Have you reached to your [Emergency Management Assistance Compact](https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/EMACoverviewForNRF.pdf) (EMAC) or private sector partners for assistance and to discuss resource availability based on existing contracts and mutual aid agreements? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Response (2/5)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Response (2 of 5)**   1. Have you confirmed your access to [HURREVAC](http://hurrevac.com/), FEMA’s web‑based storm tracking and decision support tool, to support operational decisions? 2. Have you modified your evacuation plan to account for:    1. Limited travel options and hotel availability; increased need for health and medical evacuations; financial limitations of the general public; and additional impacts from COVID-19?    2. The extra time to evacuate using mass transit modes (e.g., buses) given the need for social distancing?    3. The resources needed to evacuate people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, including but not limited to the availability of paratransit services, given the need for social distancing? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Response (3/5)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Response (3 of 5)**   1. Have you considered using geographic information system (GIS) platform planning tools, to include FEMA’s Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool ([RAPT](https://fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=90c0c996a5e242a79345cdbc5f758fc6)), to identify population characteristics and infrastructure locations that may be impacted to inform evacuation and shelter in place planning? 2. Have you considered increasing the membership of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and Medical Reserve Corps?    1. Do you have a mechanism to conduct remote recruiting and training? ​ 3. Do your continuity plans address how to respond if your agency or its partners have degraded capabilities due to COVID-19? 4. Does your plan address how to integrate FEMA personnel and/or federal partners into your response operations? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Response (4/5)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Response Considerations (4 of 5)**   1. Have you reached to your critical infrastructure partners to assess their current ability to respond to an emergency? 2. Have you reached to your private sector partners to assess their current ability to respond to an emergency? 3. Have you established a Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) to coordinate and collaborate with the private sector and the National BEOC? 4. If you do not have a BEOC, have you identified personnel to coordinate with the private sector (e.g., address questions and concerns)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Response (5/5)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Response Considerations (5 of 5)**   1. Do you have a designated point of contact and information exchange platform to coordinate with critical infrastructure and private sector partners?    1. If so, how often do you receive updates on their operational status? 2. Have you considered using (or expanding) aerial imagery and other remote sensing capabilities for situational awareness and to conduct damage assessments? 3. Does your emergency operations center have enough IT personnel and bandwidth to support increased numbers of remote emergency responders? Are they trained to work remotely and support remote work for extended periods on multiple disasters? 4. Does diverting resources for COVID-19 efforts alter planning goals and objectives? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Safety and Security (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Safety and Security (1 of 2)**   1. Do your contingency plans address potential reductions in law enforcement’s availability to support on-site security? 2. Have you considered COOP plans and ways to deliver essential government functions equitably in a COVID-19 environment if conditions are further degraded by another disaster event? 3. Have you reviewed your evacuation and sheltering plans in light of pandemic considerations for:    1. Correctional facilities?    2. Nursing homes and long-term care facilities? 4. How do you manage re-entry procedures given the constraints and impacts of a pandemic (e.g., social distancing)?    1. What agencies need to be involved? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Safety and Security (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Safety and Security (2 of 2)**   1. Have you performed a hazard assessment that considers the hierarchy or controls, including administrative, engineering, and PPE controls? 2. Have you confirmed that your safety and health plans comply with 29 C.F.R. 1904, 1910, 1926 and 1960? 3. Have you coordinated with pass-through, host and sending jurisdictions to support and execute potential evacuations to accommodate COVID-19 considerations? 4. What special operations teams (e.g., Urban Search and Rescue, HazMat) are still mission capable? Have they adopted the current CDC guidelines for PPE and training? 5. Have you identified potential sites for disaster facilities, including responder housing and quarters, that are consistent with CDC guidance and social distancing requirements?    1. If needed, have you coordinated leasing requirements? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Food, Water, Shelter (1/1)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Food, Water, Shelter (1 of 1)**   1. Have you coordinated with public health officials in your jurisdiction regarding evacuation and shelter safety, infection control and planning? 2. Have you coordinated with NGOs to discuss changes in receipt, distribution, and delivery of commodities and services (e.g., food, donations) to incorporate any social distancing limitations? 3. Have you assessed your eligibility to apply for assistance to [purchase and distribute food](https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2020/04/12/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-purchase-and-distribution-food-eligible-public) in response to COVID-19? 4. Have you identified issues and status updates in supply chain and logistics for food and water and communicated them to appropriate partners for action? 5. Are shelter personnel monitoring cleaning, disinfection and sanitizing schedules? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (1/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (1 of 4)**   1. Do you have an alternate staffing or recruitment strategy for healthcare professionals in the event of a reduction of personnel availability? 2. Have you identified alternate vaccine distribution sites? 3. Have you addressed issues with supply chain and logistics of vaccine distribution? 4. Do your healthcare, alternate care and long-term care facilities have adequate, functional and fueled emergency generators and a plan to keep emergency power systems operational during an emergency to reduce patient movement? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (2/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (2 of 4)**   1. Do your triage protocols and procedures facilitate efficient patient processing to reduce person-to-person contact, increase social distancing and reduce the amount of time patients are in the triage area? 2. Have you identified additional in-patient locations in the event of patient overflow that accommodate the need for physical separation in a COVID-19 environment? 3. Have you updated personal, family or staff care plans for sustained emergency operations? 4. Have you coordinated with multidisciplinary psychosocial support teams (e.g., social workers, mental health professionals, counselors, interpreters, patient service coordinators, clergy) to provide virtual support to patients, families and medical personnel? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (3/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (3 of 4)**   1. Do you have sufficient IT infrastructure and support to accommodate virtual coordination? 2. Does your community have an established, streamlined process for information delivery and exchange between hospital administration, personnel and, if required, governmental officials to facilitate situational awareness? 3. Can your mass casualty management plans accommodate an increase in fatalities?    1. Have you identified additional contingencies for mortuary affairs management in a COVID‑19 environment? 4. Have you encouraged hospitals and medical centers to develop and maintain an updated inventory of PPE and other equipment?    1. Do these centers have a shortage-alert system with identified and socialized triggers and associated actions to mitigate potential issues? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (4/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Health and Medical (4 of 4)**   1. Do you present key messages to patients, personnel and the public in a variety of accessible formats (e.g., audio, visual, sign language, braille, multiple languages) for equal access to information and other resources? 2. Do you have coordinated plans in place to evacuate or shelter patients in place in federal medical stations and alternate care sites in your jurisdiction? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Energy (Power and Fuel) (1/1)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Energy (Power and Fuel) (1 of 1)**   1. Do energy sector partners have adequate staffing to generate, transmit and distribute power and fuel to the community in the event of sick workers or family care needs? 2. How long would it take to restore power in a COVID-19 environment, considering the potential for reduced available staffing? 3. Are damage assessments needed in this response?    1. Can they be conducted virtually?    2. How can your agency/jurisdiction limit the personnel required to allow for social distancing if damage assessments are needed? 4. Does your plan for potential emergency energy infrastructure repairs account for pandemic social distancing or PPE needs? 5. Have changes in [commercial trucking procedures](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_covid_bp_commerical-truckers-supply-chain.pdf) affected your fuel distribution plan? How do you coordinate with representatives of the commercial trucking industry to meet your needs? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications (1/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications (1 of 4)**   1. Have you and your partners recently tested primary, alternate, contingency and emergency communications capabilities? 2. Have you evaluated your ability to send public announcements through means that are inclusive of those who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or without speech or persons with limited English proficiency?    1. Have you confirmed that the systems are fully operational (e.g., mass notification systems, internet, radio, television, cable systems)? 3. Have you tested all alert, warning, and notification systems in accordance with Federal, state, and local guidance, ordinance or policy? 4. Have you verified the number of Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) alerting authorities within your jurisdiction?    1. Have you identified any alerting authority gaps? Were they closed? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications (2/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications (2 of 4)**   1. Is a system in place to collect and share data to support decision making and help develop a common operating picture for multiple response operations? 2. Have you considered converting town hall meetings and press conferences to accessible and multilingual virtual platforms and making provisions for accessibility, such as captioning, American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation or video remote interpreting (VRI) services? 3. Are you requiring masks (if appropriate) and social distancing if town hall meetings are in person? Are you making provisions for accessibility, such as assistive listening devices or ASL interpretation? 4. Are 9-1-1 dispatch and public safety answering points available to people in need? Have you provided information on accessing 3-1-1 and/or 2-1-1, mental/behavioral health hotlines, animal control and other 24-hour community service help lines to control the flow of incoming calls? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications (3/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications (3 of 4)**   1. Can you implement text-to-9-1-1 to improve services for people who have hearing or speech disabilities? 2. Do you have plans to increase your [9-1-1 call center’s capacity](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_covid_bp-911-centers.pdf), including to respond to people who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or without speech or persons with limited English proficiency? Have you considering establishing a coordinated call center system to divert non-emergency calls from the 9‑1‑1 system? 3. Have you considered if increased use of mobile or internet bandwidth could disrupt your emergency communications? Can responders receive prioritized access to dedicated bandwidth? Do responders have backup communications? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications (4/4)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications (4 of 4)**   1. Do you have accessible, multilingual, and culturally appropriate:    1. Pre-scripted messages for communicating evacuation and shelter-in-place updates that include social distancing measures due to COVID-19 considerations?    2. [Communications materials](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fphp%2Fpublic-health-communicators-get-your-community-ready.html) that address all-hazards preparedness for your communities while under the threat of COVID-19? 2. Have you determined if you should publish guidance for non‑essential businesses and unemployed workers on mitigating economic impacts due to COVID-19 (e.g., Small Business Administration support)? 3. Are banking and financial services available? If financial services are disrupted, how long does it take to restore them? Is the disruption due to a lack of power/energy, overload of the system or another factor? Is it possible to expand the bandwidth for financial service applications and technology temporarily? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Transportation (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Transportation (1 of 2)**   1. Do you have capabilities to screen for COVID-19 on highways/roadways during an evacuation? Have you accounted for additional time needed for checkpoints during an evacuation? 2. Does your jurisdiction have the resources necessary to re‑establish critical mass transportation hubs (e.g., airports, train stations, local mass transit stations) under social distancing guidelines? 3. How long after an incident can you begin maritime transportation(if applicable) while maintaining procedures to detect COVID‑19? 4. If pipelines (if applicable) that impact transportation services are damaged, do you have access to resources to repair them (understanding that PPE may be in short supply due to COVID‑19)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Transportation (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Transportation (2 of 2)**   1. Do you have accessible, multilingual and culturally appropriate updated messaging on social distancing during COVID-19 to share with the public during an evacuation to promote healthy behavior? 2. What mechanisms are in place to increase public transportation, including accessible buses and vans, if economic impacts preclude citizens from self-evacuating, to include paratransit for individuals with disabilities? 3. Do your facilities and jurisdictions have adequate transportation agreements and legal privacy protections to accommodate medical evacuations within required timelines? Do they have patient tracking mechanisms to account for separations resulting from COVID-19 operations and evacuations? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Hazardous Materials (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Hazardous Materials (1 of 2)**   1. Have you engaged critical infrastructure and private sector partners to coordinate accessible, multilingual and culturally appropriate messaging, either through your local emergency planning committee or directly, to confirm their hazardous materials storage facilities are secure and their response plans are updated to reflect the current COVID-19 environment? 2. Are your hazardous or toxic materials plans and messaging consistent with your COVID-19 procedures and messaging? Have you reviewed your messaging for a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incident? 3. How are you meaningfully involving minority communities and low-income populations in developing and implementing policy decisions impacting the environment during response and recovery? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Hazardous Materials (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Hazardous Materials (2 of 2)**   1. How are you reaching out to the [Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program](https://www.fema.gov/radiological-emergency-preparedness-program) (REPP) (if applicable) or any hazardous and radiological materials groups to determine constraints and limitations on facilities during a pandemic? 2. Do you have the materials and resources needed for a hazardous or toxic materials incident? Have you identified any supply chain issues with procurement? 3. How are you conducting site assessments, especially in areas with hazardous or radiological material, given COVID-19 considerations (e.g., potential staff limitations, social distancing)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Break**  [Remove or adjust timing as needed] | Explain that you are now taking a [Insert the number of minutes] break and attendees should return by [Insert time]. |

Module 3: Recovery Considerations

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| Slide # | **Time** | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Module 3: Recovery Considerations** | Explain that you are starting to discuss recovery consideration |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Leadership and Authority (1/2)** | Explain that you are starting to discuss recovery considerations.  Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  Explain that this section focuses on recovery considerations as outlined in Appendix D of the Operational Guidance.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Leadership and Authority (1 of 2)**   1. Who are the lead agencies and individuals managing and coordinating disaster recovery efforts? Are the same agencies and individuals in charge of COVID-19 response actions? Has a pre-disaster recovery plan been written for your state, local or tribal jurisdiction that might include this information? 2. Have you reviewed delegations of authority and lines of succession for leadership and personnel positions critical to operations? 3. How do COVID-19 response actions and leadership intersect with disaster recovery actions and leadership? What is the coordination mechanism to synchronize both efforts? 4. Does the recovery unified coordination group include relevant health care officials? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Leadership and Authority (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Leadership and Authority (2 of 2)**   1. Who has the authority to make formal decisions in your jurisdiction related to disaster recovery? 2. Does the health department need to certify that projects or locations comply with social distancing and other public health directives before their use? 3. Can your jurisdiction pass ordinances, waivers and policies in absentia given the constraints of the COVID-19 environment (e.g., social distancing)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Staffing (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Staffing (1 of 2)**   1. Does your continuity plan address staffing requirements to successfully manage and implement recovery efforts throughout a COVID-19 environment with municipal or jurisdictional personnel, concurrent with the disaster? 2. How do you manage building and housing inspections and re‑occupancy procedures, given the constraints and impacts of COVID-19 (e.g., social distancing)? What agencies should be involved? 3. Are human resource policies and processes consistent with public health recommendations and state and federal legal requirements? Do you need to establish new policies (e.g., sick leave, scheduling, control measures) or continue them after COVID-19? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Staffing (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Staffing (2 of 2)**   1. Do you have a reconstitution plan with a prioritized order of return for personnel after COVID-19 or a comprehensive remote work/telework strategy? 2. Do your mutual aid partners have adequate personnel to support your efforts in addition to their COVID-19 response efforts? Do you have enough personnel to share personnel with other impacted jurisdictions? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (1/3)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (1 of 3)**   1. What is your process for [coordinating messaging](https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/phcomm-get-your-community-ready.html) related to COVID-19 and disaster recovery efforts? 2. Do you have a process to synchronize messages between SLTT jurisdictions? 3. Who is responsible for releasing information to the public within the jurisdiction? Is this the same individual(s) releasing information related to COVID-19? 4. Which community organizations or private sector partners can help amplify important recovery information to help realize whole of community recovery outcomes? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (2/3)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (2 of 3)**   1. How do you determine critical vs. noncritical recovery functions? 2. How does social distancing impact your recovery coordination structure? How do agencies and organizations coordinate efforts? Do you have a web platform that supports virtual coordination? 3. Do you have any pre-positioned contracts for disaster housing-related services? Have you confirmed that these contracts are still valid and enforceable in the COVID-19 environment? 4. What health and safety protocols can impact the return to, and occupancy of, homes and buildings? Who are the relevant agencies involved in making those determinations? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (3/3)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Communications and Engagement (3 of 3)**   1. How do you engage potential public assistance (PA), individual assistance (IA) or Hazard Mitigation (HM) applicants virtually, including establishing communications and information sharing platforms? 2. What accessible communications channels have been identified to relay community disaster information? 3. Does your jurisdiction have a website or social media presence to convey disaster-related information? If not, will one be established? Who establishes, maintains and updates it? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (1/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (1 of 7)**   1. Can you manage recovery functions as stipulated in your recovery plan following the constraints and impacts of COVID-19 (e.g., potential reduced staffing, budgetary shortfalls)? 2. Do you have current and accurate information on COVID-19 cases and infection rates by census block or other scales that are most pertinent to your community? 3. What analytic capabilities do you have to assess disaster impacts, vulnerable populations (i.e., protected populations, race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, age, disability, sex, religion and economic status), systemic risk, and other issues necessary for timely and data informed decision support? Have you considered using [RAPT](http://fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=90c0c996a5e242a79345cdbc5f758fc6) for data‑driven decision support? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (2/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (2 of 7)**   1. How do you maximize community input and buy-in for your recovery efforts? Can you hold effective public meetings while maintaining social distance? Do you have mechanisms to reach isolated or underserved communities? 2. Do you have required software licenses to conduct large-scale public engagements remotely? What is your single meeting participant capacity? Do you have trained personnel to operate these systems? 3. How do you provide individuals with disabilities with services in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act](https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm) (ADA) and CDC guidance? 4. How do you provide people experiencing homelessness with services in accordance with CDC guidance, while also safeguarding the health and safety of emergency responders and recovery personnel? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (3/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (3 of 7)**   1. What portion of the community has received housing assistance from COVID-19-related funding? Are these populations at increased risk from housing displacement following a natural disaster? 2. Have you considered how personnel shortfalls may impact your shelter operations? 3. How do social distancing considerations affect current shelter capacity? 4. Do sheltering and feeding plans incorporate social distancing guidelines and PPE requirements outlined by the [National Mass Care Strategy](https://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/category/covid-19/)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (4/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (4 of 7)**   1. Have you confirmed that [public shelters you normally rely upon are available](https://www.ametsoc.org/ams/assets/File/aboutams/statements_pdf/StatementTornadoShelteringPandemics.pdf) (not only those owned publicly or that are open to the general public) in the aftermath of an incident (e.g., have schools been removed from use or are they being used as vaccine distribution sites?)? 2. Have you considered identifying additional shelter locations, including in areas near public transportation and/or in places near to low-income communities, to reduce shelter density and promote social distancing? 3. Have you considered and planned for Special Needs Shelter for individuals who, during periods of evacuation or emergency, may require shelter assistance due to physical impairment, mental impairment, cognitive impairment or sensory disability? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (5/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (5 of 7)**   1. Have you explored options such as non-congregate sheltering (e.g., dormitories, hotels)? If so, have you developed a list of participating facilities, including in areas near public transportation and/or in places near to low-income communities? 2. How can you establish a mechanism for non-congregate sheltering partners (e.g., hotels) to indicate occupant capacity and availability? 3. How can you establish contractual agreements and rates with potential non-congregate shelter partners (e.g., hotels)? 4. Considering current sheltering options, do individuals with access and functional needs, including individuals with disabilities, require additional sheltering resources and assistance in a COVID-19 environment? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (6/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (6 of 7)**   1. Have you evaluated the capabilities of whole-community partners to operate or support mass care/sheltering in a COVID-19 environment? 2. Do your registration, health screening and isolation care areas provide adequate physical separation (e.g., areas for potential temperature screening)? 3. Have you included temperature and health screening in your [screening protocol](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Guidance-for-Gen-Pop-Disaster-Shelters-COVID19.pdf) upon arrival at mass care shelters? Do you have adequate temperature screening equipment and PPE to support these protocols (including survivors, response staff and healthcare professionals)? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (7/7)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Recovery Planning (7 of 7)**   1. Have you included COVID-19 testing in your screening protocol for mass care shelters if an evacuee meets criteria (e.g., symptoms, known exposure)? Do you have adequate PPE and testing kits to support these protocols (for survivors, response staff and healthcare professionals)? 2. Have you considered how to process individuals that can provide proof of vaccination when accessing the facility? Do you require temperature screens and testing for those that are fully vaccinated? 3. Do you need to increase your supply of hand hygiene products (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer) and disinfection and sanitizing products in shelters in a COVID-19 environment? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Financial Management (1/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Financial Management (1 of 2)**   1. What are your existing [financial management](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/disaster-financial-management-guide.pdf) practices for disaster and recovery? What adjustments, if any, are needed to comply with [procurement requirements](https://www.fema.gov/grants/procurement) in a pandemic environment? 2. Do you have access to a contingency planning fund? If not, how do you access critical recovery funding? 3. How can your personnel and departments access virtual training to build and sustain skills, if necessary? |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Discussion Questions: Financial Management (2/2)** | Review the following workshop discussion questions with participants.  **Customizer Note:** Add, tailor or augment suggested questions as appropriate for your organization/jurisdiction.  **Discussion Questions: Financial Management (2 of 2)**   1. What is your process to determine equal access and eligibility for all relevant funding opportunities? What access do you have to associations that support disaster-related projects? 2. Do your jurisdiction’s financial practices and procedures for non-disaster projects follow the same practices and procedures for disaster-related projects? 3. Do you have sufficient recordkeeping systems to maintain historical records of procurements and project monitoring for federal funding requirements?    1. Is the system available remotely? |

Action Plan Development

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| Slide # | **Time** | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Action Plan Development** | In the next section of the workshop — **Action Plan Development** — prompt participants to review the findings in each of the three key discussion themes: **preparedness**, **response** and **recovery considerations**.   * Review gaps identified in each section and potential solutions or mitigation strategies. * Identify any overarching themes or connections. * Identify specific and actionable steps your organization/jurisdiction needs to take in each topic area. * Prompt the group to identify who is responsible (person or group) for taking each of those actions. * Agree on a timeline and a time to reconvene or report back.   Pull up a display of input from each section and ask the group to review and discuss the Action Items and Takeaways identified in each phase.  **Action Plan Development**   * For each discussion theme, identify the following:   + Issues/Areas for Improvement   + Corrective Actions   + Primary Responsible Organization   + Organization POC * Next steps   Give everyone a chance to speak and avoid letting one person control the conversation. |

Closing Remarks

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| Slide # | **Time** | Slide Title/Content | Facilitator Notes |
| **[Insert slide #]** | [Insert Time] | **Closing Remarks** | If a senior leader is slated to deliver closing remarks, invite them to speak to the group. If not, offer closing remarks and thank everyone for their participation. |

Appendix A: Facilitation Best Practices

Along with the facilitator notes in this guide (highlighted in blue italics), this ESK also provides additional guidance on the role of a facilitator, best practices and tips and tricks. Although facilitation changes based on the exercise and participating audience, facilitators should thoroughly understand the purpose of the ESK and provide notetakers with guidance on what to capture.

Facilitator Role

As a facilitator your role is to:

Establish ground rules for participation (e.g., raising hand, unmuting) and set the discussion tone;

Foster a learning environment through open dialogue;

Keep participant discussion focused on the activity;

Confirm that all viewpoints are represented and summarize participant feedback to build consensus; and

Ask questions to clarify issues.

Facilitator Best Practices

A good facilitator strives to be:

**A strong communicator:** Communicates effectively, is aware of body language;

**Flexible:** Adapts the process to the situation;

**Knowledgeable:** Knows the process and how to use it;

**Inclusive:** Encourages participation from all group members;

**Organized:** Has all materials ready and at hand before the session begins;

**Responsible:** Has the best interests of the group in mind and confirms the needs of the activity are met;

**In control, but not controlling:** Manages the group, the process and the time but is transparent to the outcome; and

**Attentive:** Is aware of group dynamics, energy levels and participant needs.

Facilitator Tips For Remote Meetings

Send the workshop presentation to the participants prior to the workshop;

Make the participants familiar with the phone or video conference platform you are using;

Conduct a test two days prior to your workshop to confirm your conference platform works as intended;

When facilitating, consistently state the slide number for those unable to see your screen;

Decide if you would like the participants to use the chat function during the workshop. If you use it, remember to save the chat transcript before ending the workshop.

Don’t be put off by silence.