

Vital Records Program

Resilience

Continuity of Operations (COOP) programs identify processes and resources (essential functions, vital records, alternate locations, redundant systems, contingency plans, etc.) that enable individual departments to be more resilient...resulting in a more resilient community.

Robustness – inherent strength or resistance in a system to withstand demands without degradation or loss of functionality

Resourcefulness – Capacity to mobilize needed resources and services in emergencies

Recovery – return to a normal condition

Overview

Essential Functions

Importance of Vital Records

Vital Records Program

- Types of vital records
- Vital record packet
- Restoration timing
- Redundancy
- Maintenance Program

What is an Essential Function?

Critical activities that CANNOT cease

Activities driven by mission

Serve stakeholders

Think big picture...what are the ways your organization serves the citizen's of the county and the businesses?

Why Essential Functions are Important

Drives planning and preparedness (identifies, prioritizes effort)

Identifies tasks and resources that drive continuity when resources are scarce

Protecting/preserving resources (property, infrastructure, people)

Activities that support the return to normal business – recovery

Vital Records in Continuity of Operations

Viable continuity programs include comprehensive processes for identifying, protecting, and accessing electronic and hardcopy essential records at primary and alternate locations.

Driven by essential functions

Supports meeting organizations operational responsibilities and recovery objectives

Essential records should be accessible within 12 hours of activation

Important to work with Business Continuity or Disaster Recovery groups within organization or major divisions with a company to understand required functions and recovery times

Why do we need a Vital Records program?

Provides framework for identification of key pieces of information that are necessary to continue operations, contact key partners, ensure critical supplies and protect legal rights

Provides structure for ensuring regular updates occur

Assigns responsibility for updating records

Mitigates or lessens the impacts of some cyber incidents

Vital Records Program

Identifies, protects and makes readily available necessary pieces of data to continue necessary functions

- 1) Identify Records
- 2) Develop a Records Packet/data cluster (paper, electronic)
- 3) Plan for off site access
- 4) Redundancy
- 5) Prioritizes records recovery
- 6) Maintenance schedule

1) Identifying Vital Records

Information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity plan activation

Records Examples:

- Information systems technology
- Applications/Databases
- References and records
- Policies or procedures
- Legal documents/financial documents
- Contact information

Two categories: Emergency Operating Records, Rights and Interests Records

Emergency Operating Records

Emergency plans or directives

COOP – Order of Succession, delegation of authority, staffing contact and assignment list

Policies or procedures

Any documents necessary to carry out COOP, operate in limited status, and resume normal business

Rights and Interest Records

Personnel records

Social Security, payroll, retirement and insurance records

Contracting and acquisition files

Property management records

Inventory records

Supplier contact information

Financial information/records

Sensitive or legal records

2) Develop a Vital Records Packet

3) Identify pathways and access

2) Should include:

- Compilation of all vital records
- May also contain:
 - Vital records inventory
 - Access codes and necessary keys
 - List of continuity facilities
 - Records recovery experts

3) Consider medium for storage and identify pathways and means of accessing records/backups

4) Redundancy

Systems should provide appropriate level of access and cybersecurity to protect sensitive and personally identifiable information

- Should be redundantly kept in work drive away kits, alternate locations, clouds, thumb drive
- Backed up on a secondary server to increase the possibility that data and records are available and accessible
- Consider pre-positioning hard copy records
- Leverage cloud computing, remote servers hosted on the Internet, to store, manage, and process data to disperse risk

5) Prioritizing Recovery Records

Restoration time – a pre-defined time period in which records MUST be available for operations

Restoration time should correlate with timing used to prioritize Essential Functions

Way to prioritize systems/information that must be available to conduct specific functions

Takes time and understanding of department priorities and clearly mapped pathways, storage locations for restoring accessibility

6) Records Maintenance/Accuracy

Types of Records

- Active – change constantly with circumstances or as work is completed (personnel list or payroll records)
- Static Records – change little or not at all over time (policies or directives)

Records Maintenance

- Identify regular interval for updating each record
- Identify specific position that will be responsible for updating records
- Identify records storage location
- Address new security concerns
- Identify new records or systems
- Provide an opportunity to familiarize staff with the program

Questions?

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