Integrity Insurance®

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Planning Checklist ☑

Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Planning

The following checklist encompasses the basic components to include when formulating a business continuity of operations plan. All business continuity plans are based on certain reasonable assumptions. Develop the plan based on worst-case scenarios.

Once the plan is complete, share it with all levels of the company to ensure it's easily understood and user-friendly because there's always the chance they may need to step up and help lead your company through an incident. You may reference sections during small- scale events and activate the entire plan for large scale. Assign someone to update the plan on a scheduled basis – every six months or once a year. Most importantly, be certain to reference and use it during outage exercises and real events.

As the old saying goes, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Time spent developing a solid, actionable Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery plan can mean the difference between successfully maintaining your company's operations, or having to close its doors soon after a disastrous event. For assistance developing your organization's business continuity & disaster recovery plan, contact your local independent insurance agent.

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RECOVERY PLAN SEGMENT	COMPLETED
PLAN OVERVIEW	
Introduction and plan details	
• Plan name/owner/plan date (version)	
• Scope and objectives	
• Testing and maintenance dates and results	
CRISIS/INCIDENT MANAGEMENT	
A group of management or leadership individuals who will initially respond to and begin activation of the business or IT recovery plans/teams.	
• Leadership assembly methods, locations and notification process	
• Discussion outline/agenda	
• Communications with stakeholders	
• Business areas determine situation assessment at the time of an actual event – consider employee availability, damage to facility, work in process, highly critical tasks and notifying the appropriate customers or vendors	
EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATION AND DATA	
Employees are the most important resource identified in your business continuity plan.	
• Construct a call list/tree (broken down by company or department)	
• List all employees	
• Include phone numbers (home, work, mobile)	
• Even if you use an automated employee notification system, maintain a contact listing of employees for backup purposes	
• Make a list of specialized employee skills that enable the work group to perform its functions under normal conditions. Try to defuse single points of failure and cross train	
• Maintain a list of emergency contacts for all employees (it is not necessary to document this information in the plan)	
CRITICAL CONTACTS/VENDORS	
Vendors are the organizations, departments or people who supply you with services or items to perform your business operations.	
• All contact information for external business partners or vendors should be documented in your plan	
• Include such things as company name, representative, address and various phone numbers (include off-hours numbers)	
• Consider including or earmarking only those that would be deemed critical based on their support of a critical business process	

RECOVERY PLAN SEGMENT	COMPLETED
BUSINESS PROCESSES	
A work group's business processes describe the work that is done in that group at a high level. Business process and application-dependent relationships need to be identified in your business continuity plan.	
• At a high level, a Recovery Time Objective (RTO) can be defined as a specific time frame in which recovery activities must be completed. Include realistic estimates of how long the company could operate without the work group's business processes without suffering substantial losses	
• Recovery Time Objectives range from 0-8 Hours to 7+ Days	
RECOVERY TEAMS	
Listing of teams to recover core processes or systems • Incident Response Team • Business Recovery Team • Systems Recovery Team	
Designate Team Leader and Team Members	
Manage all aspects of recovery initiatives	
RECOVERY TASKS	
Business Recovery Plans list detailed tasks required to perform recovery activities and are assigned to a specific team position. Tasks and procedures should be customized to fit work group recovery requirements.	
• Listing of special recovery tasks and subtasks – intended to provide step-by-step details on how to reestablish and continue normal operation of business processes by a special point in time (associated with business process recovery time objective)	
• Tasks should address work group situation assessment, relocation to alternate site, resumption of critical processes, manual and interim processing, react procedures and return to normal business operations	
IT SYSTEMS	
Almost every work group uses a major system application to perform a business process. An application is a major network system housed on a main-frame or other distribution system.	
List applications and their recovery timeframes (company and business unit) • Mainframe • Server-based • Third-party	

RECOVERY PLAN SEGMENT	COMPLETED
RECOVERY LOCATIONS	
Document locations (addresses and directions) where employees will be expected to work during recovery (alternate site)	
• Alternate business site (should be on different power grid, use different telephone switching station and not be susceptible to the same geographic risks as the business site)	
• Remote or work from home	
• Alternate vendor/supplier site	
RESOURCES NEEDED AT TIME OF EVENT	
Resource requirements will be determined by identifying the absolute minimum resources needed for operation of each business process under recovery conditions. Allocated resources may be different during recovery than used during normal business operations. Prioritize requirements and phase in over time.	
• Equipment (such as copiers, phones, monitors, computers, scanners and any unique items and quantity)	
• Supplies (special supplies or standard office supplies and quantity)	
• Workstations (# of alternate site seats and employees expected to work remote or from home)	
• Desktop software (track special client or PC-based software)	
• Telecom – document critical phone numbers or fax numbers and re-routing priorities and processes	
VITAL RECORDS	
Information resources essential to the recovery of business processes within the identified recovery time objective.	

• Factors to consider:
  ○ Value of information vs. the risk associated with its loss
  ○ Maximum acceptable loss of information (related to the time of last back-up)
  ○ Costs associated with protection of the vital record vs. the exposures with choosing an alternative	

• Location of vital information and its form (hard copy or electronic)	
• Special file shares or common access directories	
SPECIAL PLAN ATTACHMENTS	

• Word or Excel documents containing reference information that may be needed at the time of an event:
  ○ Evacuation maps
  ○ Access instructions to special remote applications
  ○ Special response procedures (pandemic)	