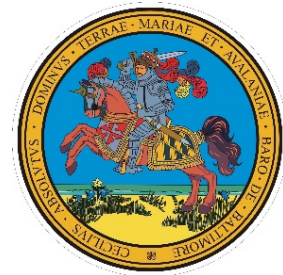


**State of Maryland**



**Continuity of Operations Plan Guide  
For  
State Departments/Agencies/Offices/Entities**

**December 2021 – Version 1.0**

## Foreword & Promulgation

I am pleased to present the State of Maryland Continuity of Operations Plan Guide for State Departments/Agencies/Offices/Entities. This guide details the development and implementation of both a steady-state continuity program and a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for each State department, agency, office, and entity that is compliant with Md. Code, Pub. Safety § 14-116 as well as other State and Federal statutory requirements and industry standards.



Utilizing this guide in conjunction with the Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Template and supported by technical assistance from the State Continuity Program Unit, the expectation is that each State Department/Agency/Office/Entity will identify and prioritize their required essential functions, establish a dedicated steady-state continuity program for increase resiliency, and develop and implement a COOP plan.

This guide is a component of the State of Maryland Enduring Constitutional Government (ECG) system, the State's holistic approach to implementing continuity at all levels of State government to ensure the existence, sustainment, and resiliency of the State of Maryland. I encourage all State departments, agencies, offices, and entities to implement continuity programs and COOP plans in the pursuit of a more resilient Maryland.

### **Approval:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell J. Strickland".

Russell J. Strickland  
Acting Secretary  
Maryland Department of Emergency Management

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

- Foreword & Promulgation ..... 2
- Table of Contents ..... 3
- List of Tables ..... 5
- List of Figures ..... 5
- Introduction & Continuity Preparedness Overview..... 7**
  - I. Introduction ..... 7
    - A. Mission Statement ..... 7
    - B. Purpose ..... 7
    - C. Scope..... 7
    - D. Utilization of the Guide..... 7
    - E. Annual Review and Certification..... 7
    - F. Record of Distribution..... 8
    - G. Guide Maintenance & Record of Changes ..... 8
    - H. References ..... 9
  - II. Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle ..... 10
- Maryland COOP Guide ..... 12**
  - I. Phase 1: Program Management ..... 12
    - A. Obtain Leadership Support ..... 13
    - B. Form Continuity Working Group..... 13
    - C. Form Emergency Relocation Group..... 13
    - D. Identify ..... 14
    - E. Develop Criteria and Milestones..... 15
    - F. Develop Budget Requirements ..... 16
    - G. Develop a Multi-Year Strategy Plan ..... 17
  - II. Phase 2: Continuity Risk Assessment..... 19
    - A. Review Threats and Hazards..... 19
    - B. Review Impacts by Resource Categories ..... 20
    - C. Consider Impacts on COOP Capabilities and COOP COAs..... 21
    - D. Develop and Implement Mitigation Strategies..... 23
  - III. Phase 3: Functional and Organizational Analysis..... 25
    - A. Identify Organizational and Programmatic Functions ..... 26
    - B. Statutory and Legal Review ..... 26
    - C. Essential Functions..... 27
    - D. State Essential Functions ..... 29
    - E. Primary Mission Essential Functions..... 31
    - F. Mission Essential Functions ..... 31
    - G. Mission Enhancing Activities..... 31
    - H. Essential Function Analysis Overview ..... 32
    - I. Recovery Time & Point Objectives..... 33



# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

J.	Organizational Administrative Analysis Overview .....	34
K.	Essential Supporting Activities.....	35
L.	EFA/OAA Submission to COOP Coordinator .....	36
M.	Essential Function Ranking, Grouping & Prioritization .....	36
N.	Submission Requirements to MDEM .....	36
IV.	Phase 4: Continuity Strategies .....	38
A.	Standard COOP Courses of Action .....	39
B.	Understanding the Decision Making Process .....	39
C.	Continuity Alternate Facilities.....	40
D.	MOU/MOA for Alternate Continuity Facilities.....	42
E.	Virtual Operations.....	43
F.	Devolution.....	43
G.	Reconstitution.....	44
V.	Phase 5: Continuity Plan Development .....	45
A.	Determine Plan Context.....	45
B.	Develop Information Requirements .....	46
C.	Review Continuity COAs.....	46
D.	Concept of Coordination.....	46
E.	Concept of Operations .....	47
F.	Resource and Logistics Requirements .....	48
G.	Develop Continuity of Operations Plan .....	49
H.	Continuity Information Technology Planning .....	49
I.	Continuity Communications Planning.....	49
J.	Plan Review and Approval .....	51
VI.	Phase 6: Continuity Training and Exercise .....	52
A.	Train Stakeholders .....	53
B.	Exercise Planning .....	53
C.	Exercise Design and Development.....	53
D.	Exercise Conduct.....	53
E.	Exercise Evaluation .....	54
F.	Exercise Types .....	54
G.	Continuity Exercise Recommendations .....	54
H.	Exercise Budget Management .....	55
VII.	Phase 7: Distribute, Maintain, and Update.....	56
A.	Vital Records .....	56
VIII.	Phase 8: Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation .....	58
A.	Implementation .....	59
B.	Activation .....	59
C.	After Action Reports and Correction Action Planning .....	59
IX.	Appendices, Annexes, & Attachments.....	60
A.	Appendices.....	60
B.	Annexes.....	60
C.	Attachments.....	60
	<b>Appendix 1 – Acronyms .....</b>	<b>61</b>
	<b>Appendix 2 – Record of Distribution .....</b>	<b>63</b>

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

<b>Appendix 3 – Record of Changes</b> .....	64
<b>Annex A – Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire</b> .....	65
<b>Annex B – Organizational Administrative Analysis</b> .....	70

## List of Tables

Table 1 – Sample Record of Distribution .....	8
Table 2 – Sample Record of Changes .....	8
Table 3 – References .....	9
Table 4 – COOP Roles & Responsibilities .....	14
Table 5 – Threats and Hazards .....	20
Table 6 – Resource Impact Categories .....	21
Table 7 – Impacts on COOP Capabilities & COAs Example .....	22
Table 8 – Mitigation Strategies for Impacts on COOP Capabilities & COAs Example .....	24
Table 9 – Statutory & Legal Review Example .....	27
Table 10 – State Essential Functions .....	30
Table 11 – MEF & MEA Contrast Details .....	32
Table 12 – Standard COOP COAs .....	39
Table 13 – COA Decision Making Process Matrix Example .....	40
Table 14 – COA Matrix Criteria Definitions & Weight Details .....	40
Table 15 – Alternate Continuity Facility Types .....	41
Table 16 – Alternate Facility PACE Elements & Details .....	42
Table 17 – Virtual Operations Scenario .....	43
Table 18 – Concept of Coordination Stakeholders .....	47
Table 19 – COOP Kit Contents by Type .....	48
Table 20 – Continuity Communications Inventory Example .....	50
Table 21 – Continuity Exercise Recommendations .....	55
Table 22 – Appendices .....	60
Table 23 – Annexes .....	60
Table 24 – Attachments .....	60

## List of Figures

Figure 1 – Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle .....	10
Figure 2 – Cycle Key .....	10
Figure 3 – Expanded Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle .....	11
Figure 4 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 1 Diagram .....	12
Figure 5 – Planning Team .....	15
Figure 6 – Multi-Year Strategy Plan Development Process .....	18
Figure 7 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 2 .....	19
Figure 8 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 3 .....	25
Figure 9 – MDEM-Preparedness Branch Statutory & Legal Review .....	27
Figure 10 – Essential Function Hierarchy Diagram .....	28

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 11 – EFA Questionnaire Format Example .....	33
Figure 12 – RPO/RTO Timeline.....	34
Figure 13 – OAA Process .....	35
Figure 14 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 4 .....	38
Figure 15 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 5 .....	45
Figure 16 – Continuity Operational Phases.....	48
Figure 17 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 6 .....	52
Figure 18 – Continuity Plan Implementation Glide Path .....	55
Figure 19 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 7 .....	56
Figure 20 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 8 .....	58

## Introduction & Continuity Preparedness Overview

### I. Introduction

#### A. Mission Statement

This guide will enable Maryland Departments, Agencies, Offices, and Entities (D/A/O/E) to effectively be prepared for, respond to, and rapidly recover from the impacts of any continuity event or incident that disrupts D/A/O/E normal operations with an effective Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan.

#### B. Purpose

The purpose of continuity planning is to ensure the continuity of the essential functions under all conditions. The current changing threat environment and recent emergencies, including acts of nature, accidents, technological emergencies, and military or terrorist attack-related incidents, have increased the need for viable continuity capabilities and plans that enable organizations to continue their essential functions in an all-hazards environment and across a spectrum of emergencies.

#### C. Scope

This Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Guide applies to functions, operations, and resources necessary to ensure the continuation of all Maryland State D/A/O/E's essential functions in the event that normal operations are disrupted or threatened with disruption. This planning Guide applies to all Maryland State personnel; therefore, all employees should be familiar with continuity policies and procedures within their organization and their respective continuity roles and responsibilities.

#### D. Utilization of the Guide

Throughout this COOP Guide, headings are labeled using roman numerals, capital letters, and traditional numbers. This progression mimics the process followed in the Maryland State D/A/O/E COOP Template that accompanies this Maryland COOP Guide for State D/A/O/E's.

#### E. Annual Review and Certification

On an annual basis, the State Continuity Program Unit will review and update the Maryland Department of Emergency Management's Continuity of Operations Plan, components, and supporting elements. In addition, the State Continuity Program Unit will review and assist with updating other Maryland State D/A/O/E's Continuity of Operations Plans on an annual basis.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

## F. Record of Distribution

The record of distribution details the distribution of the plan to individuals and/or organizations. Distribution methods include digital format or hardcopy format. Table 1 details a sample of the record of distribution.

**Table 1 – Sample Record of Distribution**

Delivery Date	Number of Copies Delivered	Distribution Method	Name, Title, and Organization of Receiver

The record of distribution table indicates the title and the name of the person receiving the plan, the D/A/O/E to which the receiver belongs, the date of delivery, the method of delivery, and the number of copies delivered. The record of distribution can be used to verify that tasked individuals and organizations have acknowledged their receipt, review, and/or acceptance of the plan. See Appendix 2 for the Record of Distribution table.

## G. Guide Maintenance & Record of Changes

Guide Maintenance is revision that occur outside of the mandate annual review process and guide maintenance review cycle. These revisions could be due to legal or organizational changes or as part of corrective actions from exercises. Change types include critical; substantive; and administrative. Table 2 details a sample of the document record of change table.

**Table 2 – Sample Record of Changes**

Change Number	Change Type	Change Date	Page(s) Affected	Individual Making Changes

When changes occur to the Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Guide, planners track and record those changes using a record of changes table. See Appendix 3 for the Record of Changes table.



# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

## H. References

The development of the guide is based State and Federal authorities and guidance, industry standards, and references.

**Table 3 – References**

<b>References</b>	
<b>State of Maryland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of Maryland Constitution</li> <li>• Md. Code, Pub. Safety § 14-116 – Continuity of Operations Plan</li> <li>• Maryland Executive Order 01.01.2009.05 – Declaration of Emergency: Influenza Response and Mitigation</li> </ul>
<b>Federal - FEMA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide to Continuity of Government for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Governments, July 2021</li> <li>• Guide to Continuity Program Management, May 2020</li> <li>• Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, January 2020</li> <li>• Continuity Guidance Circular, March 2018</li> <li>• Federal Continuity Directive – 1, January 2017</li> <li>• Federal Continuity Directive – 2, June 2017</li> </ul>
<b>Federal – DHS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Security Presidential Directive 51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 20 – National Continuity Policy, April 2007</li> <li>• Presidential Policy Directive 40 – National Continuity Policy, July 2016</li> <li>• Homeland Security Council – National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan, August 2007</li> <li>• 36 C.F.R., Part 1236, Management of Vital Records</li> </ul>
<b>Industry Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)</li> <li>• Disaster Recovery Institute (DRI) International</li> </ul>

## II. Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle

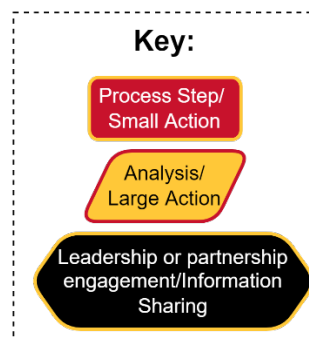
The Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle dictates the processes needed in order to ensure a comprehensive and effective continuity of operations plan. The Preparedness Cycle consists of eight phases that will be explored in greater detail below. The basic Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle is illustrated in Figure 1 and the detailed Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 1 – Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle**



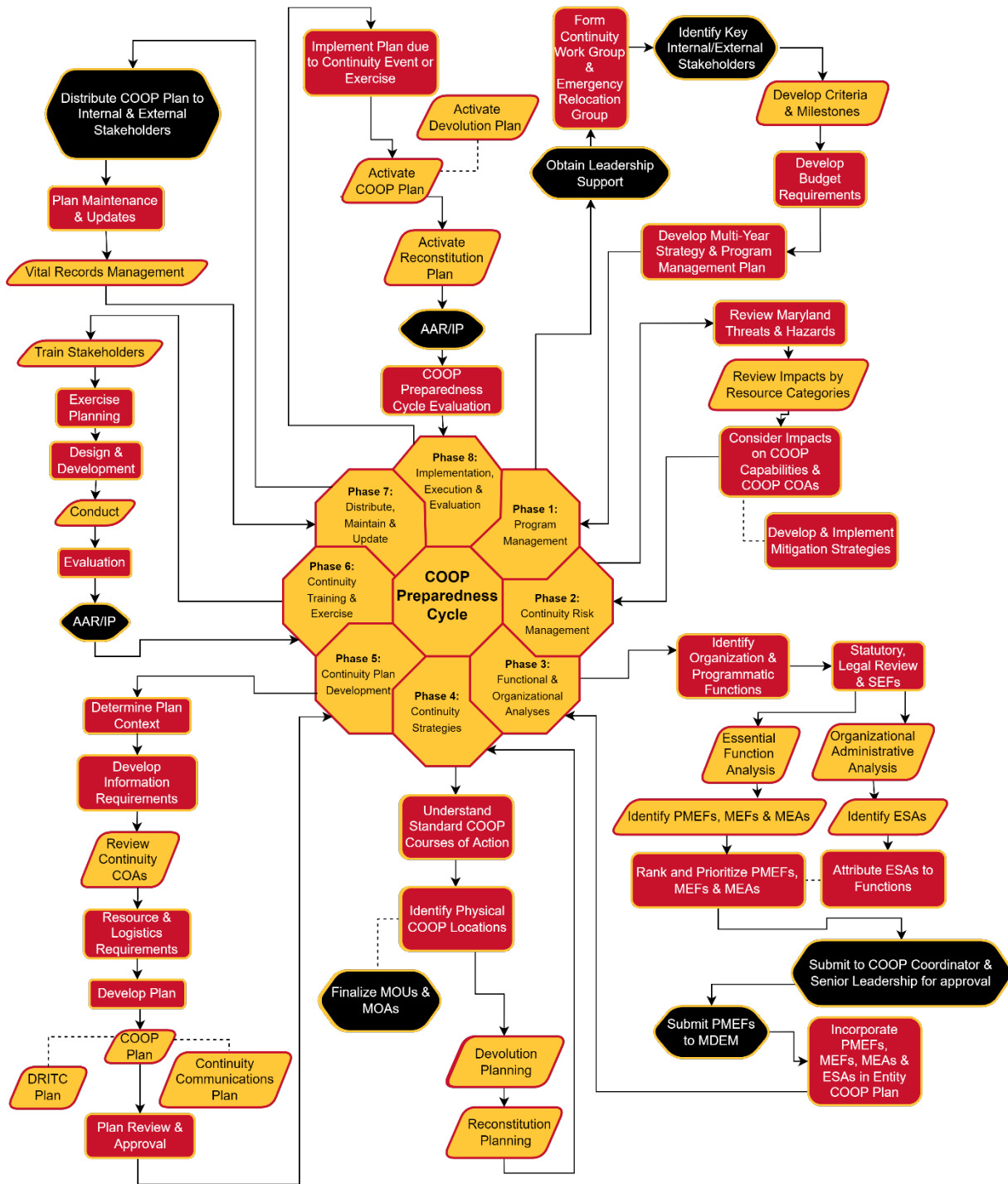
Each phase covers a unique aspect of the continuity of operations continuum. The graphic below breaks each phase down step by step and breaks those steps into three components: process step/small action, analysis/large action, and leadership or partnership engagement/information sharing. Process steps/small actions are displayed in red rectangles, analysis/large actions are displayed in yellow rhombuses, and leadership or partnership engagement/information sharing are displayed in black hexagons. Figure 2 illustrates the cycle diagram key.

**Figure 2 – Cycle Key**



# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 3 – Expanded Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle

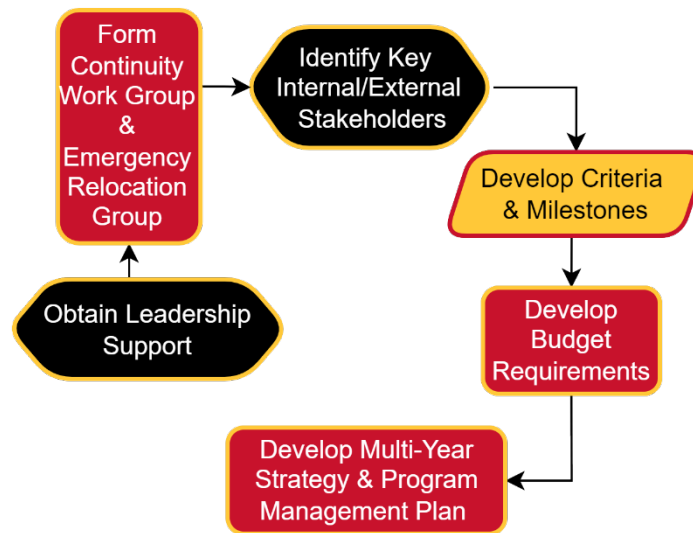


## Maryland COOP Guide

### I. Phase 1: Program Management

COOP Planning is a long, detailed, circular preparedness structure that requires strong program management at both the leadership and programmatic levels across the State Departments, Agencies, Offices, or Entities (D/A/O/E's). Figure 4 illustrates Phase 1 – Program Management of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 4 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 1 Diagram**



Continuity is the ability to provide uninterrupted services and support, while maintaining organizational viability before, during, and after an incident that disrupts normal operations. Having program management expectations, priorities, requirements, and support either established or revised at the start of each COOP cycle will allow for a reinforced and meaningful continuity program. Having a solid continuity program established is important because the program will:

- Safeguard life, property and the environment;
- Minimize confusion and enable effective decision-making in a time of crisis;
- Minimize the loss of assets, controls, revenue, and impact on the State of Maryland;
- Provide products and services even during adverse conditions;
- Ensure the survival of the D/A/O/E;
- Satisfy any legal, regulatory or statutory requirements;
- Facilitate the timely recovery of critical essential functions; and
- Maintain a favorable public image and reputation of the entity.



### A. Obtain Leadership Support

Due to the numerous threats and hazards all Marylanders face and the critical nature of work that state employees perform, it is the responsibility of all State D/A/O/Es to increase their resiliency in the ever-changing environment of disaster preparedness.

Having the buy-in and support from the leadership group will give your organization a solid base to build off for the complex preparedness initiative that is the COOP Preparedness Cycle. Senior leadership is responsible for ensuring that continuity plans, and programs are developed, coordinated, exercised, and capable of being implemented when required. Leadership needs to support the work of the COOP Coordinator for their organization, including providing the necessary budget and other resources to support the continuity program, as required. The COOP Coordinator is responsible for developing and administering a continuity program budget and submitting funding requirements to the agency head.

The senior leadership team should support the Continuity Work Group and the COOP Coordinator. A supportive leadership group is the crux of any large-scale program. COOP preparedness and planning is a thoughtful inward look of an organization that has the possibility of identifying many areas of improvement for disaster resiliency.

### B. Form Continuity Working Group

COOP preparedness activities are both ambitious and achievable. As the COOP Coordinator, you will be responsible for directing, managing, and coaching your D/A/O/E through the COOP Preparedness Cycle. Doing so will require a Continuity Working Group (CWG) that should consist of agency members from various disciplines across your State D/A/O/E to capture a complete perspective of COOP needs, activities, and priorities. The CWG group will assist the COOP Coordinator with developing, implementing, and maintaining the overall State D/A/O/E continuity program.

### C. Form Emergency Relocation Group

In addition to a designated COOP Coordinator and CWG, each D/A/O/E should have identified individuals to serve on the Emergency Relocation Group (ERG). The ERG will be responsible for facilitating the relocation to alternate locations during a continuity emergency. The ERG will travel to the alternate location and ensure that the site is prepared to receive staff to continue critical essential functions.

The COOP Coordinator, CWG, and ERG will be the driving force of all State D/A/O/E related items backed by the senior leadership group (SLG). Note that there can be overlap in personnel that serve on the CWG and the ERG, and in some cases, they may be identical based on staffing restrictions.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

The below table, Table 4, identifies different aspects of the COOP Coordinator, the CWG, and the ERG roles:

**Table 4 – COOP Roles & Responsibilities**

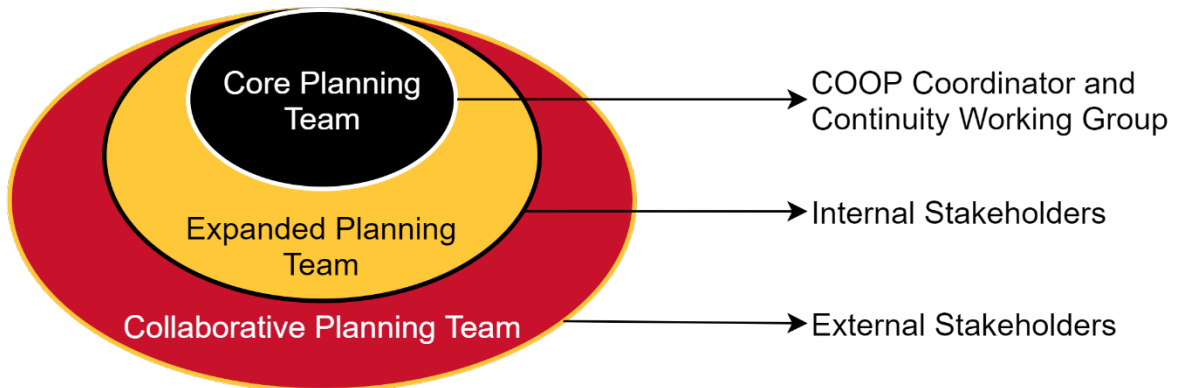
<b>COOP Coordinator</b>	<b>Continuity Working Group</b>	<b>Emergency Relocation Group</b>
Individual who has overall command, control, and coordination of Continuity Program including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program management</li> <li>• Reporting to internal senior leadership</li> <li>• COOP budgeting</li> <li>• COOP training &amp; exercise</li> <li>• Communicating with MDEM regarding COOP requirement</li> </ul>	Assist the COOP Coordinator with preparedness activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshopping with internal partners for information collection</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan creation, distribution, and management</li> <li>• Training &amp; exercising the Continuity of Operations Plan</li> </ul>	Support the COOP Coordinator when critical essential functions must be transferred to alternate facilities/locations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that alternate facilities have appropriate IT capabilities to receive critical essential staff</li> <li>• Primary point of contact between primary facilities and alternate facilities</li> <li>• Initial staff deployed to activate alternate locations</li> </ul>

### D. Identify

Continuity of Operations Planning and preparedness are entity wide initiatives that will require assistance and participation from many key internal and external stakeholders. As the CWG reflected disciplines from across the State D/A/O/E who will champion COOP preparedness efforts with the COOP Coordinator, the identification of key internal and external stakeholders can be viewed as broader versions of the CWG.

The roster of internal and external stakeholders as viewed through the planning team lens of core, expanded, and collaborative planning teams, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 – Planning Team



As you begin to identify which internal stakeholders will be involved in the preparedness initiative, consider which internal stakeholder have expertise and authority in:

- Ensuring program management, timelines, and budgeting;
- State D/A/O/E operational and logistical COOP specific planning, training, exercise, and collaboration aspects; and
- Organizational program leads that will be able to give context on their needs and priorities in a COOP setting.

While internal stakeholders can help produce a lot for COOP items, remember that the far-reaching ends of continuity will often have your organization looking for external assistance as well. Consider how interconnected your State D/A/O/E is with external partners; be sure to include the following:

- MDEM - State Continuity Program (SCP) Unit
- Communication and IT connectivity;
- Facilities and equipment suppliers and managers; and
- Procurement and resources.

## E. Develop Criteria and Milestones

After key internal and external stakeholders are identified, the COOP Coordinator and the CWG will use this Guide in coordination with the Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Template provided by MDEM to identify, develop, and execute COOP related criteria and milestones. A robust COOP program will include milestones, objectives, and programmatic criteria that will help in meeting and understanding goals and requirements laid out by the Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Guide and Template.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Before formal planning takes place, ensure you are able to meet with senior leadership and the internal and external teams to discuss any specific milestones or criteria your State D/A/O/E would like to include in your program.

Establishing the need for a continuity program requires the COOP Coordinator, in conjunction with senior leadership when needed, to perform the following tasks:

- Research and reference relevant legal, regulatory, and statutory requirements and restrictions both from an internal and external perspective, providing recommendations on compliance and conformity for the D/A/O/E;
- Identify and resolve any conflicts between the D/A/O/E's policies and relevant external requirements;
- Review existing audit reports to ensure the proposed continuity program adequately addresses any gaps or opportunities
- State the benefits of continuity within the context of the D/A/O/E's mission, objectives, and operations;
- Explain the role of leadership, including their accountability and liability related to continuity; and
- Develop formal reports and presentations about the potential impacts of risks to the D/A/O/E.

### F. Develop Budget Requirements

Budgeting for and acquiring resources for continuity capabilities is one of the most important components of continuity planning. Organizations should identify the positions, communications, facilities, infrastructure, and transportation requirements, which are necessary for the successful implementation and management of an organization's continuity program. To support these programs, it is necessary to align and allocate the budgetary resources needed to acquire and then implement these requirements. Through the budgeting and planning process, an organization's leaders and staff will ensure critical continuity resources are available to continue performing the organization's essential functions before, during, and after a continuity event. D/A/O/Es should identify and provide continuity funding and specific budgetary requirements for all levels of their organizations, including subordinate components and regional- and field-level offices.

To gain leadership support and commitment for the continuity program, you must:

- Develop a mission statement and/or charter for the continuity program within the context of the entity's mission;
- Develop objectives, assumptions, and scope for the continuity program within the context of the entity's mission, objectives, and operations;



## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

- Develop budget requirements for the continuity program;
- Define the continuity program structure and identify potential policy needs and critical success factors;
- Present the proposed continuity program structure to obtain leadership support and approval for the continuity program;
- Identify leadership sponsors for continuity program development;
- Obtain leadership approval for budget requirements;
- Establish an oversight body such as a steering committee to lead the continuity program; and
- Define the scope, responsibilities, and overall accountability of each member of the steering committee and its support functions.

Further, cost may also be a consideration because informed decisions about acceptable and unacceptable levels of risk will ultimately drive the expenditure of resources (e.g., money, people, and time) to mitigate risk.

A cost/benefit analysis needs to be conducted, which is a process that takes place after an essential function analysis and risk assessment are conducted. It facilitates the financial cost of different strategic continuity options and balances the cost of each continuity option against the perceived savings.

### G. Develop a Multi-Year Strategy Plan

Your Continuity of Operations Plan is to be updated annually at a minimum, or on an as needed basis. Some examples that may trigger an earlier review and plan update would include a change in leadership, organizational realignment or reorganization, change in process or system that supports essential functions, results of training and exercise or real-world events and incidents, or results of assessments or evaluations. To conduct this MYSP (Multi-Year Strategy Plan), the following steps should be taken:

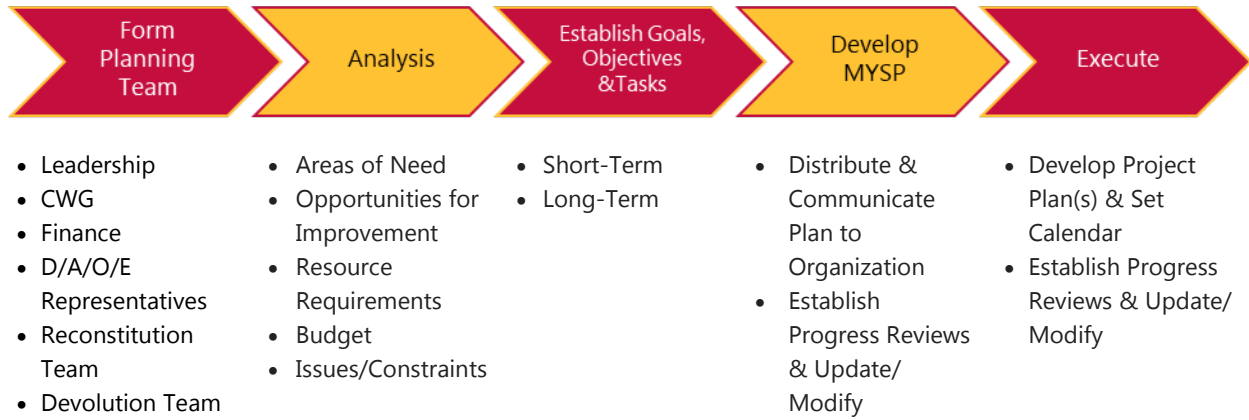
- Estimate the cost of implementing and maintaining recovery for the identified recovery strategies;
- Validate that the recovery strategy being implemented is commensurate with the impacted operational area; and
- Ensure the cost of recovery is in line with the value of what is to be recovered.

The purpose of the MYSP is to set the overall goals and objectives for your continuity program. A continuity focused MYSP should be developed (typically 3-5 years) that provides for the development, maintenance and review of continuity programs and plans to ensure the program remains viable and successful.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 6 illustrates the MYSP development process:

**Figure 6 – Multi-Year Strategy Plan Development Process**

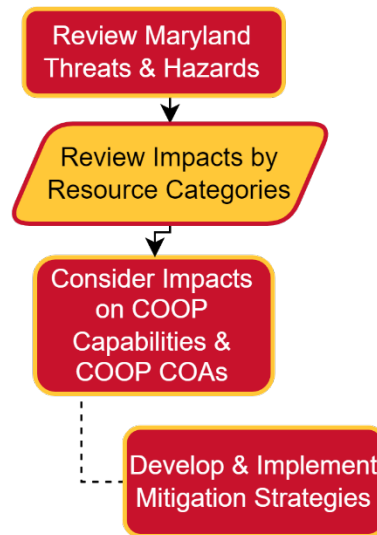


## II. Phase 2: Continuity Risk Assessment

The Functional and Organizational analyses provided your agency an opportunity to identify, investigate, and prioritize the operational and administrative aspects of your agency. Having these items formalized shifts the focus of the COOP Program Cycle from “What do we do?” to “What can impact us?”

Continuity Risk Management illustrates the complex threat and hazard profile of Maryland and bridges the analyses to the preparedness activities of Phases 3 and 4. Understanding how different threats and hazards can impact your State D/A/O/E’s resources will enable your team to brainstorm continuity courses of action (explained in Phase 4) when it is time to develop the Continuity of Operations Plan. The purpose of this phase is to provide a brief exercise for holistic planning needs and considerations when developing and reviewing continuity courses of actions during Continuity of Operations Plan development. Figure 7 illustrates Phase 2 – Continuity Risk Assessment of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle

**Figure 7 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 2**



### A. Review Threats and Hazards

Risk management is understanding and preparing for the potential impacts of threats and hazards related to your planning scope. In a COOP preparedness scope, a threat or hazard can be defined as a unique act or event that has the potential to disrupt or incapacitate your State D/A/O/E’s resources or operations. For risk management in COOP Preparedness purposes, threats and hazards can be classified into three broad categories:

- Threats: Human caused intentional actions of an adversary;

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

- Technological Hazards: Accidents of the failures of systems and structures; and
- Natural Hazards: Acts of nature.

Table 5 details the threats and hazards that that State of Maryland has identified as risks.

**Table 5 – Threats and Hazards**

Threats	Technological Hazards	Natural Hazards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Assailant</li> <li>• CBRNE</li> <li>• Civil Unrest</li> <li>• Complex Coordinated Terror Attack</li> <li>• Criminal Activity</li> <li>• Cyber Disruption</li> <li>• Improvised Device</li> <li>• Lone Wolf Attacks</li> <li>• Synthetic Infections Disease</li> <li>• Terrorism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Incidents</li> <li>• Aircraft Crash</li> <li>• Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource Disruption</li> <li>• Dam Failure</li> <li>• Hazardous Materials Release</li> <li>• Industrial Accidents</li> <li>• Infrastructure Degradation</li> <li>• Pipeline Accident</li> <li>• Radiological</li> <li>• Train Derailment</li> <li>• Transpiration Accidents</li> <li>• Urban Conflagration</li> <li>• Utility Disruptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derecho</li> <li>• Drought</li> <li>• Earthquake</li> <li>• Epidemic/Pandemic</li> <li>• Excessive Heat/Cold</li> <li>• Flash Flooding</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Landslide/Mudslide</li> <li>• Lightning/Electrical Strike</li> <li>• Organically Derived Infectious Disease</li> <li>• Space Weather</li> <li>• Straight Line Wind</li> <li>• Storm Surge</li> <li>• Tornado</li> <li>• Tropical Cyclone</li> <li>• Urban Flooding</li> <li>• Winter Weather</li> </ul>

Based on your D/A/O/E's geographic location within the State, prioritize your threats and hazards that you find to be of highest likelihood of occurrence.

The threats and hazards that are presented throughout Maryland can be located in the local Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), the Consequence Management Operations Plan (CMOP), and the Threats and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA).

Review the Comprehensive Threat and Hazards List. It is critical to understand how diverse and severe the threat and hazard profile of the region is so your state entity may build the basis of a robust COOP preparedness plan.

### B. Review Impacts by Resource Categories

Review the Resource Categories List. Reviewing your State D/A/O/E's resources enables your entity to holistically prepare for resources that will need detailed



## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

redundancy plans during a disruption. Table 6 details the resource impact categories.

**Table 6 – Resource Impact Categories**

Category	Resource
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty/staff</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Partnerships/interdependencies</li> <li>• Relationships with stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Capital and Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Storage and other structures</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Consumable resources</li> <li>• Agency equipment</li> <li>• Staff equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• IT and administrative systems</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Online platforms and services</li> </ul>

### C. Consider Impacts on COOP Capabilities and COOP COAs

Both the threat and hazard profile of the State and the resource categories have been identified. The below example details how flooding, a high probability and high impact event, may disrupt several aspects of the State. A thorough risk assessment or analysis is not always required for creating a Continuity of Operations Plan, however; identifying and understanding what and how of impacts and threats is the starting point for consequence management.

Understanding how the impacts on our resources may disrupt our essential functions is a key feature to gathering Continuity of Operations Plan context and preparing the Continuity Working Group to create Courses of Action. Table 7 details an example of impacts on COOP capabilities and COOP COAs with a flooding hazard.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

**Table 7 – Impacts on COOP Capabilities & COAs Example**

<b>Impacts on COOP Capabilities &amp; COAs Example</b>	
<b>Considering Consequence: Flooding</b>	
A recent risk assessment showed that a flooding event has the potential to impact many State D/A/O/E's. The following assesses a flooding event to the people, capital and assets, and systems of Maryland in addition to a consequence analysis of the impacts to:	
<b>The Public</b>	Flooding has frequently affected the cities, shores, and valleys of Maryland as one of the largest risks to the people of the state. The many waterways and water bodies of Maryland associate themselves to flooding zones, which house a diverse population including those who are children, elderly, or impoverished. The frequency and primary and secondary impacts of flooding to these populations lead many to be at risk across the state.
<b>First Responders</b>	"Turn Around, Don't Drown" is the number one piece of advice a Maryland first responder can give. The best way to ensure the safety of first responders during a flooding event is to prevent them from being used in the first place! Search and rescue teams may be needed in the most severe flooding events in addition to teams for road and bridge closures.
<b>COOP</b>	Flooding has the potential to severely impact the continuity of operations in some counties and regions of Maryland if they are severely inundated with floodwaters. Relocation of offices, mutual aid agreements for essential functions, and recovery will all be a focus for Continuity of Operations Planning during a flooding event. The frequency and severity of flooding in Maryland has led to many opportunities for the governments to refine and execute their flood planning.
<b>Maryland property, facilities, and infrastructure</b>	Much of Maryland's property, facilities, and infrastructure lie within flood-prone zones. A flooding event to the shore, bay, rivers, valleys, and cities could all result in damage or loss of essential Maryland government and public functions.
<b>Environment and protected ecological areas</b>	Flooding carries many environmental and ecological concerns such as the loss of crops, vegetation, and wildlife. Inundation of flood waters to an urban area may lead to pollution and disruption of the more ecologically sensitive areas of the bay. Flood waters and storm surge erosion can have severe consequences to the beach and embankments. Frequency of these events will increase going up from rising sea levels.
<b>Economic condition on the state</b>	Recently, Ellicott City has received two FEMA declared disasters due to flash flooding and has been receiving Public Assistance (PA) to help recovery efforts. Flooding has the destructive power to easily destroy businesses, facilities, homes, and infrastructure and the capacity to keep these places closed for long periods of time. Once floodwaters have stopped moving, there are also a myriad of secondary effects that could lead to economic turmoil for those without flood insurance such as mold and disease.
<b>Public confidence in governance</b>	As with most natural hazards, specifically those related to atmospheric or geologic activity, there are not many opportunities to prevent these from occurring. The public confidence in governance for flooding events will revolve around warning and response time, down-time in utilities, and assistance in recovery.
The risk assessment showed in overwhelming fashion that flooding was the greatest natural risk to the people, capital and assets, and systems of the State entity.	
Flooding can be assessed as a primary and secondary hazard. Primarily, general flooding, flash flooding, urban flooding, and storm surge are all categories of flooding that each pose a unique threat to different environments and vulnerable populations across the state. Secondarily, flooding is usually associated with severe weather events such as prolonged severe weather, tornados, tropical cyclones, wind and lightning storms, and more. The rate of occurrence, destructive force, and the state's unique vulnerability to the hazard firmly puts flooding at the top of the natural hazards risks.	

### D. Develop and Implement Mitigation Strategies

All comprehensive preparedness plans include mitigation strategies – the set procedures or redundancies that lessen the effect of a disruption of regular events. The diverse threat and hazard profile of the state offers many opportunities of disrupting your essential functions and limiting available resources. Although disruption of your State D/A/O/E's essential functions cannot be fully stopped, there will be many mitigation, prevention, or protection opportunities to develop and implement into your entity's daily operations.

Mitigation options help an organization address its risks by accepting, avoiding, transferring, or controlling risk. Some examples of mitigation strategies include:

- Alternate locations;
- Telework policies;
- Devolution of priorities and responsibilities; and
- Mutual Aid and Memoranda of Understanding Agreements.

Like any strategy or program, the critical elements that are required to execute mitigation options are supported by senior leadership and have established goals and implementation plans. These strategies should identify and analyze mitigation actions, including an assessment of existing plans and programs and the State D/A/O/E's capability to implement the mitigation strategy. Leveraging protection, prevention, and mitigation techniques and strategies as part of your State entity's Continuity of Operations Plan will increase the effectiveness of plan implementation and response to a disruption of daily activities.

Using the same flooding example, review the protection, prevention, and mitigation strategies the state may take to lessen the impact or likelihood of a flooding event. Table 8 details an example of mitigation strategies for impacts on COOP capabilities and COOP COAs with a flooding hazard.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

**Table 8 – Mitigation Strategies for Impacts on COOP Capabilities & COAs Example**

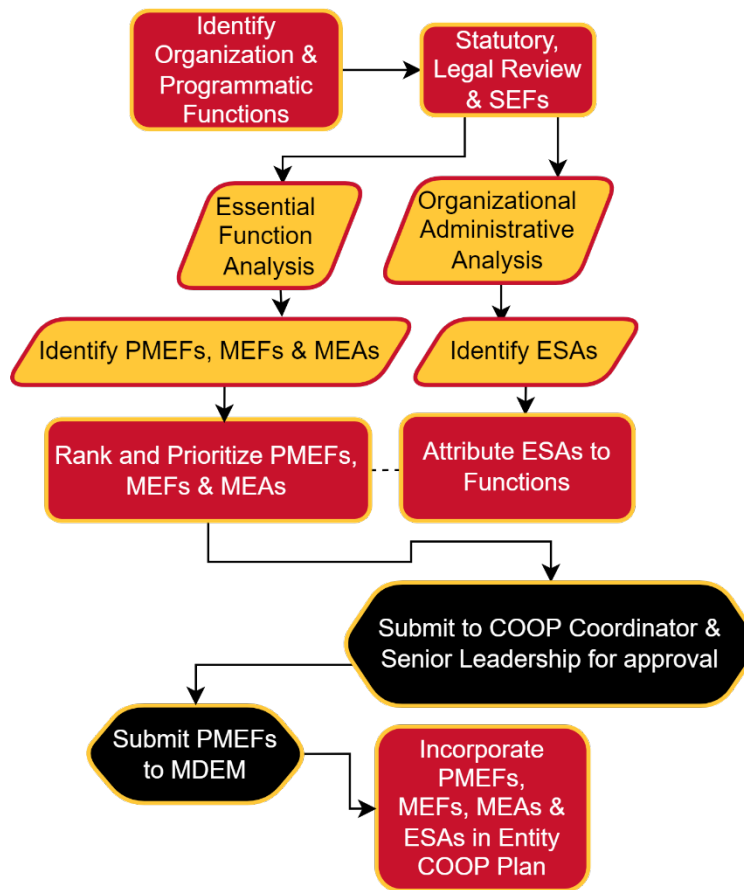
<b>Mitigations Strategies for Impacts on COOP Capabilities &amp; COAs Example</b>	
<p><b>Considering Consequence: Flooding</b> Protection and mitigation measures for the state can include such strategies as physical structures, heightened awareness and training, and leaner and upgraded operations and systems.</p> <p><b>Natural Hazard: Flooding</b> Flooding is Maryland’s most substantial natural threat. Maryland’s assets and operations have been impacted repeatedly from a myriad of flooding.</p>	
<b>Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood zoning and best-practice land use</li> <li>• Ample watches and warning systems</li> <li>• Public Service Announcements (PSA) (“Turn Around; Don’t Drown”)</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocating facilities and assets above likely flood levels</li> <li>• Education and awareness seminars and trainings</li> </ul>
<b>Mitigation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Flood Insurance</li> <li>• Jetties and seawalls</li> <li>• Levees and engineered drainage canals</li> <li>• Reservoirs and retention ponds</li> <li>• Alternate location of hard copy records</li> <li>• Telework capability</li> <li>• MOU / MOA of alternate working facilities</li> </ul>
<p>While more protection and mitigation strategies may exist for the highest human-caused, technological, and natural threats to Maryland, the above are some of the most practical and cost-effective systems that emergency managers should promote for the continued operations of Maryland assets and functions.</p>	



## III. Phase 3: Functional and Organizational Analysis

Continuity of Operations planning is an effort within individual organizations to ensure that Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs) continue to be performed throughout, or resumed rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities. Continuity planning is the good business practice of ensuring the execution of essential functions and is a fundamental duty of public entities responsible to their stakeholders in response to a wide range of disruptive events or situations. Any event that makes it impossible for employees to work in their regular facility could result in the activation of the Continuity plan. Figure 8 illustrates Phase 3 – Functional and Organizational Analysis of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 8 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 3**



From legal and statutory responsibility, coordinating provided goods and services, and conducting necessary business operations, there are many tasks for organizations to consider when creating a Continuity of Operations Plan. It is best practice to divide and label these functions in categorical hierarchies called Essential Functions. Properly identifying Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs), Mission Essential Functions (MEFs), Mission Enhancing Activities (MEAs) and Essential Supporting Activities (ESAs)

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

will help ensure that organization can continue to perform its mission(s) during or quickly after an emergency or disaster. Agencies and institutions should keep the Essential Function Hierarchy in mind as well– an agency that continues its PMEFS during an emergency or disaster can support the continuation of State Essential Functions (SEFs) and the Continuity of Government (COG) at the state level.

### A. Identify Organizational and Programmatic Functions

Effective continuity of operations planning requires each D/A/O/E to identify all organization and programmatic functions, which will all be deemed as primary mission essential, mission essential, or as a mission enhancing activity. Essential functions will later be ranked during the analysis process. Accurate function identification/ranking is crucial because it is important to know which functions take priority in the event of a disruption to daily operations. An effective Continuity of Operations Plan will clearly define which functions are required to be up and running in order to mitigate any catastrophic consequences.

### B. Statutory and Legal Review

The COOP Coordinator along with the Continuity Work Group, managers, and executive leadership review all laws, acts, regulations, statutes, and other federal or state guidance related to your State D/A/O/E. Leadership is accountable and liable to know and understand their legal responsibilities including the applicable laws and regulations, as well as contractual agreements.

It is important that the COOP Coordinator presents the legal and regulatory requirements to leadership to effectively establish the need for continuity management. Ensure that specific laws or statutory requirements are identified when programs or units complete their Essential Function Analysis, which will be later discussed. These requirements must be included in your D/A/O/E Continuity of Operations Plan. Some organizational or programmatic functions that do not have legal requirements. See Phase 3 for further explanation on COOP relevancy. Table 9 details an example of a Statutory and Legal Review in a table format. Figure 9 illustrates an example of a completed Statutory & Legal Review for the MDEM Preparedness Branch. To complete the Statutory & Legal Review utilizing the following sources of information:

- State Constitution;
- Maryland Code
- Executive Orders
- Federal Law
- Federal Requirements
- Other Requirements

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Table 9 – Statutory & Legal Review Example

Agency Component	State Constitution	Primary Title XX	Other MD Titles	Executive Orders	Federal Law	Federal Requirements	Other
<insert>							
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Figure 9 – MDEM-Preparedness Branch Statutory & Legal Review

Agency Component	State Constitution	MD Code: Title 14	Other Titles	Executive Order	Federal Law	Federal Requirements
Preparedness Branch	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§14-103</li> <li>§14-106.b.2.ii-iv</li> <li>§14-106.b.4.ii</li> <li>§14-106.c.1</li> <li>§14-106.c.2.i</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.O. 01.01.2018.08</li> <li>E.O. 01.01.2013.06</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HSPD-5</li> <li>HSPD-7</li> <li>PPD-8</li> <li>PPD-21</li> <li>PPD-22</li> </ul>
Planning Unit	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§14-103</li> <li>§14-106.b.2.ii-iv</li> </ul>	N/A	E.O. 01.01.2018.08	N/A	N/A
Training & Exercise Unit	N/A	N/A	N/A	E.O. 01.01.2018.08	N/A	N/A
REP Program	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§14-103</li> <li>§14-106</li> <li>§14-3A-03</li> <li>§8-105</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A	44 CFR Part 350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FEMA P-1028 REP Program Manual</li> <li>NUREG</li> <li>FEMA-REP-1</li> <li>EPA-400/R-17001</li> <li>EPA-520/1-78-016</li> </ul> <p>SAND-77-1725</p>
State Continuity Program	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§14-103</li> <li>§14-116</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.O. 01.01.2013.06</li> <li>E.O. 01.01.2009.05</li> </ul>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSPD-51/HSPD-20</li> <li>PPD-40</li> <li>FCD-1/FCD-2</li> </ul>
State Special Events Program	N/A	§14-103	N/A	N/A	N/A	
State NIMS Program	N/A	N/A	N/A	E.O. 01.01.2005.09	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HSPD-5</li> </ul>
Cyber Preparedness Program	N/A	§14-103	§9-2901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.O. 01.01.2019.07</li> <li>E.O. 01.01.2017.22</li> </ul>	Public Law 117-58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PPD-20</li> <li>PPD-41</li> </ul>

## C. Essential Functions

Essential functions are responsibilities, activities, and tasks that cannot be deferred during an emergency; these activities must be performed continuously or resumed quickly following a disruption. The distinction between essential and non-essential functions is whether or not an organization must perform a function during a crisis. Essential functions are those that must continue during emergencies. Essential functions are both important and urgent. Essential functions are detailed in the following categories:

- State Essential Functions;
- Primary Mission Essential Functions;
- Mission Essential Functions;
- Mission Enhancing Activities; and
- Essential Supporting Activities.

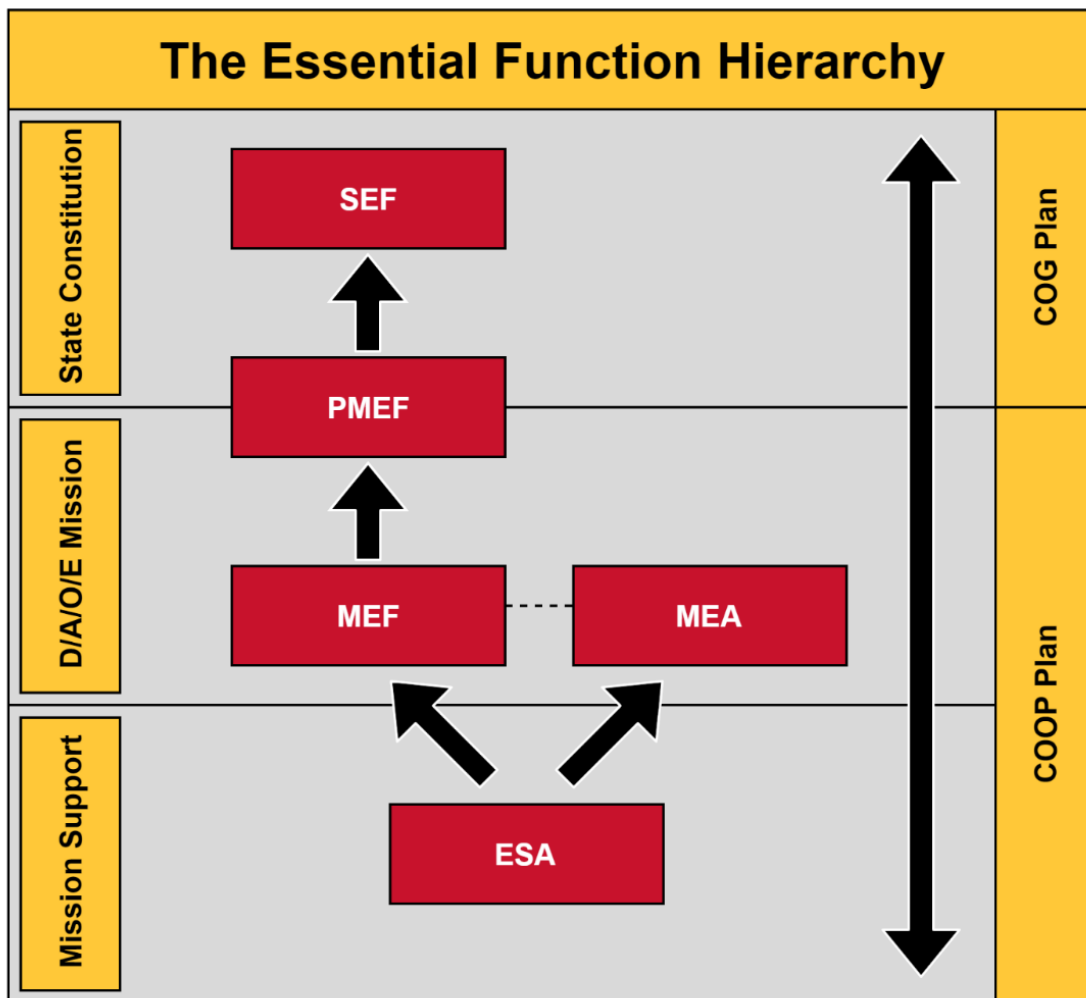
Essential functions can be placed in a categorical hierarchy for a more refined and predictable understanding of roles, responsibilities, and resources for a State D/A/O/E's COOP Plan. Figure 10 illustrates the categories of essential functions, their hierarchical relationship and their linkage to the elements of continuity. Each

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

tier flows upward to support the level above it for the goal of creating a prepared Maryland and robust continuity framework. Remember: during daily operations, PMEFS, MEFs, and MEAs operate on the same level and capacity. It is only during continuity events that MEFs and PMEFS are given an organizational priority.

Note the dotted line between MEAs and MEFs. During daily operations, PMEFS, MEFs, and MEAs operate on the same level and capacity. It is only during continuity events that MEFs and PMEFS are given an organizational priority.

Figure 10 – Essential Function Hierarchy Diagram



### D. State Essential Functions

State Essential Functions (SEFs), modeled after the National Essential Functions (NEFs), are the responsibilities of government to lead and sustain the State of Maryland during or following an emergency or disaster. The State of Maryland has eleven (11) SEFs covering broad range of responsibilities of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches. Recognizing the importance of partnerships and interdependencies, the State of Maryland's continuity framework is designed to support the ability of the Federal Government to perform NEFs, which will enable a more rapid and effective response to, and recovery from, a national emergency.

Table 10 details the SEFs, which are intentionally written as high-level functions. State Entities will need to review the SEFs as part of the determination process for categorizing an essential function as PMEF versus MEF. It is important to remember that some State D/A/O/E's may only have a few essential functions that support SEFs and in some cases a D/A/O/E may not have any essential functions that a SEF.



# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Table 10 – State Essential Functions

State Essential Functions
<p><b>SEF 1: Enduring Constitutional Government Continuity</b> Ensure the continued function of state government, under the State of Maryland Constitution and Laws, and critical government leadership elements including the functional of three separate branches of government.</p>
<p><b>SEF 2: Peaceful Transition of Power</b> Ensure the peaceful transition of power through free and open elections of government offices and the delivery of the oath or affirmation of office for elected or appointed officials.</p>
<p><b>SEF 3: Visible Leadership</b> Provide leadership visible to the State of Maryland and the Nation and maintain the trust and confidence of the citizens and partners of the State of Maryland.</p>
<p><b>SEF 4: Defend the State of Maryland</b> Defend the State of Maryland and Constitution of the State of Maryland against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and prevent or interdict attacks against the State of Maryland or its jurisdictions, people, property or interest.</p>
<p><b>SEF 5: Governmental and Non-Governmental Relationships</b> Maintain effective relationships and cooperative agreements with federal, state, local, and tribal governments, non-governmental and private sector partners, and foreign nations.</p>
<p><b>SEF 6: Homeland Security &amp; Critical Infrastructure Protection</b> Protect against threats to the State of Maryland and critical infrastructure and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the State of Maryland or its jurisdictions, people, property or interest.</p>
<p><b>SEF 7: Civil Rights, Safety, Law &amp; Order</b> Maintain civil order and public safety, including protecting people, property, and the rule of law, by ensuring basic civil rights and preventing crime.</p>
<p><b>SEF 8: Consequence Management &amp; Emergency Services</b> Provide rapid and effective response to and recovery from the consequences of an attack or other incident. Provide and/or assist local governments in providing critical consequence management and emergency services, including emergency management, police, fire, emergency medical services, public health and medical, search and rescue, hazmat, mass care and sheltering, emergency food services, military support, recovery operations, etc.</p>
<p><b>SEF 9: Economic Stability</b> Manage the overall economy of the State of Maryland by managing the State’s finances and ensuring solvency. Protect and stabilize the State’s economy and ensure public confidence in its financial system.</p>
<p><b>SEF 10: Basic Essential Services</b> Provide and/or assist in the provision of basic essential services, including water, power, food, health and medical, communications, transportation services, sanitation services, welfare services, environmental protection, commerce, etc. These services must continue or be restored quickly to provide basic needs.</p>
<p><b>SEF 11: Historic &amp; Cultural Resources</b> Protect and ensure the safeguarding of the State’s historic, cultural, and iconic resources, including historical documents, records, artwork, iconic symbols, historic or cultural properties and facilities.</p>

### E. Primary Mission Essential Functions

PMEFs are the most significant of the MEFs and are derived from the ability to directly support the execution of SEFs in the linear progression of continuity detailed in the Big Picture. While all MEFs are a priority for continuity, PMEFS are the exclusive and primary responsibility of a state department/agency/office/entity and will usually be the first to use resources and resume regular capability.

How to identify:

- How do we ensure the continuity of the SEFs?
- Which of these services absolutely cannot be deferred during an emergency?

### F. Mission Essential Functions

Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) are high-level roles and responsibilities assigned to, or required by, the State department/agency/office/entity to perform by law or executive action. MEFs are the backbone of continuity planning and are typically something unique to the State D/A/O/E. Continuing MEFs after a disaster will be the foundational goal of a robust Continuity Plan. If an organization fails to identify its MEFs and does not include them in its Continuity Plan, those MEFs may not be performed during an emergency or disaster.

Due to the nature of some State Entities, many MEFs may be identified through various laws, statutes, acts, or executive orders. During a disruption of normal events, entities must be able to focus their efforts and limited resources on the most important functions in order to sustain their operational capability – these will be labeled as Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs). If an organization identifies too many primary functions, limited resources, including personnel, may not be sufficient to resume the performance of PMEFS.

How to identify:

- What are the statutory requirements assigned to us by law, executive order, or directive?
- Which essential public goods or services are we required to continue based on our mission, purpose, or strategic plan?

### G. Mission Enhancing Activities

Mission Enhancing Activities (MEAs) are actions and services that are not required by law and are deferrable during a disruption. MEAs are usually complementary to an entity's mission or goal or are the product of best practices, in-house requirements, or industry recommendations.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Consider MEAs as supplemental functions, goods, or services that enhance the performance of MEFs.

How to identify:

- What actions do we perform that are not required by law?
- Which programs or functions enhance the purpose of our MEFs?
- Are there any supplemental goods or services that we produced?

MEAs are functions that would be preferable to continue but are not pivotal to organizational continuity the same way MEFs are. The Table 11 details the contrasts between MEFs and MEAs:

**Table 11 – MEF & MEA Contrast Details**

<b>Mission Essential Functions</b>	<b>Mission Enhancing Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-Deferrable</li><li>• "Must-do" functions</li><li>• Required by law</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deferrable</li><li>• "Supplemental" items</li><li>• May be part of Mission/Purpose</li></ul>

In order to identify which functions are mission essential, review your D/A/O/E functions against the State Essential Functions (laws, regulations, and standards). Next, conduct the Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire. This Questionnaire should be tailored to fit your D/A/O/E, as it will likely differ then MDEM in some areas. Upon completion of the EFA, PMEFs, MEFs, and MEAs will be identified. Once an Organizational Administrative Analysis (discussed later in this Guide) is completed, Essential Supporting Activities will then be identified. These ESAs will then be attributed to the D/A/O/E's primary mission essential functions, mission essential functions, and mission enhancing activities.

## H. Essential Function Analysis Overview

The purpose of the Essential Function Analysis (EFA) is to identify and document all the elements necessary to accomplish each MEF and MEA. The Essential Function Analysis enables our agency to consider the goals, products, operational details, critical legal/staffing/resources requirements, methods, and consequences. The finished product will work as a guide to include in the D/A/O/E Continuity of Operations Plan annexes that details how the function operates and to ensure continuity during a disruption. Figure 11 illustrates an example of the format of the EFA Questionnaire with the full document in Annex A. The Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire, in Excel format, that the Maryland Department of Emergency Management utilized to complete their analysis is provided as Attachment 1.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 11 – EFA Questionnaire Format Example

Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire	
[Insert Functional Area Name Here]	
Name	
Telephone	
Email Address	
Functional Area Name	
Functional Area Location	
Functional Area Description	
<b>1a. FUNCTIONAL AREA RECOVERY ASSUMPTIONS</b>	
1. Disaster affects only one facility 2. There will not be future access to facility one (everything required for recovery must be available elsewhere) 3. This plan will address the first two weeks of any outage 4. IT recovery plans are in place and IT can meet their RTO 5. Qualified personnel are available to continue operations	

## I. Recovery Time & Point Objectives

A Recovery Time Objective (RTO) is the period of time in which systems, applications, or MEFs must be recovered after a disruption of normal operations. The RTO should reflect the criticality of the MEF. Some MEFs must be performed without interruption. Others may not require resumption for a long period of time. RTOs may be determined by statutory requirements or prioritization by senior leadership. For consistency across all Continuity of Operations Plans within the State of Maryland, RTOs will be placed into categories:

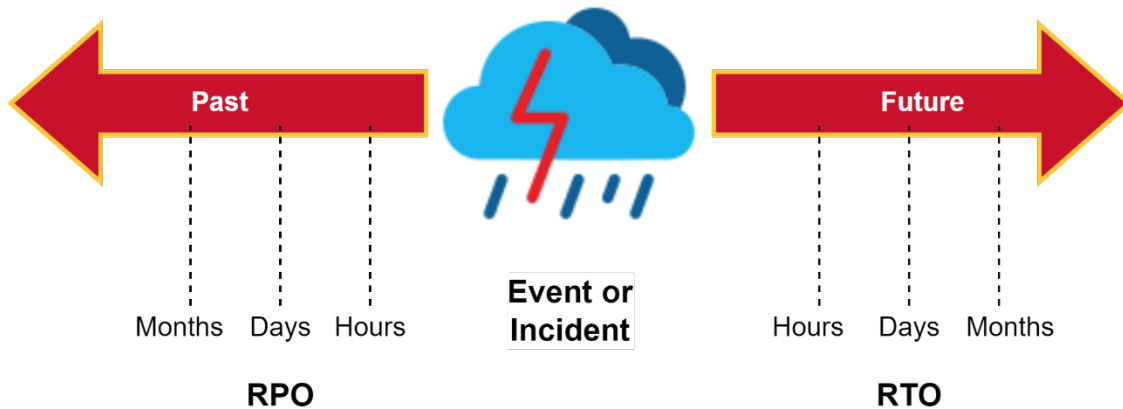
- Mission Critical – 12 Hours
- High Priority- 24 Hours
- Universal Need – 72 Hours
- Intermediate - 120 Hours
- When Available – 168 Hours

A Recovery Point Objective (RPO) is a measurement of time from the failure, disaster or comparable loss-causing event. RPOs measure back in time to when your data was preserved in a usable format, usually to the most recent backup. Recovery processing usually preserves any data changes made before the disaster or failure. RPOs can also refer to how much data can be lost before your D/A/O/E receives significant harm, also known as your D/A/O/E's loss tolerance.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 12 illustrates a visualization of the relationship between RTO and RPO with respect to your D/A/O/E's Continuity of Operations Plan. Annexes such as the Disaster Recovery IT Continuity Plan will focus on specific RPOs for data backups and systems managed by your D/A/O/E.

Figure 12 – RPO/RTO Timeline



### J. Organizational Administrative Analysis Overview

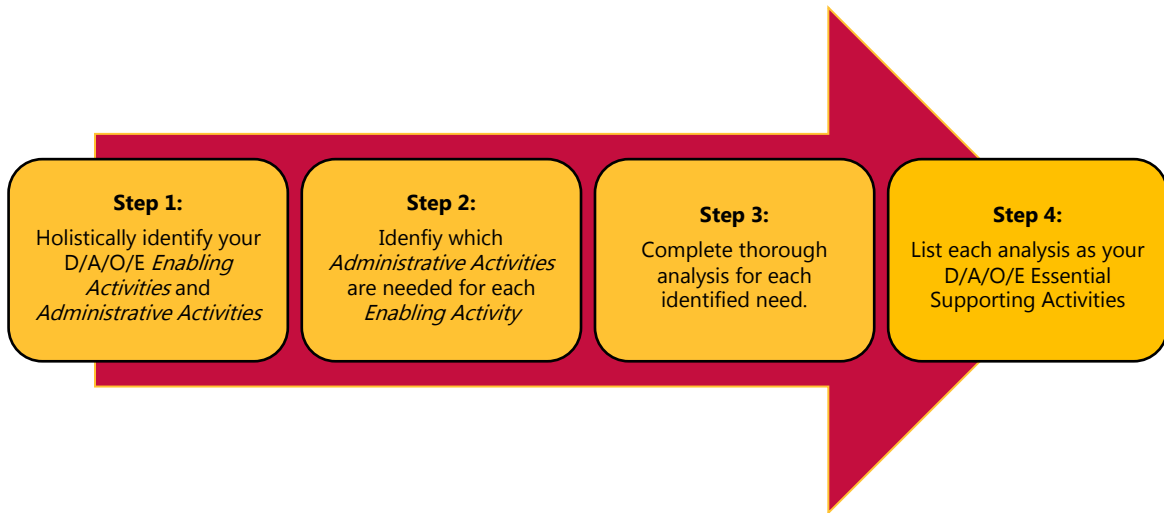
The purpose of the Organizational Administrative Analysis (OAA) is to identify which systems, platforms, and redundancies are needed to ensure both day-to-day continuity and emergency disruption continuity for D/A/O/E. The output of OAA process is the identification of Essential Supporting Activities (ESAs). For normal day-to-day operations, the following will be identified:

- Who: Personnel by position needed to execute ESA
- What: Resource needed to execute ESA
- Where: Size and location needed to execute ESA
- When: How quickly you need resources to execute ESA

Figure 13 illustrates the OAA process and Annex B details the OAA that the Maryland Department of Emergency Management utilized. The OAA, in Word format, is provided in Attachment 2.



Figure 13 – OAA Process



## K. Essential Supporting Activities

Essential Supporting Activities (ESAs) are the specific supporting activities that an organization must conduct in order to perform its MEFs and MEAs. Consider ESAs as enablers that make it possible for the State department/agency/office/entity to perform its mission. This usually includes day-to-day regular business functions that most organizations perform but will holistically influence your entity's ability to execute MEFs and MEAs.

During a disruption, many ESAs are still essential to be completed for continuity such as managing payroll, providing IT support, or paying invoices. It is crucial to identify these activities and understand their processes so they may be continued during an emergency.

Each State department/agency/office/entity will have to complete an Organizational Administrative Analysis to examine their ESAs. Although these can be regular business functions, not every entity performs ESAs the same way, further emphasizing the critical need to investigate ESAs as the main supporting mechanism for continuity. For example: some entities have the ability for in-house procurement while others may need to rely on sister agencies or other avenues for procurement.

How to Identify:

- What daily business activities need to be completed for the execution of day-to-day and emergency operations?
- How do my entity's administrative functions impact each other?
- What activities are essential to complete to support other entity functions?

### L. EFA/OAA Submission to COOP Coordinator

Once each entity of your D/A/O/E completes their assigned EFA or OAA, they are to submit their analysis to the COOP Coordinator. It is then the responsibility of the COOP Coordinator to review each analysis. If they are in agreement, it is then time to submit to senior leadership approval. Should the COOP Coordinator find a discrepancy, this must be corrected prior to submitting to leadership. The State department/agency/office/entity must obtain review, validation, and approval of the functions/activities, descriptions, and prioritizations from senior leadership. It is critical that leaders recognize the scope and effect of establishing and prioritizing organizational PMEFS:

- Organizational leadership should be in full agreement with the organization's missions and priorities during a disruption or crisis;
- Continuity and emergency plans will be developed based on the organization's PMEFS and priorities, which will involve assignment of personnel and resources; and
- Organizational funds and resources may need to be allocated during an emergency or disaster to ensure execution of PMEFS.

Submit the rankings and data sheets containing the analysis of each PMEFS, MEF, MEA, and ESA to senior leadership for approval. Once approved, incorporate these foundational functions to your organization's COOP.

### M. Essential Function Ranking, Grouping & Prioritization

Best practice for ranking and prioritizing D/A/O/E functions combines individual ranking and grouping by tiers. PMEFS and MEFs should be individually rank ordered based on criticality to D/A/O/E operations. Once your D/A/O/E has identified functions and designated them as PMEFS or MEFs, COOP Coordinators should work with the CWG to rank and prioritize functions based on legal requirements and D/A/O/E mission. MEAs and ESAs should be ranked and grouped by tiers. Individual rankings of MEAs and ESAs becomes cumbersome and is not necessary based on support to D/A/O/E operations. Order of resumption of MEAs and ESAs and should be prioritized based on operational needs following a continuity incident. Tiered groups allow for flexibility to best meet you D/A/O/E mission, goals, and objectives.

### N. Submission Requirements to MDEM

The purpose of identifying, reviewing, ranking, and analyzing each organizational function is to formalize the resources, staff, funding, and processes needed to resume functions during or after a disruption. Being able to resume your MEFs and support SEFs is vital to the continuity of state operations and the continuity of government.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Submit the PMEfs of your State D/A/O/E to the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) for review and validation. MDEM, as the lead of the State Continuity Program, will integrate the PMEfs into the Executive Branch Continuity of Government (COG) plan as the support to SEFs.

In addition, your D/A/O/E's Continuity of Operations Plan is to be sent to MDEM at [continuity.mdem@maryland.gov](mailto:continuity.mdem@maryland.gov) for their review as this is required by law on an annual basis per Md. Code, Pub. Safety § 14-116. MDEM requests that they receive all Continuity of Operations Plans by the start of each Fiscal Year on July 1st. The Continuity of Operations Plan is legally required to be reviewed annually at the very least, or on an as-needed basis. Be sure to record the date and name(s) of the personnel conducting the update/review in the Record of Changes.

## IV. Phase 4: Continuity Strategies

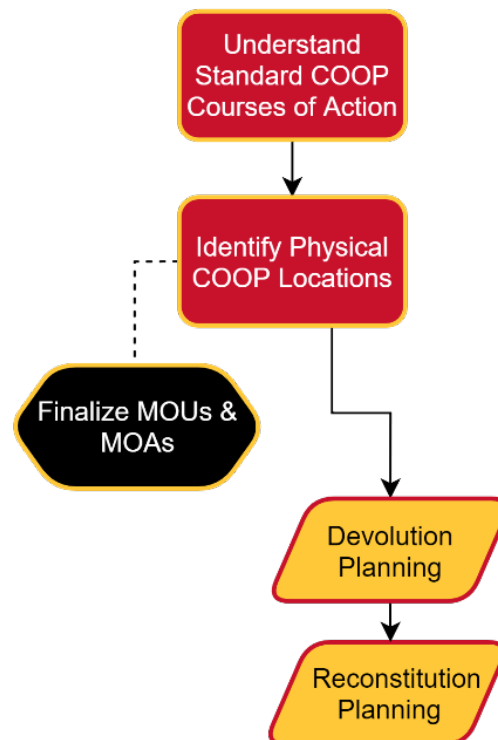
Continuity Courses of Action (COAs) are the options your State D/A/O/E has at its disposal when facing a disruption of regular events or a limitation of entity resources. The COAs are the primary focus of the Continuity of Operations Plan and will allow your leadership team to make thoughtful decisions when the plan needs to be activated.

Consider your entity as a whole:

- How spread out are our facilities?
- How many employees would be impacted?
- Would we be scarce on response equipment or materials?

Identify any trends that may be revealing as the impacts disrupt your essential functions. For example, if multiple hazards impose a threat to your facility, a virtual operations COA and the associated planning needs may be necessary to include in your Continuity of Operations Plan. Additionally, consider the other planning needs of COAs and redundancies for your PMEF/MEF/MEA/ESAs associated with the impacted resources. Figure 14 illustrates Phase 4 – Continuity Strategies of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 14 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 4**



## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

### A. Standard COOP Courses of Action

The State Continuity Program has developed a set of standardized COOP COAs that cover the range of continuity operations and flexible to any scenario. Table 12 details the standard COAs for COOP plan implementation.

**Table 12 – Standard COOP COAs**

<b>Standard COOP COAs</b>	
<b>Normal Operations</b>	Daily operations during day-to-day “Blue Sky” environment. No continuity strategies are activated. There is no disruption to daily operations.
<b>Redundancy-in-Place</b>	In the event of a failure or loss of resource or capability, existing D/A/O/E facilities have back-up capabilities already in place (i.e. generators, secondary internet service provider). Some minor, short-term continuity strategies may be activated. There is little to no disruption to daily operations.
<b>Distributed Operations</b>	Distributed operations would be utilized when part of existing D/A/O/E infrastructure is unavailable. When distributed operations are initiated, certain personnel must relocate to alternate locations or operate virtually. If possible, essential operations will remain at the primary facilities while remaining personnel report to distributed operations locations. Significant continuity strategies are now being activated. Daily operations are disrupted while ensuring essential D/A/O/E functions continue until personnel can resume functions remotely.
<b>Total Relocation</b>	Total relocation would be utilized when a D/A/O/E’s primary facilities or infrastructure are completely unavailable. All essential and non-essential personnel must relocate to alternate locations or operate virtually. A severe incident has occurred, and continuity strategies are fully activated. Daily operations are significantly disrupted and potential long-term loss of physical operations at primary facilities has occurred.
<b>Virtual Operations</b>	Virtual operations could be utilized across multiple continuity strategies. This strategy allows for maximum flexibility and should be activated and scaled as necessary. Some or all continuity strategies are activated. Daily operations are disrupted, but the extent of disruption is dependent upon the scale and duration of virtual operations.
<b>Devolution</b>	Utilized when there is complete or total loss of personnel, equipment, and facilities. Essential functions must be fully transitioned to another D/A/O/E. A catastrophic incident has occurred, and continuity strategies are fully activated by secondary D/A/O/E’s. Daily operations have been devastated and the primary D/A/O/E can no longer execute essential and non-essential functions.

### B. Understanding the Decision-Making Process

Utilizing some type of Decision Matrix may assist when determining which COA is best to use given the situation at hand. It is designed to weigh out one COA against another. Table 13 illustrates an example decision matrix, listing four criteria to rate each COA. Table 14 details the criteria, their definitions, and rating weights.



## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

However, these type matrices are subjective and can be changed however your D/A/O/E sees fit. This type of tool can be used to brief senior leadership.

**Table 13 – COA Decision Making Process Matrix Example**

<b>COA Decision Making Process Matrix</b>				
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>COA 1</b>	<b>COA 2</b>	<b>COA 3</b>
<b>Simplicity</b>	X1	1	3	2
<b>Risk</b>	X2	2	4	2
<b>Resources</b>	X1	1	2	2
<b>Time</b>	X1	2	1	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

**Table 14 – COA Matrix Criteria Definitions & Weight Details**

<b>COA Matrix Criteria Details</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Remarks</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Simplicity</b>	Degree of difficulty required to execute plan	Optimal COA would be the simplest to plan and execute	X1
<b>Risk</b>	How much risk is involved to accomplish the COA	Optimal COA would be minimal risk to employees and the public	X2
<b>Resources</b>	Ability to execute with the supplies at hand	Optimal COA would require minimal resources	X1
<b>Time</b>	Time required to implement plan	Optimal COA would be the fastest/require the least time	X1
<b>1 – Easiest/Low to 4 – Most Difficult/High</b>			

### C. Continuity Alternate Facilities

When a continuity emergency occurs, the situation may require relocation to an alternate facility. Identifying and securing alternate continuity facilities is critical to maintain operations for a D/A/O/E. Alternate continuity facilities should be capable of supporting all PMEFs and MEFs of your D/A/O/E. D/A/O/E COOP Coordinators should follow the best practice of the PACE concept of Primary, Alternate, Contingency, and Emergency when selecting alternate continuity facilities. COOP Coordinators should be working with the members of their D/A/O/E's CWG to identify alternate continuity locations to fulfill the requirements of PACE. Formal MOUs and MOAs should need to be executed if alternate continuity facilities are owned and operated by outside D/A/O/E's. The CWG should draft and review MOUs and MOAs before sending them to Senior Leadership for approval and signature. D/A/O/E legal representatives should be involved with the review and approval process for any formal agreements between D/A/O/E's.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

When considering alternate physical continuity facilities, it is important to determine status of the facility in terms of being a hot, warm, or cold site. Table 15 detail the types of alternate continuity facilities.

**Table 15 – Alternate Continuity Facility Types**

<b>Alternate Continuity Facility Types</b>	
<b>Hot Site</b>	Hot Site locations that operate 24 hours a day with fully operational equipment and capacity to immediately assume operations upon loss of the primary facility. A hot continuity facility requires on-site telecommunications, information, infrastructure, equipment, back-up data repositories, and personnel required to sustain essential functions.
<b>Warm Site</b>	Warm Site locations that have a minimum acceptable level of infrastructure in-place, and also possess the IT and telecommunications equipment to become operational as soon as possible, but not later than 12 hours after continuity activation. In order to become active, a warm facility requires additional personnel, equipment, supplies, software or customization. Warm sites generally possess the resources necessary to sustain critical mission/business processes but lack the capacity to activate all systems or components.
<b>Cold Site</b>	Cold Sites are a facility that is neither staffed nor operational on a daily basis. Telecommunications, IT equipment, and infrastructure is typically present at the location, however teams of specialized personnel must be deployed to activate the systems before the site can become operational. Basic infrastructure and environmental controls are present (e.g., electrical and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems), yet systems are not continuously active.

Your D/A/O/E should have existing secondary facilities available through memorandum of understanding/memorandum of agreement (MOU/MOA) prior to an incident that warrants Continuity of Operations Plan activation. Your D/A/O/E should have identified PACE facilities and their current capability (hot, warm, cold) listed in this section of your Continuity of Operations Plan. Table 16 details the PACE facilities concept for continuity locations.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Table 16 – Alternate Facility PACE Elements & Details

Alternate Facility PACE Elements & Details			
Element	Order	Details	Type
<b>Primary</b>	Plan A	This represents your D/A/O/E's primary working location/facility. When conditions are normal this is the location where normal day-to-day operations (PMEFs, MEFs and MEAs) occur.	Hot Site
<b>Alternate</b>	Plan B	This represents your D/A/O/E's secondary working location/facility that operations (PMEFs and MEFs) will occur if the primary location is not usable or inaccessible. This location should be maintained as a hot site. Your D/A/O/E's alternate location should be able to support operations for a prolonged period of time following a continuity event.	Hot Site
<b>Contingency</b>	Plan C	This represents your D/A/O/E's tertiary working location/facility that operations (PMEFs and MEFs) will occur if the primary and secondary locations are not usable or inaccessible. This location should ideally be maintained as a warm site. Your D/A/O/E's contingency location should be able to support operations while your primary and alternate sites are reconstituted. Operations should be transitioned back to a primary or alternate facility as soon as possible.	Warm Site
<b>Emergency</b>	Plan D	This represents your D/A/O/E's emergency working location/facility that operations (PMEFs and MEFs) will occur if all other designated locations are not usable or inaccessible. This more than likely will be a cold site. Your D/A/O/E's should plan to use your emergency location for a very short period of time while primary, alternate, and contingency locations are reconstituted as it is more than likely shared space with other D/A/O/E's. Emergency locations are only used in a worst-case scenario continuity event to maintain PMEFs.	Cold Site

## D. MOU/MOA for Alternate Continuity Facilities

Agreements should be put in place for continuity purposes if and when the need arises. A memorandum will ensure that the facility/resource will be available in the event of an emergency. These arrangements can take the form of MOUs or MOAs.

### **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):**

A MOU is a legal document describing a bilateral agreement between parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action, rather than a legal commitment. It is a more formal alternative to a gentlemen's agreement, but generally lacks the binding power of a contract.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

## Memorandum of Agreement (MOA):

A MOA or cooperative agreement is a document written between parties to cooperatively work together on an agreed upon project or meet an agreed upon objective. The purpose of an MOA is to have a written understanding of the agreement between parties. The MOA can also be a legal document that is binding and holds the parties responsible for their commitment or just a partnership agreement.

### E. Virtual Operations

There is value associated with being able to have emergency essential personnel operate in a virtual environment to maintain your D/A/O/E’s mission, however there are limitations that need to be considered. Virtual operations cannot be the primary COA that your D/A/O/E activates following a continuity event or incident. The scenario in Table 17 will highlight the considerations and constraints of virtual operations.

**Table 17 – Virtual Operations Scenario**

Scenario	Considerations
Major statewide ice storm has crippled the electrical power grid and severely restricted movement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you have alternate power to maintain virtual operations and personal computing equipment?</li> <li>2. Do you have connectivity without personal WiFi or power and/or do you live in an area with poor cellular signal/service?</li> </ol>
	Constraints
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inability to relocate prior to impacts has hindered your ability to support emergency operations based on lack of power and connectivity.</li> <li>2. PMEFs and MEFs are unnecessarily disrupted and their associated RTOs and RPOs are no achievable and impacts have been exacerbated.</li> </ol>

### F. Devolution

Devolution is defined as the transfer of statutory authority and responsibilities from a D/A/O/E’s primary operating staff and facilities to another designated staff and facility for the sustainment of essential functions. The decision to devolve stems from an incident or potential incident involving the organization’s primary operating facility and or prevents employees from relocating to an alternate operating facility to perform the organization’s essential functions.

The Devolution Plan will serve as an annex to your Continuity of Operations Plan and will focus on continuing organization operations through the transfer of

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

statutory authority and responsibilities from an organization's primary operating staff and facilities to another designated staff and facility following an actual or anticipated continuity event that causes an organization to lose access to its normal and continuity personnel and/or its normal or alternate facilities.

When writing this plan, a Devolution Working Group (DWG) and Devolution Emergency Response Group (DERG) should be established. These serve as the two (2) major groups involved in devolution planning and execution. Your D/A/O/E has the planning responsibility to create a "partnership" with their devolution counterparts. This partnership ensures devolution sites have the requisite personnel, equipment, and facilities to execute essential functions.

### G. Reconstitution

The Reconstitution plan will serve as an annex to your Continuity of Operations Plan and will focus on recovery. This plan provides guidance and direction for remaining personnel to resume normal D/A/O/E operations from the original or a replacement primary operating facility once leadership determines that reconstitution operations for resuming normal business operations can be initiated. It includes guidance to ensure the effective transition and phase-down of continuity operations at an alternate facility or devolution site and the corresponding transfer of essential functions, personnel, records, and equipment.

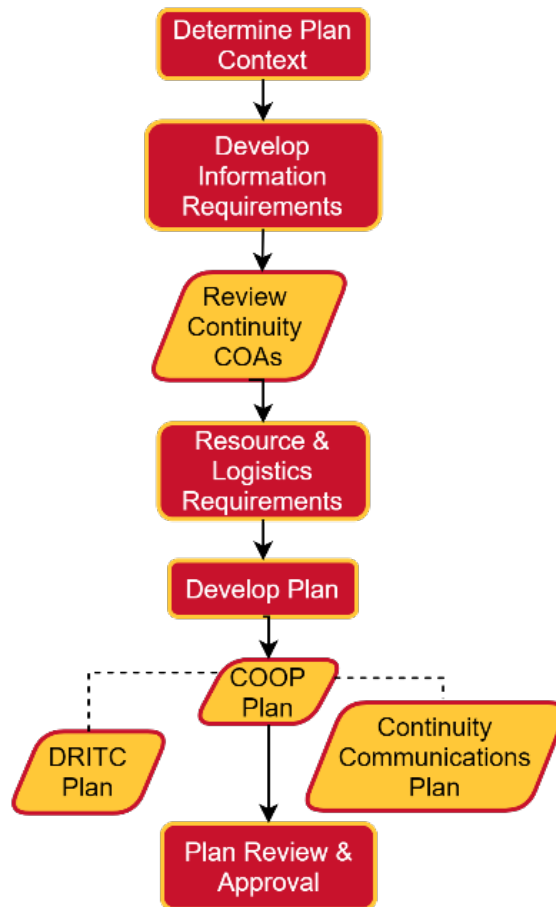
This plan applies to all the D/A/O/E's senior leadership and staff. It addresses processes, procedures, activities, actions, operations, and resources necessary to ensure the effective transition from continuity or devolution operations back to normal operations.



## V. Phase 5: Continuity Plan Development

The COOP Coordinator has specific responsibilities that they are responsible to uphold. First, they are to use the approved COA strategies as the basis for plan documentation. Next, define the structure for the plan documentation. Then, coordinate the effort to document recovery plans for the entity's operations and the supporting infrastructure. Finally, publish the plan documents and submit the Continuity of Operations Plan to MDEM. Figure 15 illustrates Phase 5 – Continuity Plan of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 15 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 5**



### A. Determine Plan Context

Much like other emergency management plans, the COOP Coordinator will have to determine the context for their D/A/O/E Continuity of Operations Plan. Determining plan context transcends continuity planning and describes a universal emergency planning process. COOP Coordinators must understand the purpose and scope of the creation or update of their Continuity of Operations Plan. Furthermore, they must understand the situation in which the plan is required. They

first step in development of a high-quality Continuity of Operations Plan is understanding the purpose, scope, and situation surrounding continuity of operations with a D/A/O/E.

### B. Develop Information Requirements

Continuity of Operations Plans have basic information requirements that must be met in order to ensure that they are effectively serving their purpose. Depending on the D/A/O/E, the information requirements will differ when developing a Continuity of Operations Plan. COOP Coordinators must work with the CWG, ERG, and senior leadership in order to identify information requirements specific to individual D/A/O/E's.

### C. Review Continuity COAs

Once the CWG identifies and understands all continuity COAs that are relevant to their D/A/O/E, they should review with senior leadership and determine the order and process for determining COAs when the Continuity of Operations Plan is activated. All stakeholders should understand the order and process based on event, impact, and capabilities to form a playbook for COOP activation and response. Once these aspects of the planning process are formalized the CWG can move forward in the development of the Continuity of Operations Plan and its annexes.

### D. Concept of Coordination

The concept of coordination for your D/A/O/E's COOP plan should clarify all roles and responsibilities of personnel before, during, and after a continuity event or incident. The concept of coordination is a process or methodology for how D/A/O/E stakeholders work together and are integrated from a continuity perspective. Table 18 defines example roles and responsibilities that should be included within your D/A/O/E COOP plan.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

**Table 18 – Concept of Coordination Stakeholders**

<b>Continuity Role</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>Senior Leadership</b>	D/A/O/E decisions makers at the highest level with greatest influence (i.e. Secretary and Executive Director).
<b>COOP Coordinator</b>	Assigned individual who oversees and is ultimately responsible for D/A/O/E continuity program (i.e. D/A/O/E continuity lead).
<b>Continuity Working Group (CWG)</b>	Assigned D/A/O/E personnel responsible for maintaining departmental COOP annexes and coordinating D/A/O/E COOP procedures.
<b>Emergency Relocation Group (ERG)</b>	The ERG is comprised of COOP personnel that are tasked with the initial deployment to alternate continuity facilities. These individuals ensure the alternate continuity facilities are setup (i.e. infrastructure, systems, equipment, resources, etc.) for the resumption of D/A/O/E PMEfs and MEFs.
<b>Reconstitution Working Group (RWG)</b>	The RWG is made up of members from the ERG. They are tasked with ensuring that the D/A/O/E is capable of normal operations, making recommendations to remain at alternate continuity facilities, for finding additional (more permanent) alternate continuity facilities.
<b>Devolution Working Group (DWG)</b>	The DWG is made up of members from the CWG. They are tasked with ensuring that the D/A/O/E can devolve all PMEfs and MEFs per the procedures defined in the devolution plan.
<b>Devolution Emergency Relocation Group (DERG)</b>	The DERG is made up of members from the DWG and ERG. They are tasked with ensuring that should the D/A/O/E devolution plan activate, PMEfs and MEFs can be sustained or quickly resumed at alternate continuity facilities. The DERG should be preparing for the worst-case scenario from a COOP perspective. These individuals will be seeking more permanent facilities after PMEfs and MEFs are stabilized at alternate continuity facilities.
<b>Mission Essential Personnel</b>	Personnel that are deemed to be mission essential due to the knowledge they possess and the tasks they are assigned or the PMEfs and MEFs they execute.

## E. Concept of Operations

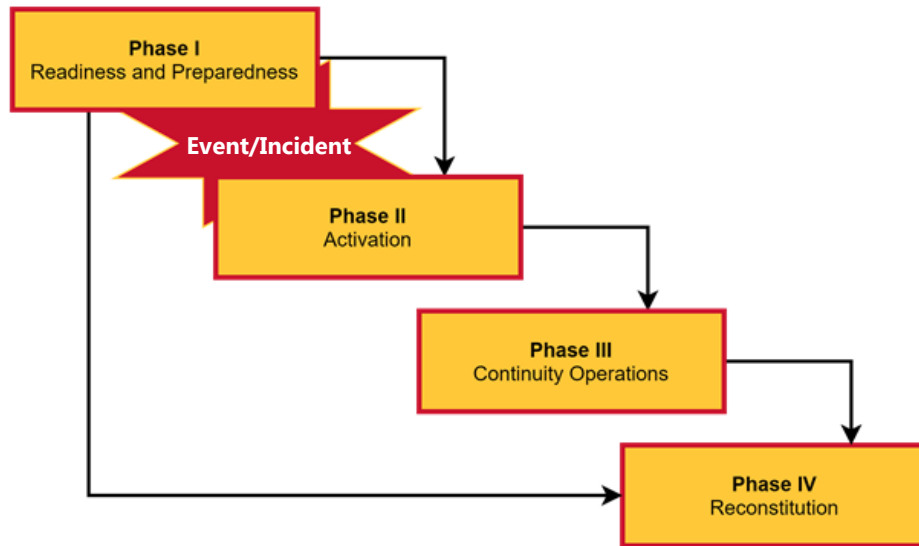
The concept of operations (CONOPS) for your D/A/O/E’s COOP plan should clarify the overall approach to how continuity events and incidents are handled (i.e., what needs to happen, when, and at whose direction) and identifies any specialized response teams and/or unique resources need to respond to a continuity event or incident. Best practice dictates that D/A/O/E COOP CONOPS be broken into four distinct phases:

1. Readiness and Preparedness;
2. Activation;
3. Continuity Operations; and
4. Reconstitution Operations.

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Figure 16 illustrates the operational phases of the continuity concept of operations.

**Figure 16 – Continuity Operational Phases**



## F. Resource and Logistics Requirements

Continuity personnel, and ideally, as many D/A/O/E personnel as possible, have the responsibility to create and maintain COOP-Kits. Continuity personnel are responsible for carrying the kits to the Continuity Facility or pre-storing the kits at the Continuity site. Table 19 details the recommended items, to include but is not limited to, for your D/A/O/E issued Continuity COOP-Kits.

**Table 19 – COOP Kit Contents by Type**

Department/ Agency COOP Kit Contents	Continuity Personnel COOP Kit Contents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication equipment (i.e. radio, satellite phone, etc.)</li> <li>• Hand-carried essential records</li> <li>• Directions to Continuity Facility</li> <li>• Maps of surrounding area</li> <li>• Continuity Plan (paper copy, location of digital copy)</li> <li>• Flashlight</li> <li>• Power banks</li> <li>• HDMI cord</li> <li>• External hard drive</li> <li>• Additional laptop/monitor (if needed)</li> <li>• Power strip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government ID card</li> <li>• Driver's license</li> <li>• Government Emergency Telephone Service (GETS) card</li> <li>• Government travel card (if issued)</li> <li>• Personal charge card</li> <li>• Government cell phone</li> <li>• Personal cell phone</li> <li>• Business and leisure clothing</li> <li>• Business and personal contact numbers</li> <li>• Emergency phone numbers and addresses (relatives, medical doctor, pharmacist)</li> <li>• Toiletries</li> <li>• Chargers/extra batteries for phones, GPS, and laptop</li> </ul>

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Department/ Agency COOP Kit Contents	Continuity Personnel COOP Kit Contents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bottled water and non-perishable food/snacks</li> <li>• Medical needs (30-day supply)</li> <li>• Insurance information</li> <li>• Glasses and contact lenses</li> <li>• Extra pair of eyeglasses/contact lenses</li> <li>• Prescription drugs (30-day supply)</li> <li>• Over-the-counter medications, dietary supplements</li> </ul>

## G. Develop Continuity of Operations Plan

To start, prepare the initial draft. There are many steps that must be taken to accomplish this task, such as utilizing the Maryland State Continuity of Operations Plan Template that was distributed along with this Guide by MDEM. To further assist in this process, the EFA Questionnaire will serve as a tool to identify PMEFs, MEFs, and MEAs for your D/A/O/E. These essential functions must be taken into consideration when drafting your Continuity of Operations Plan. In addition to the support documents provided by MDEM, also form a CWG to receive input from other functional areas within your D/A/O/E. In between meetings with the CWG, draft the plan. Once the draft is complete, forward the plan draft to the CWG, then other stakeholders to review the plan and validate information. Revise plan contents as needed and prepare the final draft. Once this step has been completed, obtain leadership approval and submit to MDEM once signed.

## H. Continuity Information Technology Planning

Each D/A/O/E cannot overlook their needs with respect to information technology (IT) when developing a Continuity of Operations Plan. MDEM has adopted this thinking in the form of a Disaster Recovery IT Continuity (DRITC) Plan. The theory behind continuity IT planning is creating an inventory of hardware and software needed to maintain operations during an event or incident. When completed this plan can be handed to an IT professional that describes the necessary infrastructure that your D/A/O/E will require to continue essential functions. This plan should be created in tandem with your local IT support and be kept as an annex to your overall D/A/O/E Continuity of Operations Plan.

## I. Continuity Communications Planning

The ability of an organization to execute its essential functions at its continuity facilities depends on the identification, availability, and redundancy of critical communications systems to support connectivity among key government leadership personnel, internal organization elements, other organizations, critical customers, and the public, during crisis and disaster conditions.



## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Your D/A/O/E should identify the most effective methods for communicating with interested parties, whether this be done through notification systems, email and group distribution lists, conference calls, intranet systems, event information lines, etc. Table 20 illustrates an example of tracking modes of communication systems that support an organization's essential functions with two examples completed for your reference:

**Table 20 – Continuity Communications Inventory Example**

Communication System	Support to Essential Function	Current Provider	Typing	Alternate Provider	Additional Notes
<b>Internet Access</b>	Connectivity to maintain operations	Comcast Xfinity	Business class/enterprise services	Verizon FiOS	N/A
<b>Cellular Phones</b>	Ability to communicate with employees and stakeholders	AT&T FirstNet	iPhone/Android device	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wireless Priority Service (WPS)</li> <li>Verizon Priority Service</li> </ul>	Personal phones may be utilized should government phones be unusable; all employees are issued government cell phones
<b>Satellite Phones</b>	Communication when traditional cellular coverage is unavailable	Iridium	Iridium Extreme 9575	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immarsat</li> <li>Globalstar</li> </ul>	Personal phones may be utilized should government phones be unusable; all employees are issued government cell phones
<b>Satellite Terminal</b>	Data upload and download when traditional internet service providers are unavailable	Immarsat	BGAN Explorer 710	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iridium</li> <li>Globalstar</li> </ul>	Terminal must be facing south with no obstructions; do not stand in front of terminal when transmitting
<b>E-mail Service</b>	Communication with stakeholders	Google	Gmail	Microsoft Outlook	N/A
<b>Portable Radios</b>	Push to talk capability to communicate with stakeholders	Motorola	Motorola APEX 8000	N/A	Coverage and range are based on frequency and tower availability
<b>GETS Cards</b>	Wireless priority service when cellular network is saturated or overwhelmed	DHS		N/A	Users must request access in order to receive a GETS Card
<b>Mobile Internet Service System</b>	Increased bandwidth to support stakeholders when traditional internet service providers are saturated or overwhelmed	Plum Laboratories	Plum Case	N/A	Plum cases have ability to create multiple wide area networks using multiple cellular providers

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Communication System	Support to Essential Function	Current Provider	Typing	Alternate Provider	Additional Notes
<b>Mobile WiFi Hotspots</b>	Mobile personal wireless network providing connectivity to services and systems	AT&T	NetGear Nighthawk	Verizon MiFi JetPack	Connectivity is based on cellular availability to provide wireless network

### J. Plan Review and Approval

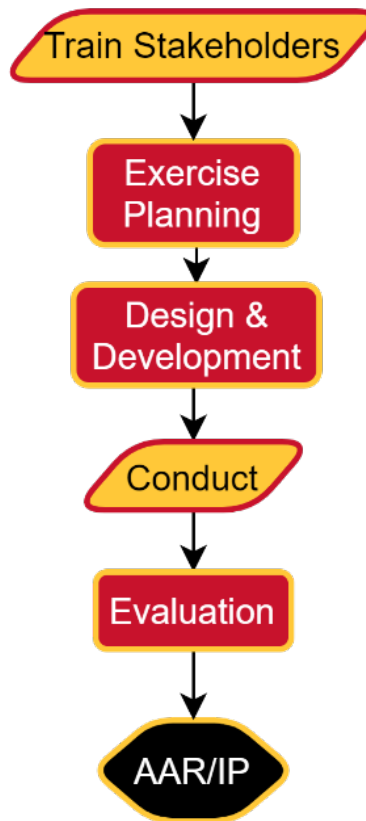
The Continuity of Operations Plan must meet leadership responsibility and statutory requirements. Once met, leadership will acknowledge approval and sign the Continuity of Operations Plan. Once approved, it should be stored both electronically for easy Stakeholder access and paper copies should be securely stored in multiple locations (office, alternate location, COOP kit, etc.) Plan maintenance must always be documented in the Record of Changes table located at the beginning of the plan. Annotate the date of changes, type of change, person & role of those making the change, etc. Maintain a record of the history of the plan document, as well as the date issued.

## VI. Phase 6: Continuity Training and Exercise

Training and exercise are a key component of preparedness and provide the opportunity to shape planning, assess and validate capabilities, and address areas for improvement. COOP success and effectiveness is dependent upon each employee knowing their roles and responsibilities. D/A/O/E personnel should be aware of the need to restore essential functions, services, and systems. It is important that employees are trained on what their specific roles and responsibilities are when an event occurs.

Training and exercise will highlight the strengths and deficiencies that exist in plans and individuals' response actions. Exercises are oftentimes what allows people to understand the areas in which they need more practice or familiarization. FEMA has developed the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), which provides a set of guiding principles for exercise and evaluation programs, as well as a common approach to exercise program management, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. Figure 17 illustrates Phase 6 – Continuity Training and Exercise of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 17 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 6**



### A. Train Stakeholders

Training is a critical component of ensuring that a Continuity of Operations Plan will be well executed. Various forms of training can be utilized to ensure familiarity and comfortability of what the Continuity of Operations Plan entails as well as what each person's roles and responsibilities are during a COOP event. Training should be conducted on an annual basis, or as needed. Ensure that all training is documented.

### B. Exercise Planning

Through the use of Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP), the whole community can develop, execute, and evaluate exercises that address the preparedness priorities. These priorities are informed by risk and capability assessments, findings, corrective actions from previous events, and external requirements. These priorities guide the overall direction of an exercise program and the design and development of individual exercises. When planning an exercise, it is important to follow the below steps to ensure that an effective and engaging exercise takes place:

- Obtain the approval of leadership for the exercise/test;
- Determine what part of the plan you want to exercise/test;
- Determine the type of exercise/test to be conducted;
- Identify the exercise/test participants;
- Agree upon the scope of the exercise/test;
- Agree upon the objectives of the exercise/test;
- Set the exercise/test date;
- Build the exercise/test plan;
- Build the exercise/test timeline;
- Review the exercise/test plan and timeline with the team; and
- Finalize the plan and timeline.

### C. Exercise Design and Development

During exercise design and development, the exercise planning team members use the intent and guidance of senior leaders and the program priorities to shape the individual or series of exercises. Involving the risk and hazard assessments, plans, policies, and procedures, grant or cooperative agreements, and relevant After-Action Reports (AARs) and Improvement Plans (IPs), exercise planners ensure that exercises assess and validate a jurisdiction's/organization's capabilities.

### D. Exercise Conduct

Exercise conduct involves activities such as preparing for exercise play, managing exercise play, and conducting immediate exercise wrap-up activities. For a

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

discussion-based exercise, conduct entails presentation, facilitation, and discussion. For an operations-based exercise, conduct encompasses all operations occurring between the designated Start of the Exercise (StartEx) and End of the Exercise (EndEx).

### E. Exercise Evaluation

An effective evaluation assesses performance against exercise objectives and identifies and documents strengths and areas for improvement relative to capabilities. Evaluation is important and considered in all phases of the exercise planning cycle, beginning when the exercise planning team meets to establish objectives and initiate exercise design through improvement planning. No later than 30 days after an incident and resuming normal operations, the D/A/O/E will ensure an After-Action Report (AAR) and Improvement Plan (IP) of the exercise is completed. It is extremely important that the AAR is completed as soon as possible, so that the involved parties do not forget details of significance. Improvement planning activities can help shape a jurisdiction's/organization's preparedness priorities and support continuous improvement. Actions identified during Improvement Planning help to strengthen elements of a jurisdiction's/organization's capability to plan, organize/equip, train, and exercise.

### F. Exercise Types

Exercises are divided into two (2) type's discussion-based and operations-based exercises. The exercise planning team will determine the appropriate type of exercise based on the objectives and desired outcomes of the exercise.

Discussion-based exercises include seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises (TTXs), and games/wargaming. These types of exercises familiarize players with or develop new plans, policies, procedures, and agreements. Discussion-based exercises focus on strategic, policy-oriented issues, and facilitators or presenters lead the discussion, keeping participants moving towards meeting the exercise objectives.

Operations-based exercises include drills, functional exercises (FE), and full-scale exercises (FSE). These exercises validate plans, policies, procedures, and agreements; clarify roles and responsibilities; and identify resource gaps. Operations-based exercises include a real-time response such as initiating communications or mobilizing personnel and resources.

### G. Continuity Exercise Recommendations

Continuity of operations exercises should occur regularly. Table 21 illustrates examples of the different exercise types and an example of frequency of delivery for each exercise type. There are other methods in which to exercise your COOP plan.



# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

**Table 21 – Continuity Exercise Recommendations**

<b>Continuity Exercise Recommendations</b>	
<b>Tabletop Exercise</b> (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COOP Tabletop Exercise (Quarter 1 &amp; 3)</li> <li>• COOP Enhanced Tabletop Exercise (Quarter 2 &amp; 4)</li> </ul>
<b>Drills</b> (Biannually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COOP Emergency Relocation Group Deployment Drill</li> <li>• COOP Alternate Facility Function Drill</li> </ul>
<b>Functional Exercise</b> (Biannually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COOP Virtual Functional Exercise</li> <li>• Continuity Communications Exercise</li> </ul>
<b>Full-Scale Exercise</b> (Annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COOP D/A/O/E Full-Scale Exercise</li> <li>• COOP Statewide Full-Scale Exercise</li> </ul>

## H. Exercise Budget Management

Effective budget management is essential to the success of an exercise program and for exercise managers to maintain awareness of available resources and expected expenditures. In developing and maintaining an exercise program budget, exercise program managers work with stakeholders to identify financial resources and define monitoring and reporting requirements for individual exercises.

Training: Ensures participants understand and can perform:

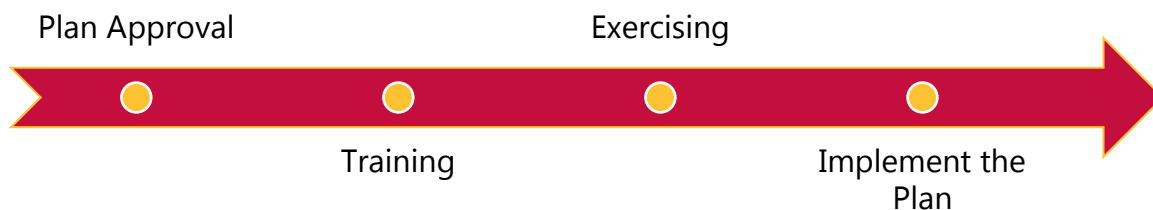
- Processes and concepts;
- Roles and responsibilities

Exercises/ Real-World events: Provides feedback to evaluate the plan:

- What went well and why?
- What did not go well and why?

Figure 18 illustrates the glide path for continuity plan implementation and details the relationship of training and exercise with plan development and plan implementation. Refer to the FEMA HSEEP Guide for further details on exercise design and development.

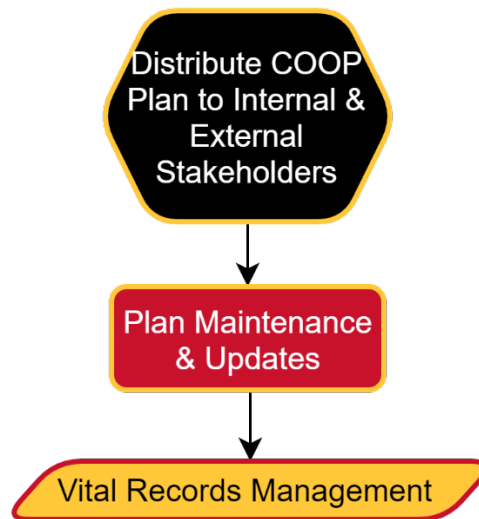
**Figure 18 – Continuity Plan Implementation Glide Path**



### VII. Phase 7: Distribute, Maintain, and Update

Once the Continuity of Operations Plan is completed and approved, the plan should be distributed among all stakeholders that have a role in the Continuity of Operations Plan for that D/A/O/E. In addition to submitting to MDEM, a copy should be securely maintained at the D/A/O/E's continuity facilities and other locations where it is easily accessible to appropriate personnel when needed. Figure 19 illustrates Phase 7 – Distribute, Maintain, and Update of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 19 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 7**



#### A. Vital Records

Vital records refer to information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity situation. A vital records plan packet should be developed and maintained. The packet should include:

- A hard copy or electronic list of key organization personnel and disaster staff with up-to-date telephone numbers;
- A vital records inventory with the precise locations of vital records.;
- Updates to the vital records;
- Necessary keys or access codes;
- Continuity-facility locations;
- Access requirements and lists of sources of equipment necessary to access the records (this may include hardware and software, microfilm readers, Internet access, and/or dedicated telephone lines);
- Lists of records-recovery experts and vendors; and
- A copy of the D/A/O/E continuity of operations plan.

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Each D/A/O/E has different functional responsibilities. Determine which records are vital to its operations, then assign responsibility for those records to the appropriate personnel. This may be a combination of continuity personnel, personnel in the chief information officer's department, and records management personnel. The identification, protection, and ready availability of vital records, databases, and hardcopy documents are critical elements of a successful continuity plan and program.

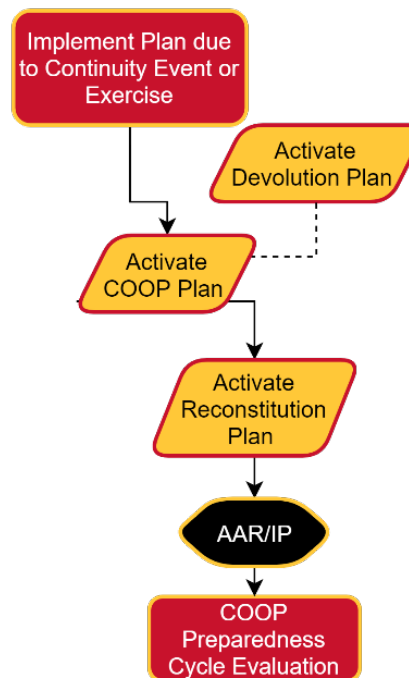
Vital records include those records and databases essential to the continued functioning or the reconstitution of an organization during and after a continuity event. Examples of these records are emergency plans and directives, orders of succession, delegations of authority, staffing assignments, and related policy or procedural records. They provide an organization's continuity personnel with the guidance they need to conduct operations during a continuity situation and to resume normal operations at the conclusion of that situation. In addition, vital records also include those that are critical to carrying out an organization's essential legal and financial functions and are vital to the protection of the legal and financial rights of individuals who are directly affected by that organization's activities. Examples of these records are accounts receivable files; contracting and acquisition files; official personnel records; social security, payroll, retirement, and insurance records; and property management and inventory records. Any and all-important records should be stored and maintained at the appropriate continuity facility.

In short, an official vital records program identifies and protects those records that specify how a D/A/O/E will operate in an emergency or disaster, identifies those records necessary to the organization's continuing operations, and identifies those records needed to protect the legal and financial rights of the organization and citizens. It needs a clear authority to include policies, authorities, procedures, and the written designation of a vital records manager.

## VIII. Phase 8: Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation

Continuity planning enables the successful implementation of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) during and after an emergency by ensuring that essential functions, critical services, and visible leadership are readily available when needed when normal operations are impacted, or necessary resources are unavailable. Effective implementation of continuity plans, and programs requires the support of leadership and decision makers who have the authority to commit the organization and the necessary resources to support continuity programs. Continuity preparedness encompasses more than information technology (IT) or facilities; it is the continuation of the functions, capabilities, and services that the organization provides to its stakeholders. Ultimately, implementation of and adherence to a continuity standard or principles will further enhance the preparedness of an organization, its community, and the State of Maryland. Figure 20 illustrates Phase 8 – Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation of the Continuity of Operations Preparedness Cycle.

**Figure 20 – COOP Preparedness Cycle Phase 8**



Objective evaluations and assessments, developed from tests and exercises, provide feedback on continuity planning, procedures, and training. In turn, this feedback supports a corrective action process that helps to establish priorities, informs budget decision making, and drives improvements in plans and procedures. Evaluation can also occur after a real-world event takes place as a result of lessons learned. From there, alterations can be made to the D/A/O/E Continuity of Operations Plan to reflect this.

### A. Implementation

People, communications, facilities, infrastructure, and transportation resources are necessary for the successful implementation and management of an organization's continuity program. Organizations must align and allocate the resources needed to implement its continuity strategy. Through the budgeting and planning process, an organization's leaders and staff ensure the availability of critical continuity resources needed to continue the performance of the organization's essential functions before, during, and after an emergency or disruption.

### B. Activation

Continuity of Operations Plans could be activated in response to a wide range of events or situations ranging from a fire in the building, to a natural disaster, pandemic, to the threat or occurrence of a terrorist attack, etc. Any event that makes it impossible for employees to work in their regular facility could result in the activation of the Continuity plan.

Continuity Plan activation and relocation are scenario-driven processes that allow flexible and scalable responses to the full range of emergencies and other events that could disrupt operations with or without warning during both duty and non-duty hours. Continuity of Operations Plan activation is not required for all emergencies and disruptive situations, since other actions may be deemed appropriate.

### C. After Action Reports and Correction Action Planning

A Corrective Action Program (CAP) should be developed to assist in documenting, prioritizing, and resourcing continuity issues identified during continuity T&E activities, assessments, and emergency operations. The D/A/O/E's CAP incorporates evaluations, after-action reports, and lessons learned from a cycle of events into the development and implementation of its CAP. D/A/O/E's should incorporate evaluations, after action reports, and lessons learned into the development and implementation of an improvement plan. The corrective actions identified during individual exercises, real-world incidents, and assessments are tracked to completion, ensuring tangible improvements in capabilities. An effective corrective action program develops improvement plans that are dynamic documents, which are continually monitored and implemented as part of the larger system of improving preparedness.



## IX. Appendices, Annexes, & Attachments

### A. Appendices

The appendices to the State of Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies/Office/Entities include the following as detailed in Table 22.

**Table 22 – Appendices**

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Acronyms
Appendix 2	Record of Distribution
Appendix 3	Record of Changes

### B. Annexes

The annexes to the State of Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies/Office/Entities include the following as detailed in Table 23.

**Table 23 – Annexes**

Annexes	
Annex A	Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire
Annex B	Organizational Administration Analysis

### C. Attachments

The annexes to the State of Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies/Office/Entities include the following as detailed in Table 24.

**Table 24 – Attachments**

Annexes	
Attachment 1	Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire
Attachment 2	Organizational Administration Analysis

## Appendix 1 – Acronyms

Acronym	Term
AAR	After Action Report
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive
CMOP	Consequence Management Operations Plan
COA	Course of Action
COG	Continuity of Government
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CWG	Continuity Working Group
D/A/O/E	Department/Agency/Office/Entity
DFACS	Distinguishable, Feasible, Acceptable, Complete, Suitable
DRG	Devolution Emergency Response Group
DRITC	Disaster Recovery IT Continuity
DWG	Devolution Working Group
ECG	Enduring Constitutional Government
EFA	Essential Function Analysis
EndEx	End Exercise
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ERG	Emergency Relocation Group
ESA	Essential Supporting Activity
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FE	Functional Exercise
FSE	Full-scale Exercise
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IND	Improvised Nuclear Device
IP	Improvement Plan
IT	Information Technology
L,R,S	Laws, Regulations, Standards
MEA	Mission Enhancing Activity
MEF	Mission Essential Function
MDEM	Maryland Department of Emergency Management
MEPP	Maryland Emergency Preparedness Program
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MYSP	Multi-Year Strategy Plan
OAA	Organizational Administrative Analysis
PA	Public Assistance
PACE	Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency
PMEF	Primary Mission Essential Function

## Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Acronym	Term
POC	Point of Contact
PSA	Public Service Announcements
RDD	Radiological Dispersal Device
RTO	Recovery Time Objective
SEF	State Essential Function
SLG	Senior Leadership Group
SME	Subject Matter Expert
StartEx	Start Exercise
THIRA	Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
TTX	Tabletop Exercise
T&E	Training and Exercise

**Appendix 2 – Record of Distribution**

<b>Delivery Date</b>	<b># of Copies Delivered</b>	<b>Distribution Method</b>	<b>Name, Title, &amp; Organization or Group of Receiver(s)</b>
12-13-2021		Digital	State Primary Executive Department COOP Coordinators
12-13-2021		Digital	State Independent Agency COOP Coordinators
12-13-2021		Digital	State Executive Branch Entity COOP Coordinators
12-13-2021		Digital	University System of Maryland COOP Coordinators
12-13-2021		Digital	Maryland Judiciary (Judicial Branch)

Appendix 3 – Record of Changes

Date of Change	Change Made	Name	Position
12-13-2021	Original Development	Chelsey Tarnowski	Sr. Continuity Preparedness Specialist



**Annex A – Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire**

Essential Function Analysis Questionnaire	
[Insert Functional Area Name Here]	
Name	
Telephone	
Email Address	
Functional Area Name	
Functional Area Location	
Functional Area Description	
<b>1a. FUNCTIONAL AREA RECOVERY ASSUMPTIONS</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disaster affects only one facility</li> <li>2. There will not be future access to facility one (everything required for recovery must be available elsewhere)</li> <li>3. This plan will address the first two weeks of any outage</li> <li>4. IT recovery plans are in place and IT can meet their RTO</li> <li>5. Qualified personnel are available to continue operations</li> </ol>	
<b>1b. RECOVERY ASSUMPTIONS SPECIFIC TO FUNCTIONAL AREA</b>	
<b>This field may be left blank if no additional assumptions are needed.</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

## 2. LEGAL AND STATUTORY REVIEW

List the legal, statutory, or in-house requirements for this function or activity. What are the legal or statutory requirements? Are there any non-legal requirements that require this function to occur?

Law, Regulation, Standard

- 
- 
- 

### 3a. FUNCTIONAL AREA DESCRIPTION

Provide a brief statement of the functions or activities that occur in this functional area. What purpose does the function hold within MDEM?

Function

Description

### 3b. FUNCTIONAL AREA TIERS

Function Tier:

Check one of the appropriate boxes and list corresponding SEF below:

- Is this function required by law AND directly supports a SEF? - PMEF
- Is this function required by law but does NOT directly support a SEF? - MEF
- Is this an activity NOT required by law but enhances your entity mission? - MEA

Function	PMEF	MEF	MEA	SEF

### 3c. FUNCTIONAL AREA SUCCESSION POSITIONS

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

For each function listed above, provide the position for line of succession. Do not include the individual's name in this section. Provide point of contact information on the Succession Contact Information sheet below.

Function	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

#### 4. FUNCTIONAL AREA RECOVERY TIME OBJECTIVES (RTOS)

RTO is the maximum amount of time that the functional area within your branch can be suspended before causing a severe impact to MDEM.

What is your Recovery Time Objective for this functional area?	

What is the basis for this conclusion with respect to your branch?  
 Explain Answer(s) Below, quantify if Possible (any or all the below fields may be left blank)

- 

#### 5. CRITICAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Using the appropriate spaces provided below, please list the minimum resources required to sustain the functional area in the event of an incident, for each of the four-time scales.  
**ALL NUMBERS ARE CUMULATIVE.**

Resource	X Hours	<2 Days	2-5 Days	>5 Days
Staff (at relocation site)				
Staff (working from home)				
Staff on Standby				
Networked PCs (at the relocation site)				
Laptops				
Cell Phones				

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

Telephones			
Mobile Hot Spots			
Applications (please list)	X Hours	<2 Days	2-5 Days
List all IT applications used to perform the operations of the functional area and check the time scale in which the applications are needed.			
<b>6. VITAL RECORDS</b>			
Vital Records	Physical Location (e.g. # Main Street, X Floor)	Electronic Location (Local Drive, etc.)	
<b>7. DEPENDENCIES</b>			
List the other areas/Departments/vendors/external contacts your functional area will need to perform the function identified. The following essential supporting activities have been identified. List additional internal essential supporting activities as needed. Only list those who you depend upon, NOT those who depend upon you.			
Internal Essential Supporting Activities	Dependency	Importance	
Finance			
Payroll			
Procurement			
Grants Administration			
Human Resources			
Facilities			
Fleet			

# Maryland COOP Guide for State Departments/Agencies

IT		
Supplies		
General Administrative Support		
External Agency/Partner/Resource	Dependency	Importance
<b>8. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES</b>		
List any special circumstances that impact how the area function(s) operate. Provide estimated timing of such circumstances and indicate how the circumstances will affect the area function(s) RTO or required resources. Specifically consider financial reporting, inventory, regulatory reporting, etc.		
Circumstance	Change in Resources or RTOs	



Annex B – Organizational Administrative Analysis

Organizational Administrative Analysis				
	Who? (Personnel by position needed to execute ESA)	What? (Resource needed to execute ESA)	Where? (Size and location needed to execute ESA)	When? (How quickly you need resources to execute ESA)
Day-to-day Normal Operations				
<b>Essential Supporting Activity</b>				
Systems and Platforms necessary to execute ESA				
Redundancies in place for continued Operations				