



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNERS AND TEAMS

A major storm, power failure, water main break, hazardous material exposure, structural failure or fire could damage buildings on campus, in some cases forcing closure for weeks or months, and will certainly interrupt the activities of those in the affected area. Departmental Continuity Planners (DCPs) and Department Continuity Planning Teams (if developed) have the responsibility of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from any event that affects your department's ability to perform its mission. For more information on Business Continuity at Boston College visit www.bc.edu/emergency/businesscontinuity.

Department Continuity Planner

The Department Planner is responsible for the development, training, testing, updating and maintaining the departmental Business Continuity Plan. This is accomplished by assembling key staff and information that would be needed in an emergency situation affecting the department, including: identifying critical functions; assembling contact information for staff, vendors and customers; identifying key equipment, supplies and support needs; identifying alternate arrangements for working during a disruption and developing ways to communicate in an emergency.

The Departmental Continuity Planner reports to departmental management and works with the Boston College Emergency Management Executive Team (EMET) in a disaster situation to coordinate information and support from the University if needed.

In an Emergency

The Department Continuity Planner is responsible to ensure the following actions are assigned/completed:

- Notify Department Management, Continuity Team and Emergency Management of emergency situation and activate the Department Business Continuity Plan if needed.
- Determine if the Department Operations Center (DOC) or conference call activation is required. If so notify Department Management and the Continuity Team to report to the pre defined location. Notify Emergency Management of its location and contact information.
- Assess the estimated length of time of the disruption and report the assessment to Department Management, Continuity Team and Incident Commander at the University Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if necessary.
- Review the scope of the problem, noting areas affected, probable duration, location to resume operations, numbers of users involved, plan for recovery, staff requirements and staff availability.
- Coordinate and communicate with the various continuity team members and the University EOC if additional resources are required. Establish a liaison with the Incident Commander if appropriate.
- Coordinate the return of processing to the usual functional area, or to a new site, if necessary.
- After the recovery effort, meet with the Department Continuity Team members. Analyze the recovery procedures, and make any necessary additions or modifications to this plan.

Plan Updating and Distribution

To ensure that your plan remains current, schedule regular updates, departmental and broader organizational tests, and train the personnel responsible for actual implementation of the plan. In addition, promote the Plan to maintain and enhance awareness of the Plan within the organization. Ensure that your Plan is updated at least annually or more often if major changes occur in the organization. After exercises or real world emergencies, even if they do not directly affect the department, are perfect opportunities to update the plan while items are still fresh in your head about what needs to be changed. Also be sure to update items such as contact information on a quarterly basis as they can change regularly.

Ensure that the updated document is distributed to Department Continuity Team members, organization management, the Emergency Management Office and placed in the shared on-line Business Continuity folder on Google Drive. A copy of the Departmental Plan should also be sent to an off-site storage location.

Test the Plan

At least annually conduct a test of your Plan. This could be a table top discussion where the Continuity Team or department walks through a scenario and uses the plan to inform how they would respond. The Planner could conduct a notification and communication exercise to test contact information or staff could participate in a remote exercise to test the ability to access necessary documentation, procedures, programs and files and other support services when their office is unavailable. Deficiencies in these exercises should be noted and incorporated into the plan. The Office of Emergency Management is happy to assist with the development and implementation of the exercise if departments need assistance. Results of the exercise should be sent to the Office of Emergency Management.

Mitigation Steps

Identify any deficiencies and/or vulnerabilities in your plan when updating, testing or reviewing the plan during an event. Discuss with the Continuity Team possible solutions to correct these gaps or ways to be better prepared for these issues and change or update the plan to correct these identified items. There is also a section of the plan dedicated to capturing mitigation steps that have been identified by the Continuity Team, but are unable to be implemented immediately due to costs, dependence on another entity, restrictions, etc. This section is a dedicated place to capture these items for future improvements.

Train Personnel and Promote the Plan

Promoting the plan means keeping it viable and visible to all members of the department. Planners should conduct an orientation program for personnel on the Continuity Planning Team outlining the actions planned for response to and recovery from a disaster and semi-annual or quarterly briefings on planning status at departmental staff meetings. All staff should have some basic familiarity with this plan such as notification and communication strategy, meeting locations, critical functions, etc.

Remember; all staff should take preparedness to heart and take steps before an emergency to be ready in case of emergency. This should include personal and family preparedness at home including a family disaster and communication plan and a disaster supply kit. Further information and assistance can be found at www.bc.edu/emergency or by contacting the Office of Emergency Management at 617-552-4316.