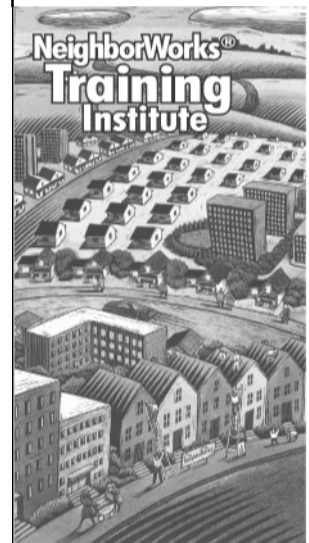


# **Disaster Preparedness and Recovery for Community Development Organizations**

NeighborWorks® Training Institute  
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# Scope of Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Community Development Organizations (CDO) with basic information useful in:

- Developing organizational continuity of operations plans.
- Pro-actively assisting their communities with preparedness.
- Pre-planning for recovery and actual disaster recovery.

More detailed information on the topics can be obtained from referenced websites.

After most disasters, the vast majority (90%) of the affected population is able to manage their own recovery. The remaining 10% will need special assistance. CDOs and non-profit organizations are uniquely positioned to provide assistance. The kinds of assistance victims will need varies greatly based on the type of disaster or crisis that has occurred and on each individual household's particular circumstances.

In order for CDOs to be positioned to provide assistance they must still be operational after the storm has passed. The first section of the handbook is a workbook designed to assist CDOs with step-by-step development of organizational Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs).

The second portion of this handbook contains steps organizations can take to work with emergency management leaders in their communities to encourage individual households and communities to be better prepared for natural and man-made disasters.

The third and fourth sections of the handbook address issues associated with recovery. There is a guide to pre-planning for recovery and to developing a Disaster Recovery Notebook. In addition, considerations and opportunities for housing, economic and community recovery are suggested.

A reference section is included to provide additional information on topics dealing with preparedness for and recovery from disasters.

# Part One—Organizational Preparedness

## Why Prepare?

In recent memory there have been graphic examples of the destruction that can be dealt by disasters, both natural and man made: earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, floods, fires, chemical spills, terrorism, and the increasing threat of a pandemic. Being prepared can lessen the fear, anxiety and losses associated with disasters. There is no community that is immune to disasters. All communities, families, individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations need to know what to do when disaster strikes. Many disasters leave no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead is essential.

Communities' preparations are guided by a local Emergency Management process. Typically, Emergency Management is a county level responsibility. However, in large urban areas it may also be a city function. Regardless of where the responsibility lies, the Emergency Management office develops and maintains plans that detail prevention and response (including police, fire and Emergency Medical Services) to hazards and disasters.

For years, large businesses and financial institutions have developed and maintained detailed preparedness plans, generally called Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs). These plans contain information about cyber security, retention of off-site records, plans for payroll continuity and contacting staff. It also considers what actions should be taken if the physical structure of the office is damaged or destroyed.

Continuity of operations planning has not historically been a priority of non-profits or Community Development Organizations. Development of Continuity of Operations plans is critically important for lessening risk to portfolios, increasing the likelihood of staying in business, staff safety and the ability to continue functioning in order to assist the community with recovery.

Plans developed using this workbook are common to all disasters. An organization need plan only once, and then apply the plan to all types of hazards. How quickly an organization can get back in business after a disaster depends on the thoroughness of its emergency planning.

**The single, most valuable thing that any non-profit agency can do to aid in disaster recovery in their community is to establish and maintain their own disaster resistant organization!**

# Developing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Developing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) can be done during a workshop or retreat, but already overburdened non-profits often feel they cannot devote that much time to such planning. If this is the case, break the planning into weekly segments. Leaders of the organization will establish a timetable and schedule meetings accordingly. This workbook is organized for such incremental planning sessions.

Determine who should be involved in development of the COOP. Assign a key staff member oversight responsibility. Consider if there are bankers or other business representatives on the organization's board of directors who would be helpful? Include a cross section of staff from throughout the organization.

## A. Meeting One

Explain to the COOP team that the organization will be developing a COOP. Discuss the reality that disaster can happen any time and anywhere and that your agency could experience damage, injuries, property loss and even loss of life. Critical services might not be available. Everyone needs to be prepared for the unknown.

Agency services which clients depend on may be disrupted or suspended. Without a disaster plan, there is no clear idea how to regroup. Drafting a COOP, will allow an agency to identify its role, respond quickly and be confident in decisions. Having a COOP in place provides a clear idea of how to re-group and move forward, minimizing confusion and providing direction.

At each meeting assign responsibility for identified tasks. Regularly report back on the status of the tasks.

1. Purchase a loose-leaf notebook with numerical tabs. This will become the COOP notebook. Store the notebook in a portable fire and waterproof container that is readily accessible if evacuation is necessary. Documentation and/or confirmation of each task will be stored in this notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

2. Contact local Emergency Management to learn what hazards threaten the local community, how citizens will be warned and what emergency management’s specific recommendations are regarding preparedness. The state office will be able to provide contact information for local offices. Ask what needs will be met in the event of a disaster and specifically what their plan is for a pandemic flu. The FEMA web-site, [www.fema.gov/fema/statedr.shtml](http://www.fema.gov/fema/statedr.shtml), gives contact information for state emergency management offices. Once this information is obtained it should be placed in the COOP Notebook under Tab #2.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

3. The first priority in any disaster is personal safety. Staff will not be capable of working to assist others if their families are not prepared and safe. Make copies of the *Individual and Family Planning Disaster Checklist* (Page 8). Meet with staff to discuss and stress the importance of household preparedness, distribute copies of the checklist and provide information about the most likely hazards in your area. If individuals and families are prepared, your organization will be better able to recover from an emergency situation. For additional information order: *Are You Ready?* by calling FEMA’s distribution center at (800) 480-2520. Put copies of the checklist and FEMA contact information in Tab #3.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

4. Install fire extinguishers and smoke alarms. Instruct all staff on use of fire extinguisher. File schedule for equipment checks and battery replacement in Tab #4 of COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

5. Meet with the organization’s insurance provider to review coverage for the hazards identified by local emergency management. Coverage for some hazards such as floods and earthquakes is an addition to traditional property coverage. Inadequate insurance coverage can lead to major financial losses. Ensure coverage is based on replacement cost. Call 1 (888) FLOOD-29 to learn more about flood insurance. Put copies of the checklist and FEMA contact information in Tab #4.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

6. Distribute copies of insurance documents to several staff and board members to be stored off-site. Put copies of the contact information in Tab #5.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

<b>Insurance Document Distribution List</b>	



## Individual and Family Disaster Planning Checklist

Done	
	Contact the local Red Cross to learn what disasters are most likely to occur. Learn what to do in each case.
	Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire; sever weather, and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.
	Pick two places to meet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.</li> <li>2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.</li> </ol>
	Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know the contact number.
	Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.
	Purchase a battery operated radio.
	Post emergency numbers by phone (fire, police, ambulance, etc.).
	Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 for emergency help.
	Show each family member how and when to turn off the utilities (water, gas, electricity) at the main switches.
	Check if you have adequate insurance coverage. Remember flood and earthquake coverage is in addition to standard coverage.
	Train each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type), and show them where it's kept.
	Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms. Change the batteries when the time changes.
	Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
	Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
	Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
	Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster.
	Quiz your kids every six months when the time changes.
	Replace stored water and food every six months when the time changes.
	Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacture's instructions.
	Test your smoke detectors monthly.

For additional information and checklists for disaster supplies, order *Are You Ready?* by calling FEMA's distribution center at (800) 480-2520. *Are You Ready?* is available in English and Spanish.

Specific information about pandemic preparedness is available at the official US government web site [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) . Click on Community Organizations for a checklist on preparedness, there is also a checklist for families.

## B. Meeting Two

Report on progress since last meeting.

7. The first goal of disaster planning is to protect human life, including employees, clients, and residents. Purchase both a battery-powered commercial radio and a NOAA weather radio that will automatically alert to watches or warnings in the local area. Remember to keep extra batteries on hand. Place location of radios, batteries and operating instructions in Tab #7.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

8. Create procedures to quickly evacuate your building. Distribute to staff, post in a key location, and file a copy in Tab #8 of the COOP notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

9. Create procedures to shelter-in-place. Distribute to staff, and place a copy in Tab #9.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

10. Discuss what supplies individuals may want to consider keeping in a personal and portable supply kit and what the organization should include in supply kits located at each site. The following page provides a checklist that may be used. File a copy in Tab #10 of the COOP notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

11. Consider the possibility of clients being in your office when a disaster occurs. Plan for their safety, taking into account special needs they may have. What else should be included in the Shelter in Place Supply Kit? File information in the COOP notebook in Tab #11.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## Assembling a Disaster Supply Kit

	Responsibility	
	Personal	Organization
First aid kit		
Portable radio and NOAA weather radio		
Bottled water-3 gallons per person		
Blankets or sleeping bag		
Flashlights		
Fresh batteries		
Non-perishable food		
Canned food and opener		
Whistle		
Heavy-duty garbage bag and toilet paper for personal hygiene		
Garbage bag to keep dry		
Germicidal hand wipes or waterless, alcohol-based hand sanitizer		
CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield		
Fire extinguisher		
Prescription medications		
Work gloves		
Duct tape		
Household liquid bleach		
Map of area		

## C. Meeting Three

Report on progress since last meeting.

12. Teach employees to quickly identify suspect packages and letters. Watch for misspelled words, no return address, excessive tape, strange discoloration or odor. Contact the local Post Office for more detailed information. File a copy of the procedure in Tab #12 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

13. Video or photograph your place of business and all of your equipment, furniture, and fixtures. Prepare an equipment list with specific detail on make, model and features of equipment of this inventory, including computer hardware, software, and peripherals. Store the video or photos and equipment list off-site at a safe place; in a safety deposit box or even out of state, geographically distanced so as not to be affected by the same disaster. Place a copy of the equipment list in Tab #13 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

14. In the aftermath of a disaster staff may need to be increased to accommodate additional programs and an influx of disaster recovery funds (if the organization is a fiscal agent). Review by-laws, making sure the language provides flexibility during and after a disaster for items listed in the table on Page 12. Place copy of specific by-laws in COOP Notebook under Tab #14.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

15. Cross train staff so that backups can perform the basic functions in case of absenteeism caused by a disaster event or pandemic. Develop training schedule and insert copy in COOP Notebook, Tab #15.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

16. An organization involved in recovery from disaster has a different function than an organization in non-disaster mode. Write a supplement to the organization’s mission statement. The disaster supplement can be as general as during the time of disaster the mission is to maximize community access to critical resources or may be more specific depending on the organization’s function. File the supplemental disaster mission statement in Tab #16.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

### Disaster Related By-laws

Does policy allow for?	Yes	No	Needs Board Approval	Board Approved
Provisions for increasing staff capacity during a disaster recovery				
Policy for overtime and overtime pay				
Maintaining continuity of payroll				
Flexible leave or work-at-home policies in case of a pandemic				

## D. Meeting Four

Report on progress since last meeting.

17. Store copies of important records in a waterproof, fireproof portable container. Store a second set off-site in a safe place such as a safety deposit box, or even in another state, geographically distanced, so as not to be affected by the same disaster. A checklist of basic documents is provided at the end of this section (Page 15). File a copy in Tab #17 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

18. Protecting the organization's data and information technology systems is vital even for small organizations; every computer can be vulnerable to attack. Download the US Chamber of Commerce and Internet Security Alliance Cyber Security Guide for Small Businesses at: [www.ready.gov/business/st3-improvecyber.html](http://www.ready.gov/business/st3-improvecyber.html) . Determine organizational policies, practices and back-up procedure, and insert a copy in Tab #18 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

19. Consider if the organization can operate from a different location or even from employee homes, if necessary. Identify several possibilities. File plan in Tab #19 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

20. If the organization's offices are located in a building with other businesses, consult them to coordinate planning. File information such as meeting minutes and letter of agreement in Tab #20 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

21. If there are people with special needs working for the organization or living in properties owned or managed by the organization, it is necessary to plan for those special needs whether evacuating or sheltering in place. Determine what should occur to ensure their safety and assemble a plan. Meet with staff to discuss the special needs, distribute the plan and educate the residents. Insert a copy in the COOP Notebook under Tab #21.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

22. Promote family preparedness among tenants including information in correspondence, and development newsletters. Repeat the information periodically. Insert a copy in Tab #22 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## Valuable Documents

Portable Container	Off Site	
		Site maps
		Building plans
		Employee contact information including home and cell phones, personal e-mail address, and pager number
		Insurance policies and agent numbers
		Bank account records
		Proof of non-profit status
		Tax identification information
		Property inventory
		Supplier contact list
		Computer backups
		Emergency or law enforcement contact information
		Landlord contact information
		COOP Notebook
		Recovery Notebook
		Other Documents



## E. Meeting Five

Report on progress since last meeting.

23. Develop a matrix of responsibilities following a disaster. Have contingency assignments and backups for each. Responsibilities will vary depending on the size of your organization. A checklist is provided at the end of this section with responsibilities identified that should be included. Discuss how the team will operate and make decisions. Document the decisions and file a copy in Tab #23 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

24. Instruct all staff how to check and shut off the power and water to the building. Insert documentation of the locations in Tab #24 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

25. Consider options for backup power. Where can a generator be obtained? Place information in the COOP Notebook in Tab #25.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

26. Create a list of critical business contractors and others whom you will use in an emergency. Place a copy of the list in Tab #26 of the COOP Notebook and in offsite storage.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

27. Provide first aid and CPR training to staff and offer to residents of properties your organization manages. Contact the local Red Cross for information on training. File a list of those trained with contact information in Tab #27 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## Responsibility Matrix

Assignment	Responsible Staff	Back-Up Staff
Recovery Team Lead		
Operations (to continue agency's business)		
Logistics (secure resources)		
Financial		
Communications – Internal		
Communications - External		
<b>Other</b>		

## F. Meeting Six

Report on progress since last meeting.

28. Set up a telephone call tree, a password-protected page on the company web-site, an e-mail alert, or a call-in voice recording to communicate with staff in an emergency. This communication will be used to inform employees about such things as returning to work, where to report, if special clothing is required (i.e. steel toed boots). File information in Tab #28.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

29. Designate and distribute information regarding an out-of-town phone number where employees can leave an "I'm okay" messages in a catastrophic disaster. File information in Tab #29 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

30. Attach equipment and cabinets to walls or other stable location. Place heavy or breakable objects on low shelves. Document the office policy and file information in Tab #30.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

31. Elevate electrical machinery off the floor for protection in the event of flooding. Document the office policy and file information in Tab #31.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## G. Meeting Seven

Report on progress since last meeting.

32. How will the status of clients off-site be determined? If the clients are evacuated what will they need that might not be available at a shelter? What can be planned to provide for these needs? Consult with the local Red Cross Emergency Shelter Coordinator about what is typically available in shelters. Develop the plan for client support and file in Tab #32 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

33. Will you limit or expand your clientele and/or services following a disaster? Identify the ways and file information about possibilities in Tab #33.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

34. Prior to completing your plan, brainstorm on all the “what ifs?” and worse-case scenarios. Consider such things as:

- What if staff is scattered or for other reasons unable to work?
- What if you lose all communication?
- What if staff is separated from their families?

Review the plan thus far to consider these possibilities and revise as needed. File information in Tab #34.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

35. Spend half a day conducting a table top exercise with staff to identify any short falls. A table top exercise is conducted by presenting a disaster scenario and then walking through the plan based on that scenario. Revise any aspects of the plan and store in Tab #35 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## H. COOP Plan Update

36. Update staff contact information in the COOP whenever new people are hired, and inform all staff of COOP procedures as part of orientation. Update contact information each time someone new is hired as part of the payroll set-up process. File documentation of office procedure in Tab #36.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

37. Establish at least an annual date when the plan will be reviewed. Make it a date such a Valentine's Day or Columbus Day, something that is memorable. Schedule an annual table top exercise with staff to identify any revisions that need to be made. File schedule in Tab #37 of the COOP Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

### **Congratulations!**

**CDOs with COOP plans will be more self-sustainable, more disaster-resistant and faster to recover to be back in business to assist clients and community recovery.**

# Part Two—Community Preparedness

## A. How Do Communities Prepare?

Chief elected officials, including governors, county supervisors, judges, city mayors, and managers, bear direct and ultimate responsibility for how well their jurisdiction responds to and recovers from an emergency or disaster. Emergency Management is part of government's charter "*to maintain law and order and provide for the protection of lives and property.*" The state and federal governments also have emergency management responsibilities and assist the local efforts. The following section describes the typical distribution of responsibility.

## B. Roles of Various Levels of Government

### 1. Local Emergency Management Functions and Responsibilities

- Develop and update the jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that addresses all types of hazards that may affect citizens.
- Coordinate overall response to manage impact of widespread emergency.
- Identify and coordinate mitigation efforts to lessen the impact of disasters that cannot be prevented.
- Notify and warn the public of probable impending disaster in time to take protective action.
- Direct and control management of a community's disaster recovery efforts
- Provide information and direction to the public about appropriate emergency preparedness measures.
- Search and rescue of trapped, injured, or missing people.
- Coordinate health and medical care or services to affected citizens.
- Direct evacuation of people from the path of an impending disaster.
- Deploy firefighting resources to prevent or contain fires and rescue trapped or injured people.
- Monitor and analyze a disaster and assess physical damage.
- Provide shelter, lodging, food, clothing, and sanitation to the affected population. This responsibility is generally carried out in collaboration with the Red Cross and other voluntary organizations.

- Remove debris resulting from a disaster from public property including roads.
- Restore public works and utilities damaged by the emergency or disaster.
- Deal with hazardous material accidents.

## **2. State Government**

The state offers training programs for the local jurisdictions, assists with local plan development, and with exercising the local and state plans. In addition, the state coordinates its preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation functions.

When a disaster has occurred which is beyond the capability of the local unit of government, the local unit may request assistance from the state. The state coordinates the plans of the various affected jurisdictions so that activities do not interfere or conflict with each other. Finally, the state coordinates state agency recovery activities.

## **3. Federal Government**

The federal government can provide resources to augment state and local efforts. These resources can be in the form of:

- Public educational materials.
- Financial grants for equipment, training, exercises, personnel and programs
- Grants and loans to help communities respond to and recover from disasters so severe that the President of the United States has deemed them beyond state and local capabilities.
- Research to help reduce losses from disaster.
- Technical assistance to help build stronger programs.

Presidential Declarations of Disasters are actually rare when compared to the number of total disasters. Some federal assistance may be available without a Presidential Declaration of Disaster including: agricultural assistance and Small Business Administration (SBA) loans.

When a state has exhausted all of its resources (both local and state) in response to an emergency, and if the urgency of the situation warrants and the needed resources can only be provided (or provided more readily) by the federal government, state officials may submit a request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration. When a Presidential Disaster is declared, it invokes the Federal Response

Plan. Some or all of the emergency response functions may be activated in order to address needs. The purpose of the Presidential Disaster Declaration is essentially to return the declared area to safe, sanitary and secure conditions—not to make the community “whole.”

## **C. Citizen Participation in Preparedness**

When Americans witness natural and Human-caused disasters, the immediate questions are, "What can I do?" and "How can I help?" There is an infrastructure available through local collaborative groups called Citizen Corps. Citizen Corps helps all Americans answer these questions through public education and outreach, training, and volunteer service.

### **1. Citizen Corps**

Citizen Corps actively involves citizens in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger, and better prepared. Citizen Corps Councils help drive local citizen participation by coordinating Citizen Corps programs, developing community action plans, assessing possible threats and identifying local resources. Citizen Corps Programs include five federal Program Partners: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Neighborhood Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, and Volunteers in Police Service.

### **2. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program**

CERT is a Citizen Corps program that educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace and take an active role in preparing their community.

CERT is a grass roots neighborhood program, and it builds resilience into neighborhoods. Training sessions cover disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, basic disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue, and team operations. The CERT course is taught in the community by a trained team of first responders who have completed a CERT Train-the-Trainer [course](#).

For additional information about Citizen Corps and details about all five of the programs go to: [citizencorps.gov](http://citizencorps.gov).



**3. Neighborhood Watch/USA on Watch**

Neighborhood Watch/USA on Watch incorporates terrorism awareness education into its existing crime prevention mission, while serving as a way to bring residents together to focus on emergency preparedness and emergency response training.

**4. Medical Reserve Corps (MRA) Program**

The Medical Reserve Corps strengthens communities by helping medical, public health, and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year as well as during emergencies and other times of community need.

**5. Fire Corps**

Fire Corps promotes the use of citizen advocates to enhance the capacity of resource-constrained fire and rescue departments at all levels. Citizen advocates can assist local fire departments in a range of activities including fire, safety outreach, youth programs, and administrative support.

**6. Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)**

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) work to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. VIPS serves as a gateway to resources and information for and about law enforcement volunteer programs.

Citizen Corps also works closely with the Corporation for National and Community Service to promote volunteer service activities that support homeland security and community safety.

For detailed information about Citizen Corps Programs go to:

[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov).

## D. What CDOs can do to Promote Citizen Preparedness?

One of the recommendations that has been identified in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina is to make citizen and community preparedness a national priority. Given CDOs relationships in the community, they are in an ideal position to assist with local preparedness by collaborating with their local Citizen Corps Councils to promote Citizen Corps programs in the neighborhoods and developments they serve.

There are two steps to promoting citizen preparedness:

1. Promote personal and household preparedness. Explain the importance of preparedness and distribute the *Individual and Family Disaster Planning Checklist* (Page 8) or one obtained from the references in the last section of this handbook.
2. Assign a key staff person responsibility for determining if there are Citizen Corps Programs in your community.

Go to [www.citizencorps.gov/councils/find\\_council.shtml](http://www.citizencorps.gov/councils/find_council.shtml) to determine if the CDO is located in a community that has an existing Citizen Corps Councils. This site also provides additional information about the programs and training.

- a. If there is a local Citizen Corps Council, contact the individual identified to learn how the CDO can assist with promotion of Citizen Corps Programs within the community.

Promotion can be accomplished through:

- Mailings
- Organizational newsletters
- Multi-family development newsletters
- Public service announcements
- Church bulletins
- Neighborhood get-togethers
- Any other ways the CDO communicates with the public.

- b. If there is no local Citizen Corps Council:
  - i. Contact the local emergency manager with whom you worked to develop the COOP.
  - ii. Explain to that individual the CDO's relationship to the community
  - iii. Explain the CDO's interest in assisting with the establishment of Citizen Corps Programs
  - iv. Give ideas of ways you can assist:
    - o Promote interest (see above)
    - o Recruit citizens for training
    - o Provide space for training
    - o Assist with writing a grant proposal to the Department of Homeland Security to finance the development of Citizen Corps Programs.

**It takes everyone working together to make our communities safer and more disaster resistant!**

## Part Three—Recovery from Disaster

As a disaster shifts from response to the recovery phase, both the activities and many of the people involved will change. Those actively involved in response include: firefighters, police, emergency medical and emergency management. However, recovery activities generally require different knowledge and skills, and they are usually performed by a different team of people. As leaders in the community, representatives from the CDO will be called upon to assist with recovery and surely will become part of the solution.

Recovery from disaster is the longest, most time- and energy-consuming and expensive of the phases of emergency management. While the severity of the damage and recovery needs vary for each disaster, the fact remains that a disaster, by its very nature, makes demands upon communities, individuals, non-profit providers, and government agencies that are well beyond routine business. Each individual, household, and organization is responsible for its own recovery. There is simply never enough public money to make everyone “whole.” However, there will also be many opportunities to make community-wide improvements creating a safer, more disaster-resistant, livable community.

CDOs that have developed COOPs will be well on the way to recovery. Recovery in the aftermath of a major disaster can still be daunting, and disasters seldom perfectly fit hypothetical scenarios. The best time to begin preparing for disaster recovery is prior to their occurrences. The following section provides a guide to pre-planning for recovery beyond what had been started in the COOP. Purchase a second loose-leaf notebook with numerical tabs. This notebook will contain the CDOs pre-disaster recovery planning information and, in the event of a disaster documentation of recovery. Keep the Recovery Notebook in a waterproof, fireproof container along with the COOP.

## A. Pre-Planning—Establish Community Relationships

Successful recoveries are a result of collaboration of all levels of government and many Community Based Organizations, including CDOs.

1. Establish collaborative relationships prior to disasters or emergencies with emergency responders in your community. Visit the local emergency management office, and contact police and fire departments. The contact information is contained in Tab #2 of the COOP notebook. Be sure to:
  - Make them aware of your organization and its services.
  - Provide them with literature about your organization.
  - Become familiar with their EOP plan. Ask about their role during a disaster.
  - Learn the location of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
  - Find out if the jurisdiction has a recovery from disaster plan, and review it to assess the role the CDO would best fulfill.
  - Ask how you can be informed of the time and location of daily briefings when a disaster occurs.

Document the information and file in Tab #1 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

2. Collaboration after a Disaster is much smoother if relationships are built prior to an event. Get to know other community organizations, particularly Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs). Establish regular meetings (possibly quarterly) during which each organization is given a specified amount of time to explain what assistance/services they provide and how to make referrals. Local VOADs may be willing to help organize these efforts. The National VOAD website ([www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=State](http://www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=State)) lists state contacts that will be able to provide local contact information. Document the information, and provide a copy to each organization. File in Tab #2 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

3. File contact documentation for the above organizations in Tab #3 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## B. Pre-Planning—Identify CDO Resources

4. Consider the financial resources of the CDO and determine where there may be flexibility to redirect them to recovery from disasters. Document the information and file in Tab #4 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

5. Identify resources that may be available from outside sources like:
- State programs.
  - Federal programs.
  - National organization programs.
  - Foundation funding.
  - Any other current funding sources.
- Document these including contact information and file in Tab #5 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

6. Brainstorm non-financial resources of the CDO, including such things as:
- Rehab advising expertise.
  - Leadership abilities.
  - Financial counseling skills.
  - Foreclosure prevention advising.
  - Program design and development skills.
  - Communication skills.
- Document these resources, and store in Tab #6.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## C. Pre-Planning - Additional Considerations

7. Emergency management, police, fire, public works and often public utilities maintain mutual aid agreements. Mutual aid agreements provide that a political subdivision may request the assistance of another sub-division when the public interest requires it because of an emergency. Consider the possibility of entering into an organizational agreement with a similar CDO. Document formal or informal agreements, and file in Tab #7 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

8. Organizations that have been through a disaster unanimously recommend doing the following as soon as safely and logistically possible:
- Photograph your property damage. Purchase a disposal camera and store in a waterproof, fireproof container with notebooks.
  - Determine your insurance claim filing deadlines.
  - Register with FEMA (if the disaster is federally declared).
  - Document everything! Make copies of all paperwork.

Identify responsibility for above tasks, and file information in Tab #8 of Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## D. After a Disaster—Organizational Recovery

9. In the COOP Plan #28 and #29, a means to communicate with staff was identified. Leadership or assigned staff will determine staff availability or likely return date. Document this information, and file in Tab #9 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

10. Staff duties may need to be diversified and reassigned. Consider, a staff member who has been physically injured could answer phones, staff that lives in an area not affected may be better suited to take on more physical challenges if their home and family is safe and secure. Staff whose personal situation is chaotic may need time off or simpler responsibilities. Make temporary assignments, and file in Tab #10 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

11. The CDO will not be able to assist the community with recovery until it is once again operational. Brainstorm the tasks that need to be completed to recover your office, either onsite or in a new location as identified in Tab #19 of the COOP plan. Prioritize and assign responsibilities, break down into daily or weekly objectives. Document, and store in Tab #11 of the recovery notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

12. Decide how staff will coordinate information and keep responses from either being duplicated or falling through the cracks. (Emergency management agencies produce daily situation reports with designated individual responsibilities for coordination and tracking.) Document the process, and file in Tab #12 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed



13. Take care of yourself and the staff or there won't be staff to take care of. There is so much work to be done that it easily becomes a person's entire focus. Distribute the following article, *Taking Care of Yourself* (Page 31), or similar information, and establish specific work times. Require people to take breaks away from the disaster area, encourage staff to talk about their feelings, and watch for signs of burnout. Develop schedule and file in Tab #13 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

## Taking Care of Yourself

Long-term disaster recovery for most people is not their regular job, and it will generally take years. There will be set backs and frustrations along the way. You need to take care of yourself in order to be capable of helping the victims of the event.

While it might seem noble to throw yourself into your work, no one can be fully effective when they are worried about their own home or family. Staff may also be victims and may need some time off to deal with their own situation.

Avoid workplace martyrdom—there is a point of diminishing returns, after which long hours no longer equate to higher productivity. In some cases, this can even become a safety hazard. Although the temptation is high to drive yourself to your limits, getting some rest is actually good for your work productivity. Know personal limits.

Try not to take anger personally. Anger is a common feeling after a disaster and throughout the long period of recovery, and it sometimes gets vented at those helping with recovery. Respect the need to be patient with yourself and others.

Draw on supports that nurture you during your time off. This may include friends, reading, recreation, religion, prayer, meditation and exercise. Take care of yourself physically; good diet, adequate sleep and rest and exercise will help you considerably.

Be alert to emotional over-involvement with victims. There is always some interplay of emotions. Sensitive recovery workers may take on the feelings of those with whom they are talking—feelings such as sadness, helplessness, and frustration.

Attend debriefing groups and stress education programs that may be offered. Speak with a stress or crisis management counselor. Be gentle with yourself—there are always things we could have done differently. Keeping a journal can be helpful as a release. Educate your board members about the long-term recovery process so that they have a better understanding of what staff members are dealing with and the length of time it will take.

## E. After Disaster—Community Recovery

14. As soon as logistically possible assign responsibility for attending daily briefings at the EOC or other designated locality. The briefings will provide valuable information about disaster recovery related activities. Conduct in-house briefings and updates daily. Also, maintain a log or notebook of simple meeting minutes. Assign responsibilities or determine a rotating schedule, and file in Tab #13 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

15. It is efficient and productive to work together, coordinating communication and resources between organizations and individuals. Meet with the other organizations listed in the Recovery Notebook, Tab #2; identify each organization's current resources, coordinate activities, and update contact information that may have changed. Consider if obtaining release of information from clients to other organizations assisting with recovery is possible; it will ease identification of appropriate resources. Using a release of information also means victims will not need to provide the same information repeatedly. Document decisions and current contact information, and file in Tab #14 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

16. Interfaith organizations are active participants in recovery. They often establish Unmet Needs Committees. The Unmet Needs Committee will manage funds that are donated. When other resources are not available, the interfaith organization can often assist. Faith groups or churches also provide a great deal of comfort and support to those going through a crisis. Assign responsibility to determine if there is an interfaith group established, and learn how to contact them. If there is no such organization, recommend the creation of one to local Faith Based Organizations. Document contact information, and file in Tab #15 of the Recovery Notebook.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

17. Go where the people are. Attend community meetings to hear the public messages that are being presented. Be prepared to offer information about what services or assistance the CDO can provide. Assign responsibility for tracking and attending public or town meetings, and file in Tab #16.

Responsible Staff	Not Started	In Progress	Completed

**Use the balance of the recovery notebook for filing copies of all recovery related documentation.**

# Part Four—Recovery Considerations

After the “dust has settled” and people are safe, there will be much work ahead. Recovery from disaster generally takes many years. Along with the hard work and frustrations there will be many opportunities to improve the community. The following section addresses several of the topics that will be encountered by CDOs assisting with recovery from disaster. With each topic, some basic considerations are offered and just a few of the opportunities that will arise are identified.

## A. Housing Recovery

Other than the loss of a loved one, loss of the home is generally the greatest loss individuals and households sustain. The following are concepts and approaches that have been applied successfully in housing recovery and will be helpful to CDOs confronted with the daunting task of rebuilding communities and lives.

The objective of housing recovery is:

- To help victims repair or replace their housing,
- To revitalize the housing stock and tax base of the community,
- To incorporate hazard mitigation principles in the recovery effort.

### Considerations

- Don't rush into the long term housing recovery. Don't assume because the community has lost many housing units there will be a strong market for new housing development. Learn about the potential market—people's financial capacity and their personal preferences—before deciding on a long-term new construction strategy.
- The objective of the housing recovery strategy should be to help restore people to their pre-disaster condition and address health and safety concerns, not to enrich their living situation.
- Use supplemental public funds (i.e. CDBG, HOME or state appropriations to fill the gaps (affordability or value) after people have made a reasonable effort to meet their own needs, including applying insurance proceeds to rehab or new construction.

- Consider using public funds as incentives for people to rebuild either on their original property or in a new, less disaster prone area.
  - Programs that are designed should provide the incentive to the homeowner, not the builder or developer.
  - A program can be designed in the form of a deferred loan, which is forgiven or repayable after a certain number of years, thereby protecting against windfall gain.
  - Disasters always accelerate natural attrition; there will predictably be a loss of population.
  - Learn about federal assistance programs that disaster survivors are receiving. There are problems that can arise if there is duplication of benefits. Go to [www.fema.gov/rrr/inassist.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/rrr/inassist.shtm) for information about programs available to individuals and households, or if there is a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) established, make an appointment to meet with a representative experienced with the Individual Household Program. They can help you to understand the program to better assist clients.
  - There will be considerable citizen focus on fairness and whether people are treated the same as their neighbors. It is important to strike a balance between standardization and program flexibility when designing housing recovery programs.
  - People need to talk—it is part of the recovery process.

### **Opportunities**

- Incorporate hazard mitigation principles into housing recovery so that in the rebuilding process you're helping prevent future damage. For information about disaster resistant construction go to the web-site of the Federal Alliance for Safe Housing: [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org).
- Programs may be designed to not only help victims who were homeowners prior to the disaster, but they also may help pre-disaster renters become homeowners. Incentive programs can provide the down payment.

## B. Economic Recovery

The objective of economic recovery is to assist viable private, for-profit businesses to recovery from physical and economic losses resulting from a disaster, to retain businesses that provide essential services and employment to the affected community/region, and to incorporate hazard mitigation principles in the recovery effort.

### Considerations

- There is a mutual interdependency between government and industry. When both are affected, they need to work together to fully recover.
- When many business structures have been destroyed, use a large surviving structure to establish a business incubator. Businesses whose stores or offices can operate in the incubator. Or, even set up a tent marketplace.
- Establish priorities for use and distribution of public funds, i.e., business that are adversely affected by the disaster but were viable and creditworthy prior to the disaster, businesses to which insurance proceeds have been applied, businesses whose credit checks indicate no back taxes or other delinquencies, and businesses whose operations were in compliance with state and local land use requirements.
- Historically, financing has been available for physical damage and economic injury/loss of business thru the Small Business Association (SBA). For specific information go to: [www.sba.gov/disaster\\_recov/loaninfo/dloanassit.html](http://www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/loaninfo/dloanassit.html).
- The Economic Development Agency may have assistance available for economic recovery, go to: [www.eda.gov/](http://www.eda.gov/).

## C. Community Recovery

Communities recovering from disasters face decisions with long-term implications that need to be given serious consideration.

### Considerations

- Don't make promises about full recovery—there is never enough money.
- Do assure citizens that the community “will recover.”
- Needs assessment is a critical component for communities.
- Many new policies will be instituted as a result of the disaster. It is important for the decisions to be consistent. This requires documentation of all decisions.
- Rumors will spread rapidly; people want to know what's happening. Communicate frequently with citizens. People are most likely to become upset when they don't know or understand what is happening.
- Telling people specifically where and how to get help is among the most important information you can provide. Referral lists to service agencies can help people start to help themselves. Refer to the Recovery Notebook Tab #14.
- Every disaster and its ensuing recovery are unique causing the process, procedures and assistance to vary.

### Opportunities

- Review the community's long-term plan. Does the recovery provide an opportunity to rethink the community's long-term plan? Can improvements planned for the future be accomplished with recovery funding? Can non-conforming uses or related issues be addressed?

**Things will never be as they were, the disaster will be a marker in time; hereafter life will be referred to in terms of “before the disaster” or “after the disaster.” It becomes part of your identity; life will not return to the pre-disaster normal, but, there will be a new normal.**



# Reference

## Useful Acronyms

ARC	American Red Cross	FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
BFE	Base Flood Elevation	FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
CAC	Community Action Council	GAR	Governor's Authorized Representative
CAP	Community Action Program	HFA	Housing Finance Agency
CATEX	Categorically Excluded	HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
CCP	Crisis Counseling Assistance Program	HRA	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
CERT	Community Emergency Response Teams	HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant	IHP	Individual Household Program
CDO	Community Development Organization	FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan	JPIC	Joint Public Information Center
CMHS	Center for Mental Health Services	LDR	Lutheran Disaster Response
CWS	Church World Service	LSS	Lutheran Social Services
DCT	Donations Coordination's Team	NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
DFO	Disaster Field Office	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
DHS	Department of Homeland Security	NVOAD	National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
DPS	Department of Public Safety	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
DUA	Disaster Unemployment Assistance	PA	Public Assistance
EDA	Economic Development Agency	PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment
EIDL	Economic Injury Disaster Loan	PIO	Public Information Officer
EMS	Emergency Medical Services	RFPE	Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation
EO	Executive Order	SBA	Small Business Administration
EOC	Emergency Operations Center	SCDP	Small Cities Development Program
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan	SD	Substantial Damage
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
FCO	Federal Coordinating Officer	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
FDR	Flood Damage Reduction Program	USACE	United States Army Corp of Engineers
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

## Valuable Websites

### **Citizen Corps**

[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)

The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

### **Economic Development Administration**

<http://www.eda.gov/>

EDA helps distressed communities address problems associated with long-term economic distress, as well as sudden and severe economic dislocations including recovering from the economic impacts of natural disasters.

### **Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned**

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/reports/katrina-lessons-learned/>

The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned

The review has identified 125 recommendations in 17 general categories where we can improve the Federal government's capability to respond to a catastrophic event.

### **FEMA Assistance**

<http://www.fema.gov/rrr/inassist.shtm>

The site contains basic information about disaster assistance programs.

### **FEMA Training**

[http://www.fema.gov/tab\\_education.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/tab_education.shtm)

FEMA provides education programs, courses, and materials to support emergency preparedness training for families, kids, and teacher resources.

### **FLASH**

[www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org)

The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes - FLASH, Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to promoting disaster safety and property loss mitigation. FLASH's mission is to promote life safety, property protection and economic well-being by strengthening homes and safeguarding families from natural and manmade disasters.

### **National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster**

[www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=State](http://www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=State)

The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster Web-Site is where state information can be obtain, state contacts will be able to make local referrals.

There is also information about the types of assistance member organizations provide.

**Pandemic Flu**

[www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) .

Specific information about pandemic preparedness is available at the official US government web site Click on Community Organizations for a checklist on preparedness; there is also a checklist for families.

**Public Entity Risk Institute**

[www.riskinstitute.org](http://www.riskinstitute.org)

The Public Entity Risk Institute site provides tools, publications and resources for risk management, there is a new publication available titled *Holistic Disaster Recovery: Ideas for Building Local Sustainability After a Natural Disaster*, it is recommended for community use following a disaster. It appears to also be a good resource for those interested in sustainable development.

**Ready.Gov**

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

Ready.gov is a common sense framework designed to launch a process of learning about citizen preparedness.

[www.ready.gov/business/st3-improvecyber.html](http://www.ready.gov/business/st3-improvecyber.html)

Access detailed information about cyber security.

**Small Business Administration**

[http://www.sba.gov/disaster\\_recov/loaninfo/dloanassit.html](http://www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/loaninfo/dloanassit.html)

Information about disaster assistance loans for homeowners, renters and businesses.

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