

MASTER CHECKLIST



1. KNOW YOUR RISKS

Identify the most serious threats to your business by focusing on the most likely disruptions and their impact.

- Find and review your county's hazard analysis or mitigation plan, which can be found on the internet.

This will include past threats and disasters in your area and geographical hazards related to severe weather patterns, wildfire concerns, proximity to flood plains, major airports, dams, ports, other companies with hazardous materials, etc.

- Consider risks/threats related to your business that stem from the nature of the operation or from specific situations that may originate inside your organization.

Examples include human error, poor training or maintenance, illness, death, theft, fraud, employee morale, the type of equipment used, your IT risks, your building, etc., as well as threats to your community.

- Fill out the Know Your Risks form to identify and rank the greatest threats to your business.

- Develop and document a plan for threats that score the highest (17-25) on the Know Your Risk form.

Assume these threats will strike your business and determine what controls you can implement to minimize your risk.

2. KNOW YOUR OPERATIONS

Understand your business's most critical functions and how to perform them if there's a disruption.

- Identify the business functions and processes that are critical to the survival of your business.

Consider: What is your main product/service? What other business functions/processes do you perform to run your overall business such as production/service delivery; manufacturing; customer service; sales/marketing; purchasing; accounting/finance; human resources; administration; and information technology? What activities do employees perform on a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis or other special times of the year?

- Rank these business functions in priority from extremely high to low.

Consider: What are the consequences if the function can't be performed? Can your business survive without this function? How much downtime can you tolerate for each function?



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- Use the Know Your Operations form to document important information for each function.
Start with functions ranked Extremely High and High. Additional functions can wait until your annual update.
- Consider whether employees need additional training to perform functions they do not normally complete but could complete in the event of a disruption.
- Be as specific as possible when documenting procedures for workarounds and/or manual processes.

3. KNOW YOUR EMPLOYEES

Document employee information so you can connect with them before, during, and after a disruption.

- Use the Know Your Employees form to collect contact information for each employee.
This allows you to determine their safety and whereabouts; inform them about the status of operations as well as when, where, and how they should report to work; and provide any additional instructions following a disruption.
- Note key responsibilities of each employee as well as alternate employees who can perform these tasks.
- Make sure special skills are not know by only one person. This may require additional employee training.
- Have employees review and update their contact information at least every 6 months.
- Create a Contact Tree so you can quickly call, text, and email employees.
Keep an updated hard copy in case of power or internet outages. Note: The linked Excel doc contains 3 sheets: the contact tree, instructions, and a call log.
<https://disastersafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Contact-Tree-Generic-Template.xlsx>
- Designate a phone number and/or intranet site where employees can get status updates and leave messages.

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- Consider possible technology solutions to simplify the process of reaching your employees.
Low-cost emergency notification systems are available that can reach every employee on every device—instantly, simply, and reliably with one easy click. (However, always maintain a hard copy and manual solutions in the event of power/internet outages.)

4. KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT

Protect critical equipment to keep your business running.

- Identify equipment and machinery necessary to perform critical business functions.
If these items failed or were unavailable, the business may have to restrict production of goods and services or be forced to shut down. Examples: a printing press at a print shop or an oven at a bakery. Also consider company-owned vehicles.
- Determine how and where you might move these items to safeguard them from a hazardous event when there is advanced warning (such as a hurricane or severe winter weather).
Consider: Can the equipment be easily moved to a safe place in the building or to an alternate location? Can measures be taken to protect the equipment in its current location?
- Identify available replacements or alternate options in case equipment becomes damaged or there is a hazardous event without advanced warning.
Consider: Is the equipment customized or one-of-a-kind? How long would it take to reorder? Is the equipment functional or obsolete? If obsolete, how long would it take to replace or get it functional? Are there rental options to temporarily replace the equipment? Can you outsource the end product if equipment cannot be substituted quickly?
- Fill out the Know Your Equipment form to document this information.
Use for non-IT equipment only; IT equipment is covered in module 7.
- Save and store photos, purchase invoices, sales receipts, user guides, and warranty information in a dry and safe location.
You should be able to access this information at any time during the event.



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5. KNOW HOW TO REDUCE POTENTIAL DISRUPTIONS

Identify and plan for potential disruptions so you recover faster.

- Fill out the Know How to Reduce Potential Disruptions form for info on:
 - o Make-Up Capabilities
 - o Product and Inventory
 - o Perishable Stock
 - o Power
 - o Shutdown and Startup Plans
 - o Miscellaneous

6. KNOW YOUR KEY CUSTOMERS, CONTACTS, SUPPLIERS, AND VENDORS

Ensure you can continue service to your customers in the event of a disruption.

- If possible, avoid relying solely on suppliers and vendors in the same geographic location as your business.
- Establish relationships with alternate or backup suppliers and vendors.
- Request copies of your suppliers' and vendors' business continuity plans.
Your ability to resume operations relies on their ability to deliver to you what you need on time if they experience a disruption.
- Fill out the Know Your Key Customers, Contacts, Suppliers, and Vendors form to document contact information.
Key contacts are those you rely on for administration of your business such as accountants, banks, billing/invoicing services, building management or owner, security personnel, insurance agents, internet service providers, payroll providers, public works department, telephone and utility companies, etc.
- Establish various ways to communicate with customers about the status of your business operations, your product or service, delivery schedules, etc., after a disruption.

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- Consider direct telephone calls, a designated telephone number with a recording, text, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, or announcements on your company website, by radio, or through a newspaper.

7. KNOW YOUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Understand your IT needs and develop protection systems.

- Develop a severe weather plan to protect equipment.
For example, if severe weather is predicted, shutdown and unplug all computer hardware to avoid serious damage due to power fluctuations. If flooding may occur, consider elevating or moving equipment offsite. Instruct employees to take laptop computers home each day if you are on weather alert so they can work offsite if necessary.
- Determine which data and records are vital to perform the critical functions you identified in the Know Your Operations module, and back up this data on a daily basis (using servers, desktop PCs/Macs, laptops, or a combination, including operating systems and applications).
It is recommended that data is backed up on one or more types of media. Store a backup copy onsite for use during small disasters, such as a failed hard drive, and store a second copy in a safe offsite location or with a cloud storage provider that can be easily accessed during larger disasters.
- Follow the 3-2-1 backup rule. You should have three copies of your data. Each copy should be saved to two types of media. And you should keep one backup copy of your data at an offsite location.
- Keep a backup copy of your computer's operating system, boot files, critical software, and operations manuals.
- Backup computer files, including payroll, tax, accounting and production records.
- Maintain an up-to-date copy of computer and Internet login codes and passwords.
- Make arrangements with IT vendors to replace damaged hardware and software, and/or to set-up hardware and software at a recovery location.
- Request written estimates for rental or purchase of equipment, shipping costs, and delivery times. Be sure to list these companies on your supplier and vendor form.



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- Keep equipment inventory updated.
- When flooding is possible, elevate computer equipment stored on the floor.
- If possible, consult an IT expert to assist with your technology needs of your business.
- Fill out the Know Your Technology form to list the computer equipment, hardware and software, vital records and your back up processes that you will need to fulfill your critical business functions.
If your computer equipment is damaged or destroyed, you will need to lease or purchase new hardware and replace your software. Make a list of everything you would need to purchase or lease. The important thing is to know what is needed to perform your critical business functions.
- Establish a maintenance program to keep your IT inventory current and relevant.
- Review your IT needs and resources every 6 months.

8. KNOW YOUR FINANCES

Ensure your business is financially resilient.

- Start an emergency reserve fund.
You may need to purchase supplies or equipment or relocate your business temporarily. Cash during an emergency is recommended, especially in scenarios when the power may go out for long periods of time forcing business to be conducted on a cash-only basis.
- Get a credit card or establish a line of credit.
- Identify financial obligations and expenses that must be paid.
Don't assume that because your area was hit by a disaster that your suppliers, vendors, and creditors are aware of the situation and are granting extensions. Items such as mortgage, lease, or rental payments may still be required.
- Consider creating a policy regarding payroll during and after a disaster.
Payroll is often overlooked in business continuity planning. Don't expect employees to continue working without pay during or after a disaster. Be sure employees are aware of your payroll continuity plans ahead of time so they can plan for their personal financial obligations.

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- Have employees sign up for electronic funds transfer (EFT) and arrange for a cloud-based payroll system.

- Get adequate insurance for your place of business, your contents and inventory, and/or your production processes.
Evaluate your insurance policies and meet regularly with your insurance agent/broker to make sure your coverage is up to date and that you understand what is covered, what is not, deductibles and limits, and how to file a claim. Also discuss the types of insurance coverages available to you such as business owners, business income/business interruption, contingent business income, extra expense insurance, loss of key personnel, and many others.

- Determine if you need separate insurance for flood or earthquake damage (most property insurance policies do not cover these events).

- Establish clear strategies and procedures for controlling costs, reporting information to appropriate groups, and clearly budgeting so you can track what is actually spent during a significant disruption.

- Fill out the Know Your Finances form to develop your financial strategy.

- Review your finances every six months.

9. KNOW WHEN TO UPDATE AND TEST YOUR PLAN

Make sure you're ready any time a disruption could occur.

- Set reminders to review and update your plan every 6-12 months, or any time there are changes to your business.
Consider: Have there been any changes in procedures or business priorities? Have responsibilities changed? Be sure to document this information.

- Use the Know When to Update and Test Your Plan form to test your organization's disaster readiness and learn where you can improve.

- Update your plan based on feedback from testing.

- Keep employees up to date with any plan changes since you will need their help putting the plan into action.



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10. KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Build ties with your community and outside agencies who can help you recover quickly from a disaster.

- Get to know community leaders, emergency management office staff (from police and fire departments and emergency medical services), and other key staff from government agencies, utility companies, etc., who can provide helpful information during a disaster.
- Use the Know Where to Go for Help form to gather information from helpful resources.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- ▶ Enlist help from coworkers and schedule time to work through the plan together. Consider a series of working sessions over lunch to make it more enjoyable.
- ▶ Consider using SharePoint or Google Docs for collaborative editing.