

EMERGENCY PLAN GUIDE
Updated BUSINESS CONTINGENCY PLAN CHECKLIST

Date: _____ Completed by: _____

	<i>Item</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Grade</i>
1	Review current Plan		
2	Itemize business assets		
3	Assess, prioritize threats		
4	Identify critical functions		
5	Analyze cost of downtime		
6	Consult with business advisers: attorneys, bank, accountant, insurance agent regarding all risks of downtime		
7	Lay out "immediate response" safety requirements		
8	Set timelines for returning to service taking into account any required changes		
9	Identify resources necessary for critical functions (alternate suppliers, insurance coverage, cash, etc.)		
10	Create plan to bring each critical function back up		
11	(Re)Build in-house team		
12	Identify Leaders		
13	Clarify staff roles and assignments		
14	Schedule staff training and cross training		
15	Update Communications plan (staff, suppliers, families, regulators, media, etc.)		
16	Confirm emergency supplies (First Aid, hygiene, food, lights, radios, etc.)		
17	Budget for Plan		
18	Document and test Plan		
19			
20			

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How to Use this Checklist

This checklist is meant to be a tool – a starting point for emergency planning. Print out several copies and let senior management “grade” the state of the business’s contingency planning. Then compare notes – and discover where the differences lie! Anytime things change – whether it’s your market, the political climate, even public health conditions – you’ll want to review your plan again.

Note: Decide how you will “grade” where you stand on each item in the checklist. Will you grade with a letter grade (A-F), or come up with a number grade? For example, you could score each item 0-10, with 10 being “most complete” or “best.” Using a number score will make it easier to do a follow-up assessment to show improvement.

Notes to the checklist items

1 – 5 Begin research on your plan.

Every plan is a snapshot in time and needs to be reviewed and updated where necessary. Start with a review your current plan. When was it written? Who wrote it? How accurate is it today? Decide if you can use what you have, or need to start again. If you’re starting again, or from scratch, check [Emergency Preparedness for Small Business](#) for more detailed, step-by-step help.

Your plan will have several sections. One of the most important is the assessment of the threats you face based on your geographic location, the type of business you’re in, your neighbors, etc. When things change, the level of threat may change. For example, doing business during the coronavirus pandemic brings new legal threats with it.

Consult with staff, business partners and business advisers to complete your risk assessment.

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7 - 10 Understand how the company will keep doing business.

If an emergency hits suddenly, you must meet immediate needs: tracking visitors and employees, coping with injuries, safety shut-down procedures, calling for evacuation or sheltering in place, etc. Once the immediate situation has been stabilized, you can assess survival over a longer-term.

Some functions can stop for one hour, some for one week, some can wait for a month. Item 8 helps you identify each and place recovery in order of priority. "Getting back to business" may not mean "getting back to normal." Your business may need to move to an alternate location. As a result of the pandemic we have now seen that working from home is becoming a new "normal" standard for some employees. The workplace itself may need physical changes to protect employees and customers before it can be opened. Plan for these changes – including training and/or new benefits you'll need to address morale, productivity, security, etc..

11 – 14 Designate and train key people to perform mission critical and other key tasks.

These items deal with the people who will ultimately save your business. It starts with the leaders – who may NOT be upper management, but rather people with particular emergency and disaster recovery skills. If these leaders are CERT trained they will have practice in identifying who needs to do what and can communicate effectively with First Responders.

Every function needs a back-up, since some employees are likely to be away from their post or away from the workplace altogether when the emergency hits or during an extended shutdown. New practices may need to be implemented as a result of the emergency. Train on these..

15 Maintain communications.

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Being able to communicate quickly and accurately with all impacted audiences is essential to maintaining momentum and protecting your reputation. Audiences include customers, suppliers, regulators, stockholders, the media, and above all employee families. Today, crisis communications systems typically operate “in the cloud” so they are always available. If essential functions can be performed away from the workplace (at employees’ homes), secure communications with these locations need to be considered, too.

16 Invest in emergency supplies.

Equipment and supplies need to be assembled in the workplace and inventory maintained. Emergency radios and two-way radios can aid in rescue and recovery operations. Supplies include water, snacks, hygiene supplies and cash for employees if payroll is disrupted.

17 - 18 Assemble and put the plan to use.

Finalizing the plan will require management decisions. How much to budget, how to document, when to test. Set milestones to be sure your plan comes together per expectations

19 – 20 What can you add to this list for YOUR company?

Fill it in, and comment as to urgency! This would be a great place to include actions to improve your current processes and/or mitigate the effects of an emergency or disaster.

Disclaimer: *This simple checklist is no substitute for a comprehensive Business Contingency Plan. Its purpose is to illustrate the broad range of circumstances that must be considered in planning for an emergency. Every business is unique; the checklist can help identify areas that are often overlooked in plans that we have seen. At a minimum, your plan needs to include how employees will communicate, where they will go and how they will keep doing their jobs – to protect themselves and protect the business. Every plan should be reviewed by a human resource professional as well as financial and legal counsel.*