



THE PARTNERSHIP
FOR INCLUSIVE DISASTER STRATEGIES

DSIL Continuity of Operations: **Strategies for Serving** **Consumers in Disasters and** **Public Health Emergencies**

— www.disasterstrategies.org —

Accessibility for this Presentation

Friendly reminders:

- Please identify yourself before speaking.
 - Ex. “This is Priya, and...”
- Please avoid speaking while others are speaking.
- Please keep yourself on mute when not talking.
- Please avoid using acronyms.

Welcome and About Us

Who We Are: The Partnership

The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies is the only U.S. disability-led organization with a focused mission on equity for people with disabilities and people with access and functional needs throughout all planning, programs, services, and procedures before, during, and after disasters and emergencies.

Mutual Agreements

- Maintain confidentiality
- Ask questions
- Have fun!

Goals for This Training

Building your understanding of:

- What continuity of operations means;
- What a continuity of operations plan is; and
- DSIL's plan to operate during and after disasters and public health emergencies.

Continuity of Operations Plan

What is a Continuity of Operations Plan?

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a plan that will support DSIL in continuing operations to the highest degree possible during disruptions and disasters.

Examples of Disruptions

- Disasters
- Emergencies
- Public Health Emergencies (PHE)
- Unexpected staff absence
- Power outage / Connectivity failure
- Damage to or destruction of DSIL Office

Why Is a COOP Necessary?

Without a COOP:

- Staff, board, consumers, and the public may become confused
- Relationships may deteriorate
- Consumers and the public may not be served effectively or at all
- Staff may not get paid on time

What Does Having a COOP Mean?

- Tasks may be completed differently
- Hours of operation may be modified
- Staff may report to a different person

Keep in mind:

- Changes may be uncomfortable, but they are for the purpose of supporting consumers to maintain independence
- Changes are likely temporary

Succession Plans

Succession Plans

A succession plan is a written plan that states who will take over responsibilities when the person typically assigned to those responsibilities can't fulfill them for a significant period of time.

Succession plans are different from delegation of tasks.

Succession Plan

CEO

- If CEO is unable to perform their duties, the CFO assumes their responsibilities.
- The CFO may delegate CEO tasks at their discretion.

CFO

- If the CFO is unable to perform duties, the CEO assumes their responsibilities.
- The CEO may delegate CFO tasks at their discretion.

Succession Plan

If both **CFO and CEO are unavailable**, the fiscal assistant assumes CFO responsibilities under the supervision of the board president.

Succession Plan

Generally, supervisors shall assume the responsibilities of their staff that are unavailable.

Supervisors may delegate responsibility to staff with similar experience and qualifications, where feasible.

Before a Disaster

Support Consumers in Preparedness

- Work with consumers on developing personal preparedness plans.
- Inform consumers where they can find information during a crisis.
- Inform consumers of DSIL's potential availability in crisis.

Support Consumers in Preparedness

- Incorporate crisis communication information into the annual meeting agenda each year.
- Collect multiple methods of contact from consumers
 - Phone numbers
 - Email
 - Social media platform (e.g., Facebook)

Prepare Website to Provide Disaster Support Information

- Assess the accessibility of the website and resolve barriers to access.
- Develop templates to use when you need to update your website due to a disaster or emergency.
- Train staff to update the public section of the website with crisis communications, and inform consumers and the public that they will be able to find crisis communications there.

Prepare to Engage Media

- CEO will develop close relationships with local media.
- Office manager will update press contact lists.
- Office manager will develop a media advisory and press release template.

During and After a Disaster

Crisis Communication Plan

During a crisis that disrupts communication, you should:

- **Expect** to be contacted by the CEO or their designee within 24 hours after the beginning of a crisis.
- **Reach out** to the CEO and or their designee if you have not been contacted by them within 72 hours of crisis, or as soon as feasibly possible.
- **Monitor** your phones, computers, devices, and the DSIL website for updates when there isn't operable communication with DSIL.

Crisis Communication Plan

- Check the DSIL website for updates, if you are not able to be notified by other more direct means.
- Continue to provide IL services and disaster IL services as feasible during typical business hours until you have been contacted.
- Be aware that you may be required to work virtually or from an alternate venue in a crisis, and provide details about equipment and alternate venue (as available).

New Job Duties During Disasters

Job duties may change in disasters to include:

- Registering consumers for FEMA and other services at gathering spaces and, if needed door-to-door, and
- Advocating for the rights of consumers in disasters.

Continuing Previous Job Duties

Staff will also need to continue to:

- Divert consumers from institutions
- Provide transition services out of nursing facilities
- Provide core and other services during and following emergencies and disasters

Disasters May Cause Change

Some changes that could happen during disruptions include:

- Different hours or days of operation
- Enacting telework plans
- Moving to partial or full virtual operation
- Where and when staff should report to work (physical site or virtually)

Disasters May Cause Change

- New assignments due to the crisis including going to shelters, points of distribution, Disaster Recovery Centers, other gathering places, or door-to-door to help people register for FEMA and/or other relief services.
- Schedule of virtual, phone, or in-person meetings to coordinate crisis response.

Communication with Consumers and Public

In a crisis, the public will be notified via the DSIL website of DSIL's hours of operation and any canceled events.

Website Updates

Office manager/outsourced consultant will update front page of the website to **provide information about changes in:**

- DSIL's hours of operation.
- The way core and other services will be provided (virtually, at another location, or in consumers' homes).
- If the office is not occupied, how messages will get to staff, consumers, funders, contractors, and the public.
- Office address if an alternative site is being utilized.
- Relevant disaster services.

Website Updates

Office manager/outsourced consultant will **share to the website front page**:

- Links to important resources, including location of any shelters, FEMA (if there has been a presidential disaster declaration), or the American Red Cross (if they are activated).

Website Updates

Office manager/outsourced consultant will **share to the website front page**:

- Links to resources to go to if they think their rights are being violated, including:
 - [Disability Rights Florida](#)
 - [Community Legal Services](#)
 - [The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](#)

Website Updates

Office manager/outsourced consultant will **share to the website front page** a reminder to consumers / members of the public with disabilities that that they have legal rights to:

- Physically accessible services
- Effective communication (sign language interpreters, visually accessible materials, etc.)
- Modifications to policies and practices, including admitting service animals.

Communication with Consumers

Send email/text/phone/website communication that:

- Updates consumers about changes in office hours, meetings, or event cancellations or postponements.
- Directs consumers to the website for additional information about the crisis.
- Check in with consumers and ask what support they need.

Communication with Media

Office manager will **create and disseminate media advisory and press release(s)** that describe the crisis and its potential impact on:

- Disabled people in affected areas
- Resources
- DSIL's availability to provide support as well as any changes in hours or operations or services

Alternative Office Site

Following an event where the DSIL office must be closed but it is safe to travel, DSIL will be operating remotely from their homes or an alternative venue.

Note: While work-from-home options may be ideal during public health emergencies or when DSIL may need to be temporarily closed, an alternative site may be a desirable option following disruptions that only impact the DSIL office, such as a building fire or collapse.

Remote Work

Staff has been asked to sign a telework agreement.

Decisions to close the office and/or work remotely as well as return to office decisions will be made by the CEO.

Shelter-In-Place and Evacuation Events

Shelter-In-Place Kit

- DSIL will be developing shelter-in-place kits for every workstation, plus a few extra for visitors.
 - It will contain food, water, and other essentials.
- Staff will be asked to provide individualized items, such as medication, food for specific dietary needs, and period, bowel, and bladder supplies.
- Kits will be monitored for expiration annually by the office manager.

Evacuation

- DSIL has the goal of exercising evacuation plans.
- Staff should share the evacuation plan at the beginning of any meeting where attendees include participants that are not on staff.

Ongoing Activities

Minimize Paper Documents

Digitizing paper documents:

- Consultant will be responsible for overall digitizing of paper documents.
- Staff who are not already trained will be trained to digitize paper documents.
- A schedule will be developed for digitizing paper documents.
- You are encouraged to eliminate paper documents unless necessary for reasonable accommodation.

Minimize Paper Documents

Shredding paper documents:

- A schedule will be established for shredding paper documents that have been digitized.
- Office manager/consultant will have oversight responsibility.

Questions?



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Thank you!

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