



Business Continuity
Planning and Pandemic
Preparedness: *First Steps
Toward Emergency
Preparedness*

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Overview

- Business Continuity Planning
- The Pandemic Threat
- Starting points for your organization
- HR issues in BCP and Pandemic planning
- Moving forward – next steps for HR professionals

Business Continuity Planning

- Planning to minimize the impacts of a disruption
- Not based on a 'all hazard planning principles – focused on general procedures that can be adapted to suit the response required for a disruption
- Defines short term, immediate needs, timelines, and guidelines at the functional area level
- Builds capacity to provide essential services, protect assets and employees



Business Continuity Planning is ...

- Focused on delivering **only the minimally necessary services** provided by your organization, not all that you normally provide

Why do BCP?

- Protects assets
- Ensures delivery of essential services
- Builds resiliency of emergency operations
- Increases confidence of employees, the public, and stakeholders
- Protection from liability
- **Without the required equipment, people, and facilities, you will not be able to effectively respond to an emergency**

What are the steps?

- Identify your functional areas
- Conduct a risk analysis
- Prepare a Business Impact Analysis
- Determine your priorities for restoration
- Evaluate and select a strategic approach
- Write a plan based on all-hazard principles and the requirements of functions during emergencies
- Consider the need for recovery from minimal operations to normal operations
- Train and exercise your employees

What are some BCP considerations for the Human Resources function?

- HR will be seen as an integral part of your company, including planning and during a crisis
- Increased need for employee communication
- Unique labour relations issues will arise – be ready to respond and provide advice
- **There will probably be very little difference between your Normal Operating Statement and your Minimal Operating Statement during a crisis – it may even increase**

What is the outcome?

- An **all-hazard plan for dealing with a wide range of disruptions**. From this, you can start developing plans for specific emergencies, such as ...

Pandemic influenza

- A shift in the influenza A virus to which people have little immunity and easy transfer from person to person, resulting in widespread illness and death
- Impossible to predict impacts, but it is thought that 35 per cent (176,000 to 410,000) Manitobans may be ill, and 3 per cent (4,100 to 6,100) may die
- Will have impacts on health care, businesses, schools, public services (including critical infrastructure)
- Assumption that up to half of people will be unavailable for work for a period of up to 8 weeks

Pandemic planning concerns

- How would a public health emergency impact your organization?
- Can you anticipate employees that will not be available?
- What are the critical parts of your supply chain and are your partners prepared? If there is a critical vulnerability, should you stockpile?
- What are the minimal services that your organization can tolerate, and when are they needed? Would people expect an increase or a reduction in your services? How would this impact your contractual obligations?



Developing a Pandemic plan

- Evaluate the impact of a pandemic on your employees and partners (including those you depend on, and those who depend on you)
- Evaluate the impact of a pandemic on your business
- Establish policies to implement during a pandemic that will help manage the expected impacts
- Identify and allocate resources required to deliver services, and protect employees and partners
- Communicate and educate employees
- Coordinate with external agencies, be ready to help your community if this is required



Pandemic concerns for HR professionals

- Have you considered modifying your sick leave/vacation policies to allow people to stay at home?
- Will employees on extended leave receive benefits ?
- Is working from home an option for your organization? If so, what technology is required?
- If someone gets sick at work, will there be liability or WCB issues?
- What right-to-refusal issues might arise?
- What flexibility (in contract, agreements, or skills) do you have to assign alternate duties?



Pandemic concerns for HR professionals

- How would you communicate with employees?
- How would you communicate with the public?
- How would you communicate with stakeholders?
- What occupational safety and health concerns might arise from a pandemic? How would you address them?
- At what point would layoff notices be considered?
- Are flexible hours an option for your organization?
- What leadership will the HR function be expected to provide during a pandemic?

When it's all done, your plan should ...

- **Establish the minimal activities** that need to happen in the event of a disruption
- **Anticipate the additional demands** on your HR function during certain priority concerns (i.e. pandemic)
- Determine **when** it needs to happen
- Identify **what** is required to make it happen
- Determine **when** it needs to happen
- Provide guidance on **what are higher priorities**, and tools to decide on priorities
- Include a way forward with plans for **training, exercises, and on-going responsibility**



Starting points for your organization

- Promote the development of an all-hazard BCP first, and a pandemic plan second
- Get the support of your executive on the need, the approach (including timelines), and the resources
- Assign the responsibility to someone, and make it a regular part of their work
- Invest in training
- Get all employees aware and involved
- Don't view it as a one-time job – the investment only has value if it is grown and developed



Moving forward

- Education, awareness, and knowledge within the organization
- Development of plans to address medium and longer duration emergencies
- Coordination of cross-departmental issues, dependencies, and facilities
- Planning for event-specific concerns
- Exercises and revisions

Resources

www.manitobaemo.ca

www.gov.mb.ca/emo/bcp.pdf

www.drie.org

www.dri.ca

www.gov.mb.ca/pandemic

www.nfpa.org



Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization – Business Continuity
Planning and Pandemic preparedness