About FEMA's National Continuity Program

Serving as the Nation's center of excellence for continuity planning, guidance, and operations, FEMA National Continuity Programs (NCP) executes its vision to ensure essential functions of government continue at all levels. Our mission is to safeguard the implementation of Executive Branch continuity and assist the continuity planning efforts of federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government and non-governmental stakeholders to sustain the continuous performance of essential functions and critical services under all conditions. To accomplish this, NCP provides guidance, technical assistance, planning, training, and workshop support to other Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA components, federal departments and agencies, state, local, territorial, and tribal (SLTT) governments, and other members of the whole community, to include private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure.

Telework Resources

Information on telework may be found online at https://telework.gov. The website includes:

- Information for Telework Managing Officers and Coordinators, Managers, and Employees;
- Telework guidance and legislation (including the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 and Guide to Telework in the Federal Government);
- Reports and studies (including Status of Telework in the Federal Government report); and
- Training and resources.

For non-federal government agencies and organizations, employees and managers should consult their agency's Human Resources coordinators.

Contact Information

For more information, please contact FEMA National Continuity Programs. For FEMA Region-specific information, contact the appropriate Regional Continuity Manager from the list below.

FEMA Region	Location
FEMA HQ	National Capital Region
Region I	CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Region II	NJ, NY, PR, VI
Region III	DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV
Region IV	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN
Region V	IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI
Region VI	AR, LA, NM, OK, TX
Region VII	IA, KS, MO, NE
Region VIII	CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY
Region IX	AZ, CA, HI, NV, Pacific Territories
Region X	AK, ID, OR, WA

Regional offices may be contacted via:
FEMA-CGC@fema.dhs.gov

Website

Continuity news, tools, guidance, and other useful resources may be found on FEMA's website at: www.fema.gov/national-continuity-programs.

Continuity Updates

To receive free continuity e-bulletins, register at: www.fema.gov/subscribe-receive-free-email-updates.

Telework:
An Essential Component of Continuity Planning

National Continuity Programs

July 2018

Continuity & Telework

The *Telework Enhancement Act of 2010* defines telework as "a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of such employee's position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work." The essence of continuity is to create a plan to accomplish essential functions under all conditions. Telework options enhance the resiliency and continuity capabilities of organizations, and offer many advantages to employers, staff, and communities. In situations such as extreme weather conditions, infectious disease outbreak, national security special events, or civil unrest, which prevent employees from traveling to or working at their regular facility, the option of telework allows employees to perform essential functions off-site to keep the organization running. In preparation for such circumstances, organizations should have telework policies in place that provide eligible employees with instructions, procedures, and performance expectations.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in consultation with FEMA, sets policy and policy guidance for telework that can be leveraged for continuity of operations and long-term emergencies. The information contained in this brochure is based upon that guidance.

Organizations should focus on the following activities to incorporate telework into their continuity plans:

- Assessing the organization's essential functions to identify which functions the organization must conduct onsite and which the organization can conduct via telework by continuity and non-continuity personnel;
- Establishing and maintaining plans and procedures to use telework as a primary or backup continuity strategy for those essential functions and supporting tasks that can be accomplished via telework;
- Establishing a policy under which eligible continuity and non-continuity personnel are authorized to telework during a continuity event;
- Notifying all employees of their telework eligibility before a continuity activation;
- Ensuring that each eligible employee authorized to telework during a continuity activation successfully completes a telework training program prior to signing a written telework agreement with his/her supervisor;
- Coordinating with the organization's designated telework managing officer when developing the organization's continuity plan;
- Ensuring information technology (IT) equipment, support, and servers are in place and offer appropriate capacity to support the number of staff envisioned to telework;
- Providing protection of information and information systems during telework; Providing access to essential records, databases, and robust communications tools necessary to sustain an organization's essential functions at telework locations;
- Ensuring adherence to relevant laws, statutes, policies, and guidance governing the use of telework; and
- Coordinating with IT specialists to identify equipment and technical support requirements for personnel identified as telework capable.

Benefits of Telework

A robust and well-practiced telework program offers many benefits to employees, organizations, and the whole community. Telework offers the potential to improve quality of life for communities, for example, by reducing traffic congestion and pollution, improving work/life balance and eliminating commute time on telework days.

There is a direct relationship between an organization's continuity plan and telework. The two programs share the basic objective of performing and maintaining an organization's functions in an alternative location and method. Telework can assist the sustainment of essential functions during a change in normal operating status, such as a pandemic or an incident that causes a building closure.

In recognition of the value telework can add to continuity capabilities, the Telework Enhancement Act was signed into law in 2010, requiring federal executive agencies to incorporate telework into continuity plans.

Organizations should work with human resources to support continuing operations in a telework environment. Additionally, organizations should identify necessary accessible methods to maintain effective communication access and telework for employees who are deaf or hard of hearing or employees who are blind or have low vision.

Telework may not be a viable strategy for continuing essential functions during all incidents, such as cyberattacks and mass power outages. The use of telework may also not work for all organizations or portions of organizations, and the effectiveness of this option will be dependent upon factors identified during the business process analysis (BPA). Even if telework may not work for supporting essential functions, it may serve as an option for supporting functions or capabilities necessary to ensure the continued performance of essential functions.