



Emergency Services Sector Continuity Planning Suite

Overview

The Emergency Services Sector Continuity Planning Suite (ESS-CPS) provides a centralized collection of existing guidance, processes, products, tools, and best practices to support the development and maturation of continuity planning for the first responder community. Continuity planning enables first responders to maintain their essential functions and fulfill their mission to save lives, protect property and the environment, assist communities impacted by disasters, and aid recovery from emergencies.

The ESS-CPS was created through a partnership of the Emergency Services Sector-Specific Agency (SSA) and Sector Coordinating Council (SCC). First responders can use the ESS-CPS as it suits their organization to evaluate and improve their continuity capability and enhance their preparedness for emergencies. Three major sections comprise the ESS-CPS: Education, Tools and Resources, and Knowledge Validation.

Education: Why Continuity Planning is Important

The ESS-CPS includes educational videos, brochures, and additional information that demonstrate why continuity planning is important for the first responder community. Continuity planning is simply the good business practice of ensuring the execution of essential functions during emergencies. Without the planning, provision, and implementation of continuity principles, first responders may be unable to provide services to help fellow citizens when needed the most.

Tools and Resources: Evaluating Continuity Capability

The core of the ESS-CPS is an easy-to-use and uniform method for evaluating continuity capability to identify and fill continuity gaps. Through identifying and addressing these gaps, viable continuity programs can be established to help keep organizations functioning during emergencies. ESS organizations can use the entire [Continuity Capability Evaluation for the Emergency Services Sector](#) to complete an evaluation, or they can evaluate selected elements of continuity capability based on their organizations' needs. Worksheets and templates are provided for filling gaps identified when evaluating continuity capability.

| Elements of Continuity Capability | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Essential Functions | Orders of Succession | Delegations of Authority | Continuity Facilities | Continuity Communications | Essential Records Management |
| Human Resources | Test, Training, and Exercise | Devolution of Control and Direction | Reconstitution Operations | Program Plans and Procedures | |

Knowledge Validation: Testing, Training, and Exercising Continuity Planning

Applying continuity capability and plans through exercises and training validates the efforts invested in continuity capability-building and can help identify opportunities for improvement. The ESS-CPS provides templates and resources for conducting and documenting exercises for emergency events, as well as references to training available to first responders to improve continuity capability.

For more information, visit www.dhs.gov/emergency-services-sector-continuity-planning-suite or contact the SSA at essteam@hq.dhs.gov.