

Continuity Guiding Principles

The potential for no-notice emergencies, including localized natural hazards, accidents, technological emergencies, and terrorist attacks, require strong continuity plans that enable communities and organizations to continue their essential functions. This planning is guided by three essential principles:

Preparedness and Resilience. Continuity is an important element of preparedness and an integral part of each core capability across the five mission areas within the National Preparedness System. Continuity planning and operations increases the likelihood that organizations can perform essential functions and deliver core capabilities and essential services.

Whole Community Engagement. The Nation cannot be strong if the communities that comprise it are vulnerable to the effects of the threats and hazards that it faces. Whole community is a focus on enabling the participation in national preparedness activities of a wider range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors in order to foster better coordination and working relationships.

Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Continuity Capabilities. Because organizations vary in size and complexity, the Continuity Guidance Circular takes such diversity into consideration. A robust continuity program and culture across the entire national spectrum requires continuity programs and capabilities to be scalable, flexible, and adaptable to meet evolving requirements.

About FEMA's National Continuity Programs

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.

Contact Information

For more information, please contact FEMA NCP. 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 can be found on our website at: www.fema.gov/national-continuity-programs.

Continuity Updates

To receive free continuity update bulletins, register at: www.fema.gov/email.

Continuity Resource Toolkit

FEMA has developed a supporting Continuity Resource Toolkit that provides examples, tools, and templates for implementing each chapter of the Continuity Guidance Circular. The Toolkit is found at: www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit.



Whole Community Continuity

National Continuity Programs

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FEMA

Importance of Continuity

Every day, individuals, organizations, and government institutions conduct critical services and perform essential functions upon which neighbors and communities depend. The ability to continually perform such services comprises an important component of resilience, the ability to prepare for and adapt to changing conditions and recover rapidly from operational disruptions.

Continuity ensures that the whole community plans for ways to provide essential services and conduct these functions when normal operations are disrupted. Implementation of continuity principles ensures that organizations, communities, and governments are able to support citizens in need. Development and maintenance of continuity capabilities helps build and sustain a more resilient nation equipped to sustain essential functions, deliver critical services, and supply core capabilities under all conditions.

The vision for continuity is a more resilient nation through whole community integration of continuity plans and programs to sustain essential functions under all conditions.



Continuity Guidance Circular

The Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC) serves as a resource for federal and non-federal entities to appropriately integrate and synchronize continuity efforts. Non-federal entities, to include non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, local governments, schools and academia, and state, tribal, and territorial governments can draw upon the CGC as a reference when creating or revising continuity plans, programs, and processes. The CGC can be found at: <https://www.fema.gov/continuity-guidance-circular-cgc>.

Definition of Continuity

Continuity of Operations (COOP) ensures an individual organization can continue to perform its essential functions, provide essential services, and deliver core capabilities during a disruption to normal operations.

Continuity of Government (COG) is a coordinated effort within each of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed before, during, and after an emergency or threat. COG is an outcome of a viable continuity capability, not a program. COG is intended to preserve the statutory and constitutional authority of elected officials at all levels of government.

Enduring Constitutional Government (ECG) is the cooperative effort among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to preserve the constitutional framework under which people are governed. ECG focuses on the ability of all three branches of government to execute constitutional responsibilities, provide for orderly succession, and appropriate transition of leadership, and support essential functions during an emergency.

The Basis for Continuity

The National Essential Functions (NEFs) are the foundation of all continuity programs and capabilities and are the primary focus of the federal government before, during, and after a catastrophic emergency. However, the federal government cannot maintain these functions and services without the support of the rest of the Nation. The graphic on the right shows how the whole community directly contributes to the federal government's ability to perform the NEFs, with NEF#6 as an example.

The eight NEFs are:

1. Ensure the continued functioning of our form of government under the U.S. Constitution, including the functioning of the three separate branches of government.
2. Provide leadership visible to the Nation and the world and maintain the trust and confidence of the American people.
3. Defend the U.S. against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and prevent or interdict attacks against the U.S. or its people, property, or interests.
4. Maintain and foster effective relationships with foreign nations.
5. Protect against threats to the homeland and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the U.S. or its people, property, or interests.
6. Provide rapid and effective response to and recovery from the domestic consequences of an attack or other incident.
7. Protect and stabilize the Nation's economy and ensure public confidence in its financial systems.
8. Provide for federal government services that address the national health, safety, and welfare needs of the U.S.

