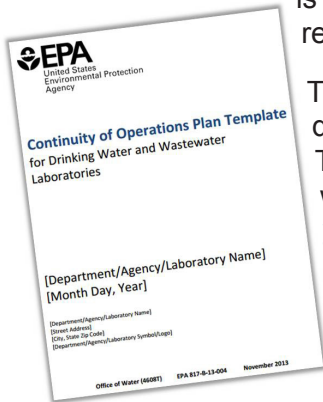




Fact Sheet for the *Continuity of Operations Plan Template for Drinking Water and Wastewater Laboratories*

The *Continuity of Operations Plan Template for Drinking Water and Wastewater Laboratories* (COOP Template) is designed to provide recommendations that may be useful in preparing for events that may disrupt normal laboratory operations. For ease of use, the template was designed as a fillable PDF that is customizable and can be expanded or condensed depending on the operational requirements of each laboratory.



The COOP Template is accompanied by instructions which will provide additional details including examples to facilitate development of each section of the COOP Template. Both documents are available on the Water Laboratory Alliance (WLA) website under “WLA Tools and Resources” at: <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/watersecurity/wla/index.cfm>.

Each completed COOP should include a Basic Plan, Functional Annexes, Hazard-Specific Appendices, Annex Implementing Instructions and Quick Reference Annexes as briefly outlined below. Users will also need to create Supporting Appendices to supplement the information provided in the COOP Template.

Basic Plan Description (Including Supporting Appendices A-L)

The Basic Plan should provide an overview of the laboratory’s approach to continuity of operations. It details continuity and laboratory policies, describes the organization and assigns tasks. The contents of the Basic Plan are broken into eight primary sections.

I. Purpose, Scope, Situations and Assumptions

This section details the primary functions of the COOP, time-sensitive core laboratory activities covered by the COOP to maintain operations, a situational overview to understand potential threats that could disrupt normal laboratory operations and assumptions of staff responsibility based on the extent of COOP activation. Appendices A (Key Personnel) and B (Risk Assessment) will supplement Section I.

II. Concept of Operations

This section lays out actions that should be taken to prepare for, and recover from a disruptive event through each of four phases of operations:

- 1) Readiness and Preparedness
- 2) Activation, Reprioritization and/or Outsourcing
- 3) Continuity Operations
- 4) Return to Normal Operations

Appendices C (Notification Steps), D (Instructions for Procurement), E (Accessing Protocol), F (Agreements), G (WLA-RP), H (Priority Based Plan) and I (Normal Operations Resumption Plan) will supplement Section II.

III. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

This section stipulates delineation of continuity responsibilities for each key staff position, which includes individual continuity members, personnel identified in the orders of succession and delegation of authority, the Laboratory’s Continuity Coordinator, continuity managers and other staff possessing additional continuity responsibilities. Responsibilities of key personnel should be attached as Appendix J.

IV. Disaster Intelligence

This section provides recommendations for the collection and dissemination of critical information during an incident. Examples of critical information should be attached as Appendix K.

V. Communication

This section should address communication systems needed to ensure connectivity during crisis and disaster conditions, including redundancy of communication methods in case primary means become inoperable.

VI. Assistance Agreements

This section should identify processes and procedures for developing and implementing agreements necessary for continuation of the laboratory's essential functions. These agreements should be established in advance to facilitate implementation during an incident. Agreement types will vary based on circumstances surrounding necessary support.

VII. Plan Development and Maintenance

This section should describe the process the laboratory uses to ensure the COOP includes up-to-date information. It identifies who is responsible for maintaining the COOP and how often it will be reviewed and updated.

VIII. Authorities and References

Key authorities and references on which the laboratory's COOP is based should be attached as Appendix L.

Functional Annexes (Including Supporting Appendices M and N)

The functional annexes should add specific information and direction to the Basic Plan. These annexes should clearly describe the policies, processes, roles and responsibilities that laboratories carry out before, during and after any event.

I. Essential Functions Annex

The essential functions section should include a list of the laboratory's prioritized Mission Essential Functions or "core functions." The Mission Essential Functions should be attached as Appendix M.

II. Continuity Facilities Annex

All laboratories should identify and maintain at least one continuity facility or membership in the Environmental Response Laboratory Network (ERLN)/WLA or Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN), to ensure continuation of the laboratory's essential functions.

III. Continuity Communications Annex

This section should address communication systems needed to ensure connectivity during crisis and disaster conditions. The continuity communications plan should be attached as Appendix N.

IV. Test, Training and Exercises (TT&E) Program Annex

This section should focus on the laboratory's TT&E program. All laboratories should develop and maintain a continuity TT&E program for conducting and documenting TT&E activities. The TT&E program should identify the components, processes and requirements for the identification, training and preparedness of personnel needed to support the continued performance of their Mission Essential Functions.

Hazard-Specific Appendices (Supporting Appendix O)

The contents of hazard-specific appendices should focus on the special planning needs generated by particular hazards. A compilation of all hazard-specific appendices that provide unique response details that apply to the laboratory should be attached as Appendix O.

Annex Implementing Instructions (Supporting Appendix P)

Annex implementing instructions serve to provide additional information on sections presented in the continuity of operations plan. Implementing instructions should be attached as Appendix P.

Quick Reference Annexes: Annex A (Glossary), Annex B (Authorities and References) and Annex C (Acronyms)

These Annexes provide quick reference information to define terms and acronyms, as well as provide additional resources outside of the immediate COOP.

To learn more about the WLA, contact WLA@epa.gov or the WLA Helpline at 703-818-4200.