CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANS (COOP)

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is an effort within organizations to ensure that primary mission essential functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies. It will assist a coordinated effort within the government to ensure that “essential functions” continue to be performed during a major campus emergency. Although this document has been developed for use in a pandemic situation, it also serves as the cornerstone for any event threatening a major disruption to the daily operations of the institution, making it useful as an “All Hazards Plan.”

The COOP is part of the overall “Four Phases of Emergency Management” cycle which includes:

Prevention/Mitigation ➔ Preparedness ➔ Response ➔ Recovery

The COOP ensures that the campus has the capability to continue essential functions (e.g., transportation, housing, food services, etc.) A Business Continuity Plan (BCP) identifies systems needed to conduct all administrative functions (e.g., payroll, and communication) so that operations can be continued after the emergency.

ACTIVATION OF COOP

For a public health event, the Executive Director of Campus Health will make a recommendation to the UACERT for activation of the university COOP. With the UACERT recommendation the university will move to the appropriate stage within the plan. The Executive Director of Campus Health will advise when a movement from one stage to another is required.

For other critical events having a profound impact on the daily operation of the university, the COOP may be activated by UACERT and/or the University of Arizona President. In such cases the University’s Emergency Communication Plan

(Functional Annex 5) will also be activated to provide communication and direction to the university community.

RESPONSIBILITY

The University of Arizona has developed an institutional plan (located at the end of this document) containing six (6) stages, following the phases developed by the World
Health Organization (WHO). Based upon the situation, the UA may move between phases quickly to activate an institutional response.

The COOP developed by the UA is also intended to serve as the institution’s plan during a major event affecting the institution, whether a man-made or act of nature

**Departmental/College COOP**

To be better prepared, all UA departments and units are required to develop and maintain a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This plan will describe how each department and/or unit will operate during a critical incident and then recover from and be fully functional following a critical incident affecting the university. The template used by the university is generic in nature to ensure that basic critical information is documented. The template may be expanded as necessary to meet your individual departmental/unit needs.

The COOP should be updated on an annual basis and submitted to the Manager of Emergency Preparedness, Commander Brian Seastone, via email at: seastone@uapd.arizona.edu. All completed COOPs will be maintained on a secure server, to be accessed if necessary during critical incidents.

The template for the COOP can be accessed online at: [www.cert.arizona.edu](http://www.cert.arizona.edu)

**CONTACT PERSONNEL**

The following individuals are available to assist with questions concerning the development of the COOP:

* Brian Seastone, Commander/UA Manager of Emergency Preparedness, 621-3507, seastone@uapd.arizona.edu
* Harry McDermott, M.D., UACERT Pandemic Response Planning Subgroup Chair, 621-7428, McDermott@health.arizona.edu
* Steve Holland, Assistant Vice President, Risk Management Services, 621-1556, sholland@email.arizona.edu

**DEFINITIONS**

**Continuity of Operations**: An effort within individual organizations to ensure that Primary Mission Essential Functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies.

**Corrective Actions**: Following an exercise a list of “corrective actions” should be identified with a timeline for resolution. After these corrective actions have been made, plans should be rewritten, distributed, and re-exercised.
**Department Objectives:** The department/unit’s unique mission to the University of Arizona, including teaching, research, and service objectives.

**Emergency Access to Information and Systems:** The department/unit’s emergency access to essential information. This may include remote access (or authorization to allow remote access), contacting IT support, Blackboard, off-site data backup, use of backup files on flash drives, hard copies, Smartphone, and use of alternate email systems (e.g., Yahoo, Gmail, AOL).

**Emergency Communications System:** An emergency notification to be used to notify department/unit members in an emergency. Departments should identify multiple communication systems that can be used for backup, after hours, when not on campus, or for other contingencies such as home and cell phone numbers and listservs and alternate emails for each employee.

**Essential Functions:** Functions essential to operational continuity and/or recovery, and identification of individuals who are responsible for them.

**Essential Personnel:** The individuals who are critical to the operation of the department/unit and are responsible for bringing the department back to normal operations following a major event. These individuals should be cross-trained in other essential functions within the department/unit.

**Exercise:** Testing the established plan through a series of methods, including a seminar, tabletop exercise, drill, or functional exercise.