

# **Loyola University Maryland Business Continuity Planning - FAQ**

## **Introduction**

Loyola University Maryland's mission is to "inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world." Each department or area performs functions that are essential to the ongoing success of this mission. A Business Continuity Plan is a collection of resources, actions, procedures, and information that is developed, tested, and held in readiness for use in the event of a major disruption of operations. Business Continuity Planning helps to prepare University departments to maintain mission critical operations after any emergency or disaster.

Department heads are responsible for ensuring that their areas have Business Continuity Plans in place, and that all persons within the department, including faculty, staff, and administrators, are familiar with their plan. It's important to remember that your BCP is an integral part of the overall University plan.

The following is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) to help your department develop a business continuity plan.

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**1. What are the components of a Business Continuity Plan?**

- Essential Business Processes
- Team contact information
- Staff Requirements
- Office Requirements
- Continuity Steps (recovery priorities and procedures)
- BCP Documentation (SOPs, forms, checklists, reference materials needed during a crisis)
- Anything the department would need to conduct business manually
- BCP Support Info (vendors, policies, misc.)

**2. What are the phases of Business Continuity Planning (BCP) development?**

There are 4 phases of creating a Business Continuity Plan. The entire process should be completed over a 1-2 month period.

**Phase One:** Determine the Essential Business Processes of your department or organization.

**Phase Two:** Conduct a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) for each Essential Business Process

**Phase Three:** Develop a Business Continuity Plan based on your Essential Business Processes and BIA

**Phase Four:** Test, revise and review your plan at least annually

**3. What is an Essential Business Process?**

It is a business process that cannot be interrupted or inaccessible anywhere from a few hours to one month without significantly jeopardizing the

mission of the department.

#### **4. What are some guidelines for identifying Essential Business Processes?**

- Support primary mission statement
- Support other departments' essential business process
- Must be recovered quickly
- Have a high dollar value
- Have a high business impact
- Have political ramifications or implications
- Have legal requirements or liabilities

#### **5. What is a Business Impact Analysis?**

A Business Impact Analysis is a methodology used to determine the effect of an interruption of services on each department within the university and then the total impact on the organization as a whole. The analysis provides valuable information on the short and long term effects of a disaster.

#### **6. Who should do Business Continuity Planning?**

All departments within the University are responsible for ensuring that their areas have Business Continuity Plans in place, and that all persons within the department, including faculty, staff, and administrators, are familiar with the plan.

#### **7. What is the difference between our Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (CEOP) and Business Continuity Planning?**

Our Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (CEOP) describes the way the University will respond to an incident on campus that impacts our normal operations. The priorities of this plan are to:

- Protect lives
- Stabilize the incident
- Minimize environmental and property damage
- Maintain critical campus services

Our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is designed to establish priorities and procedures for each department in order to restore University operations in the event of a disruption.

Together these plans support one another and help the University to effectively handle emergencies and restore operations following an incident.

#### **8. What does a BCP do for our department?**

- It addresses actions to be taken before, during and after a disruption of business functions.
- It spells out in detail the what, who, how and when of a recovery plan.

- It reduces liability and disruption to normal business operations while assisting with the decision making process.
- It helps your department prepare for a broad range of events and disasters.

### **9. Should we appoint a departmental business continuity manager?**

Yes, typically an upper level staff member. The role is part project manager, part group facilitator and will be the contact person for business continuity issues. A list of current [BCP managers](#) is available on our Emergency Management Planning Team SharePoint Site

### **10. Who should be in the planning group?**

Members in your department performing critical tasks or roles, and who understand how your department operates should be considered for your planning group.

### **11. How long does it take to create a business continuity plan?**

Time frames vary based on the individual department and the essential business processes that they perform. Developing your plan should in reality take approximately 1-2 months. Our experience is that longer time frames do not produce better plans. Most of this time will be spent developing priorities and action items. Once completed, inputting the information and supporting documentation into the CPOtracker software takes little to no time.

### **12. How can we craft a plan to handle unknown circumstances?**

The university takes an all-hazards approach to business continuity planning. That's because most events (earthquake, fire, pandemic, etc.) will affect our functioning in similar ways: they will temporarily prevent us from using some of the resources to which we have become accustomed. These resources include:

- Space (our classrooms, labs and offices)
- Infrastructure (power, water, sewer, networks, phones)
- People (our staff)
- Equipment (libraries, computers, etc.)
- Funds (our income stream)

Your planning should focus on:

- Identifying critical resources
- Safeguarding critical resources against loss (*backup of systems and data, bracing of equipment, safe storage of research items*)
- Actions that will lessen the impact of losses
- Replacing resources quickly (*contracts with vendors*)
- Performing essential business processes without some of those resources (*teaching via distance learning technology*)
- Providing our people with the information they will need, post-disaster, to get the campus back in action.

### 13. What assumptions can we make about what the campus will do for us as a department after a disaster?

Here are some reasonable assumptions:

- **Access to buildings.** If campus officials have reason to suspect that a building is hazardous to enter, they will immediately close the building and call in trained inspectors. In the worst case (i.e. a major earthquake with many buildings damaged), the inspection process alone could take several days with cleanup and repairs taking much longer. You may be unable to enter your office or building for an extended period of time.
- **Locating temporary space.** This will be a huge challenge for the campus, so any arrangements you have made ahead of time will serve you well. Anything you can do within your own department will be to your benefit, such as sharing labs and offices that remain accessible.
- **Computing infrastructure.** Restoration of our many centrally supported IT applications will be of the highest priority after any disruption. This includes email, internet, payroll, and many other applications, as well as the physical campus data network. A lot of money and effort continues to be spent on strengthening our IT systems to minimize damage and aid quick recovery. Definite predictions, of course, are not possible. Within your department, you should be taking steps to backup data and applications along with a plan for quick access and recovery.
- **Communication protocol.** General communications with students, faculty, staff, and the public will be handled by the Marketing and Communications Department and will be tightly managed so that messages are consistent.
- **Contacting your staff.** This will be a departmental responsibility. Each department should keep its own emergency contact lists.

### 14. What resources are available to help assist us with making our plan?

- CPOtracker Quick Start Guide (contact [Tim Enders](#) of Technology Services Department to get started)
- The Business Impact Analysis (BIA) template
- The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) template

### 15. What have we learned?

- Business Continuity Planning is critical to the vitality of the University
- It is not a question of if, but when a disaster will strike!
- Most organizations are not prepared for a major disruption.
- Advanced planning reduces the impact of a disaster.
- Don't delay, get started today on your BCP!