

Tips for Effective Business Continuity Planning

As you create your business continuity plan in *StanReady*, please remember to describe how you plan to continue performing each critical function, without the resources you are accustomed to. **The assumption is that business must continue, however you may be in an alternate location, without staff, or without IT.** How, specifically, will you cope?

Business continuity planning identifies where we are vulnerable (are our processes too heavily dependent on a specific resource?) and puts alternate plans in place *before* a disaster. We can cross-train backups now, document our processes now, create backups of critical information now, order extra equipment now, and even create MOUs with other locations to use their facilities in the event we need to relocate. What steps can we take *now* to better position ourselves to continue?

Your plan in *StanReady* will need to include details on:

- ***Operating in an Alternate Location:*** Where specifically will you go? What resources (equipment, staff, etc.) will you need when you get there? How have you ensured those resources will be available when you need them? Can you create an MOU for an alternate facility? Can you establish a contract for the replacement of minimum equipment or purchase extra equipment in advance and store it off-site?
- ***Continuing without the Data Network:*** How, specifically, will you carry out each critical function without IT? If you didn't have PeopleSoft, MyCSUStan, or Blackboard? If you didn't have email or computer access? If you couldn't process credit card or Warrior card transactions? Describe how this function will be performed manually (i.e. create forms for manual processing and perform data entry when network is recovered). You can even upload your forms into *StanReady*.
- ***Communication:*** How do you plan to communicate with staff if csustan.edu email is down (creating free, alternate non-csustan.edu email accounts for your department is a great backup plan)? How will you communicate relocation plans? How will you communicate with each other if you are working from home (can you establish a discussion board or group email account)? How will you communicate special circumstances with vendors and/or the campus community (ex. you can post special instructions on department website, but can this be performed from home)?
- ***Continuing with a Reduced Workforce:*** If 50% of your staff was unavailable, how, specifically, would each function continue? If performing your department's critical functions requires possession of a special skill, license, or certification (ex. physician, police officer, animal trainer), and this staff is unavailable, how will you continue (can you create MOUs with other universities and/or departments who employ individuals with the required skill set)?
- ***Line of Succession and Delegation of Authority:*** Who can make on-the-spot decisions for your department? Who is the backup? What policy exceptions might you need to continue operating and who can grant them?
- ***Continuing Instruction and Research (for Academic Departments):*** How will instruction continue? Where will classes be held if usual space is not available, and who makes this decision? How will student information (roster, contact information, etc.) be obtained without the data network? How will online instruction continue without the data network, and how will you contact the students to communicate your alternate plan to proceed? Can Faculty establish alternate, non-csustan.edu email or virtual classroom environments as a backup measure (Blackboard, etc.)? How will students be notified if classroom is relocated or if online instruction is unavailable? How will research continue if the lab or data network is unavailable? Can grades be submitted without the data network? If so, describe the process (who grades are manually submitted to, etc).
- ***Special Considerations:*** Do you store pharmaceuticals or other items that require refrigeration and/or storage within a controlled climate? In the event of a power outage, alternate storage of these items must be thought through and incorporated into your plan.