

Elements of Viable Continuity Capability

The Continuity Plan is the roadmap for the implementation and management of the Continuity Program. NSPD-51/HSPD-20, the NCPIP, Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1), and Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC 1) outline the following overarching continuity requirements for agencies and organizations.

Essential Functions – are functions (tasks, duties, jobs) that are determined to be critical business activities that must continue with little or no interruption.

Orders of Succession – Protocol that allows personnel know who assumes the authority and responsibility of the agency's and organization's leadership if that leadership is incapacitated or becomes otherwise unavailable during a continuity situation.

Delegations of Authority – establishes who has the right to make key decisions during a continuity situation as well as any limitations on such authority.

Continuity Facilities – alternate facilities from which an organization can perform its Essential Functions in a threat-free environment.

Continuity Communications – the availability and redundancy of critical communications systems to support connectivity to internal and external organizations, customers, and the public.

Vital Records Management – the identification, protection and ready availability of electronic and hard copy documents, references, records, information systems, data management software and equipment needed to support essential functions during a continuity situation.

Human Capital – provides guidance to emergency employees and other special categories of employees who are activated by an agency and organization to perform assigned response duties during a continuity event and provides information for non-essential personnel as well.

Tests, Training, and Exercises (TT&E) – Provisions made for the identification, training, and preparedness of personnel capable of performing their continuity responsibilities and implementing procedures to support the continuation of the performance of essential functions.

Devolution of Control and Direction – capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from an agency's and organization's primary operating staff and facilities to other agency and organization employees and facilities, and to sustain that operational capability for an extended period.

Reconstitution – the process by which surviving and/or replacement agency and organizational personnel resume normal agency operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility.