

State of Ohio
Agency Name

Continuity of Operations Plan
Telework Exercise Appendix Template

Month Year

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TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

This Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) template provides exercise planners with the information necessary for their participation in the [Agency Name] Continuity of Operations (COOP) Telework Exercise, referred to as [Agency Exercise Name]. This EXPLAN Template is a tool to assist agencies to conduct a telework exercise to determine current capabilities to operate in a telework or socially-distanced environment and to determine what needs to be done to enhance your current capabilities and to better prepare for a pandemic influenza or continuity event.

Use of this template is not mandatory. Agencies are encouraged to tailor their exercise documents to meet their specific continuity planning and operational needs.

*This template is set up to provide an example of an exercise plan for conducting a telework exercise. Sample text and instructions have been provided throughout the template, in blue italics and **bold text** inside of brackets. Once agency-specific information is entered in the brackets, please **delete** italicized instructions and replace bracketed instructions with applicable information (e.g., If planning for the continuity of operations of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, the instruction [Agency Name] would be replaced with “Ohio Department of Administrative Services”).*

This template is considered unclassified in its current form. When the template is completed, each agency should classify the document to meet their own internal guidelines regarding record security. Agencies should consider their plan as For Official Use Only (FOUO), if it contains sensitive information. An electronic version of this document, in portable document format, is available through the State of Ohio’s business continuity planning software, RPX. A Microsoft® Word version of this template may be requested by emailing the Ohio Department of Administrative Service’s Office of Business Continuity (contact information listed below).

Questions concerning this template can be directed to:

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PREFACE

This Planning Guide was produced with input, advice, and assistance from the [**Agency Exercise Name**] planning team, which followed the guidance set forth in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

This Planning Guide gives officials and players from [**Agency Name**] the information necessary to participate in an operations-based exercise focusing on telework agreements, policies, and procedures that may be required to support a no-notice activation. The information in this document is current as of the date of publication and is subject to change as dictated by the exercise planning team.

[**Agency Exercise Name**] is an *unclassified* exercise. The control of information is based more on public sensitivity regarding the nature of the exercise than on the actual exercise content. Some exercise material is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners, but players may view other materials as deemed necessary in the performance of their duties. The Planning Guide may be made available to all exercise planners.

All exercise planners should use appropriate guidelines to ensure the proper control of information within their areas of expertise and to protect this material in accordance with current jurisdictional directives. Public release of exercise materials to third parties is at the discretion of [**Agency Name**] and the exercise planning team.

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. The title of this document is *[Agency Exercise Name] Exercise Plan*.
2. The information gathered in this document is considered sensitive information not to be disclosed. This document should be safeguarded, handled, transmitted, and stored in accordance with appropriate security directives. Reproduction of this document, in whole or in part, without prior approval from **[Agency Name]** is prohibited.
3. At a minimum, the attached materials will be disseminated only on a need-to-know basis and when unattended, will be stored in an area offering sufficient protection against theft, compromise, inadvertent access, and unauthorized disclosure.
4. For more information, please consult the following points of contact (POC):

Lead Exercise Planner:

Title

[Agency Name]

Address

Office: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

Fax: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

Email:

Exercise Director:

Title

[Agency Name]

Address

Office: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

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Email:

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Introduction

[Agency Name] will conduct a no-notice 'No Fault' telework exercise Determined Sentry during the month of [Date]. The exercise will test the [Agency Name]'s current capabilities to operate in a telework environment, test the alert and notification system, connectivity to the [Agency Name] network through the Virtual Private Network (VPN) dual factor authentication, remote access to component essential/vital records, and communications capabilities.

[Agency Exercise Name] is a one-day, no-notice exercise for the [Agency Name] personnel, to telework from their designated telework site. All [Agency Name] personnel with current telework agreements in place are encouraged to participate in this exercise. It is important that managers and supervisors ensure telework agreements are current and in place for employees who support [Agency Name] Mission Essential Functions (MEF), as employees in this category will ensure continuity readiness for any local, regional, or nation-wide event.

B. Objectives

(Suggested exercise objectives are listed below. Please determine best use of objectives to drive your agency's required objectives and goals):

This exercise will focus on the following objectives:

- Increase awareness of [Agency Name]'s requirement to incorporate telework into COOP planning and to operate from various locations.
- Test the ENS alert and notification system,
- Test [Agency Name]'s ability to remotely access essential/vital records, files, and databases in a no-notice telework environment
- Continue [Agency Name]'s MEFs in a telework environment.
- Test communications capabilities (i.e., GETS, WPS, telephone, blackberry, large scale teleconferencing, etc.).
- Stress test [Agency Name]'s remote network access capabilities.
- Test social distancing telework sites of operational capabilities.
- To identify solutions or alternative actions to COOP challenges presented during a telework or socially-distanced event (i.e., pandemic influenza, weapons of mass destruction).

II. EXERCISE LOGISTICS

A. Exercise Summary

1. General

All divisions of **[Agency Name]** are responsible for providing their users with equipment (if needed) to participate in this exercise. All employees are directed to bring their devices to work before the scheduled **[date]** telework exercise and to connect their devices to the network to ensure they have the latest antivirus definitions and patches installed on their machines.

Sample text for IT staff:

The following guidance has been set forth by the Chief Information Officer (CIO): mobile device maintenance patches should be installed at least twice monthly. If users do not follow these guidelines, it is highly probable that their laptop will not connect. For example, if a user has not used their VPN connection in 45 days the account will be suspended and the user must contact the Enterprise Service Desk (ESD) to get the account reactivated. Because of this, it is advised that all users log into their VPN accounts weekly.

There will be a series of planning and preparation events for this exercise. **[Agency Exercise Name]** allows the **[Agency Name]** an opportunity to exercise all telework staff and to stress test IT systems. Additionally, telework continuity capabilities and the process of coordinating with employees using continuity communications capabilities will also be tested. Finally, this exercise process will capture valuable data related to the business process support requirements and challenges associated with telework for gap analysis and mitigation strategies.

2. Exercise Play

Exercise play will begin at 7:30 a.m. (local time) on **[Date]**. Each participant shall:

- Log onto the **[Agency Name]** network
- Send an email to their Continuity of Operations Point of Contact (COOP POC) and their direct supervisor that they have connectivity and are operational.
- Play will proceed according to the events outlined in the Player Handbook.
- The exercise will conclude upon the completion of operations and attainment of the exercise objectives, as determined by the Exercise Director.

The exercise execution timeline is as follows:

- **Day Prior to Exercise:**
 - **2 p.m. ENS Notification**
- **No-Notice Telework Exercise** (all times adjusted to player location):
 - **7:30 – 7:45 a.m.:** Log onto **[Agency Name]** network
 - **7:45 – 8 a.m.:** Send exercise participant e-mail to component COOP POC and direct supervisor

- **7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.:** Test GETS/WPS access
- **8:00 – 9 a.m.:** Manager conducts component conference call with staff
- **8:00 – 11:30 a.m.:** Exercise play and completion of Annex A located in component shared drive
- **11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** Lunch
- **12:30 – 4:30 p.m.** Resume Exercise Play, complete Annex B (located in component shared drive), e-mail Annex A and B to COOP POC
- **1:00 - 3 p.m.** COOP POC email [**email address**] to report number of component participants and any issues
- **3:30 – 4:30 p.m.:** Component Hot Wash discussion
- **One Week After Exercise (Hot Wash)**
 - **10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.:** Hot wash, [**Insert specifics on your agency’s hot wash conduct**]

3. Exercise Participants

The following are the categories of participants involved in this exercise. Note that the term “participant” refers to all categories listed below, not just those playing in the exercise.

- **Players** are agency personnel who have an active role in responding to the simulated emergency requiring telework and performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players initiate actions that will respond to guidance provided by their supervisors
- **Support Staff** includes individuals who are assigned administrative and logistical support tasks during the exercise

B. Player Handbook

The Player Handbook is designed to help players participate and meet the training objectives. This handbook also enables players to understand their roles and responsibilities in exercise execution and evaluation.

C. Exercise Implementation

The following are the general rules that govern exercise play:

- Real-world emergency actions take priority over exercise actions.
- Exercise participants will comply with real-world response procedures, unless otherwise directed by control staff or supervisors.

D. Safety Requirements

Exercise participants’ safety takes priority over exercise events. Although the individuals involved in this exercise will come from various divisions of [**Agency Name**], they share the basic responsibility for ensuring a safe environment for all employees involved in the exercise.

Professional health and safety ethics should guide all participants to operate in their assigned roles in the safest manner possible. The following general requirements apply to the exercise:

- Participants are responsible for their own and for each other's safety during the exercise. It is the responsibility of all employees associated with the exercise to stop play if, in their opinion, a real safety problem exists. Once the problem is corrected, exercise play may resume.
- All divisions will comply with their respective environmental, health, and safety plans and procedures, as well as the appropriate Federal, State, and local environmental health and safety regulations.
- Exercise setup involves prior training activities and the dispersal of exercise materials including documentation.

E. Exercise Communication

1. Exercise Start, Suspension, and Termination Instructions

The exercise is scheduled to run from 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on **[Date]** or until the Exercise Director determines that the exercise objectives have been met.

2. Player Communication

Players will use routine, in-place agency communication systems. The need to maintain the capability for a real-world response may preclude the use of certain communication channels or systems that would usually be available for an actual emergency or incident. In no instance will exercise communications interfere with real-world emergency communications.

3. Communications Check

Before the start of the exercise, each telework supervisor will conduct a communications check with all interfacing communication means to ensure redundancy and uninterrupted flow of control information.

III. PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES

A. Exercise Director

The Telework Exercise Director has overall responsibility for planning, coordinating, and overseeing all exercise functions, and achievement of the exercise design objectives.

B. Exercise Lead Planner

- Support overall exercise development and coordination.
- Develop, coordinate, and obtain approval for all supporting exercise plans and reports.
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate all exercise planning meetings and workshops.
- Conduct a hot wash after the exercise has concluded to obtain perspective on the accomplishment of the overarching purpose and objectives.
- Collect participant feedback and include in the After Action Report (AAR)/Improvement Plan (IP).

C. COOP Divisional Point of Contact

- Before the Exercise:
 - Schedule conference calls and obtain dial-in numbers for the exercise.
 - 8 – 8:30 a.m. – Component Conference Call
 - 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. – Component Hot wash discussion
 - Disseminate Player Handbook and Tri-Fold to each participant
 - Place Annex A and B from Players' Handbook in your Division's shared drive for non-emergency relocation group (ERG). Place the forms for the ERG in the COOP folder and email Divisional telework participants the path to the folder with instructions on completing the required evaluation questionnaires.
- Immediately After the Exercise:
 - Collect evaluation questionnaires.
 - Conduct end of exercise component hot wash.
- Hot Wash:
 - Attend and participate in the hot wash.
 - Contribute to the development of the AAR/IP

D. Managers

- Before the Exercise:
 - Ensure employees have the ability to telework and have a current telework agreement on file.
 - Know where employees will be teleworking from and how to contact them.
 - Provide employees with tasks to be performed during the telework exercise.
- During the Exercise:
 - Establish a teleconference to conduct roll-call, review of issues, and discuss potential recommendations for improving telework operations.
 - Communicate pertinent information to employees as required.

- Report performance of MEF's throughout the day to Exercise Director, Lead Planner, and COOP Divisional POC
- Immediately After the Exercise:
 - Conduct a hot wash with employees and provide feedback to the COOP Divisional POC.
 - Ensure participating employees email their Telework Continuity Exercise Evaluation Questionnaire to COOP Divisional POC.

E. Participants

- Before the Exercise
 - Review the appropriate continuity and telework agreements, procedures, and support documents.
 - Make sure you have connected your mobile device to the network during the specified timeframe to ensure that current patches and software updates have been made.
 - Read Player Handbook which includes information on exercise safety.
- During the Exercise:
 - Send an e-mail confirmation to your manager and COOP POC to validate participation in the exercise.
 - Perform normal duties and exercise-specific tasks as if the telework exercise was real.
 - Complete the telework continuity exercise evaluation questionnaire and email it to COOP POC.
 - Receive notification by manager to participate in a 30-minute telework conference call, which includes roll-call, review of issues, and potential recommendations for improving telework operations.
 - Conduct a GETS card test using your GETS card (if applicable).
 - Use WPS to test your WPS capability (if applicable).
 - Maintain a log of activities.
- Following the Telework Exercise:
 - Participation in Unit's Hot Wash meeting and/or conference call.
 - Access shared drive to retrieve the Telework Continuity Exercise Evaluation Questionnaire and complete the Evaluation Questionnaire. This form allows players to comment candidly on telework activities and effectiveness of the exercise. The completed form shall be e-mailed to your COOP POC. This information will be consolidated and briefed out at the COOP POC Hot Wash the following week.

IV. EVALUATION AND POST-EXERCISE ACTIVITIES

A. Telework Exercise Documentation

The goal of the [Agency Exercise Name] is to exercise and evaluate [Agency Name]'s plans and capabilities as they pertain to telework implementation, such as would be required in a no-notice event. Data collected by managers, players, and COOP POCs will be used to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the context of the exercise objectives.

B. Telework Hot Wash

[Agency Name] will conduct a Hot Wash immediately following the conclusion of the exercise (for Managers and Participants) and approximately one-week following the exercise.

[Insert specifics on your agency's hot wash conduct.]

C. After Action Report

The After Action Report (AAR) is considered the culmination of the [Agency Exercise Name]. It is a written report outlining the strengths and areas for improvement identified during the exercise. The AAR will include the timeline, executive summary, scenario description, mission outcomes, and capability analysis. The AAR will be drafted by individuals from the exercise planning team. The lessons learned and recommendations from the AAR will be incorporated into an Improvement Plan.

D. Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan identifies how recommendations will be addressed, including actions that will be taken, who is responsible, and the timeline for completion. It is created by key stakeholders from participating divisions.

ANNEX A - TELEWORK CONTINUITY EXERCISE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:			
Division:		Unit:	
Telephone:		Email Address:	
Current Telework Agreement in Place?	Yes or No		

Your observations during the Telework Exercise will assist [Agency Name] in developing the After Action Report and Improvement Plan. We ask that you honestly and candidly respond to all questions that apply to your experience in this exercise and that you provide as much detail as possible. E-mail your completed questionnaire to your COOP POC at the conclusion of this exercise.

- 1. Were you able to access and effectively use your e-mail (send and receive)? YES or NO**

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

- 2. Were you able to open attachments in your e-mail? YES or NO**

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

- 3. Were you able to access all of the records and files required to do your work? YES or NO**

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

- 4. Were you able to test your GETS and/or WPS? YES or NO**

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

- 5. Did you bring work materials with you to your designated telework location? YES or NO**

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

6. Were you able to communicate effectively with your management? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

7. Were you able to communicate effectively with your [Agency Name] co-workers? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

8. Were you able to communicate effectively with your external customers and stakeholders? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

9. Did you have access to contact lists for people and agencies you needed to reach? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

10. Did you participate in a conference call? Do you feel the conference call was an effective communication method? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

11. Did you use collaborative software such as Adobe Connect, WebEOC, RPX, or Net Meeting? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

12. What hours did you work from your designated telework location (e.g., 0730-1630)?

Hours Worked:

13. Did you experience any technical, computer, or communications difficulties? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

14. Was your telework environment conducive to accomplishing critical tasks? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

15. Overall, were you effective in performing your job from your designated telework location? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

16. Did you accomplish the amount of work you would have accomplished if you had been in your regular office? YES or NO

If NO, what problem did you encounter?

Do you have any recommendations for correcting this?

17. What would you change to improve your telework capability? What would make you more effective or productive?

18. Did you record the telework code in your T&A record for this exercise? YES or NO

19. Do you have any additional comments, concerns, or suggestions?

ANNEX B - HOT WASH FORM

Exercise Name:			
Name:		Agency:	
Email:		Unit:	
Telephone:		Exercise Role:	
List the Top Three (3) Strengths:			
1.			
2.			
3.			
List the List the Top Three (3) Areas of Improvement:			
1.			
2.			
3.			