



# Business Preparedness

Our department understands and appreciates everything that our local businesses contribute to our quality of life for the citizens and visitors of York County. Whether your business is a large corporation or a locally owned establishment, your ability to serve your customers is vital to the survival of your business. That is why we have developed this page, including the emergency planning links below, to help you better plan in case of business disruption due to large-scale emergencies and/or disasters, both natural and human caused.

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere. And when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. A hazardous material leak or spill could require immediate closure and evacuation. A winter storm, hurricane, or tornado could disrupt business services for an extended period of time. Flooding and severe weather could leave employees stranded at home, cut off from basic utilities; (gas, water, electricity and telephones) and/or interrupt supply chains for days.

Your business will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. One way is by preparing a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan (BC/DR). When disaster strikes, it is too late to plan; at that point you must act. Prepare now by using the information included here to develop a plan for your business. Also, take the time to encourage your employees to develop a plan at home and to do this by learning more from Ready York County, Virginia and our Families page to help get them started



## Ready Virginia Business

Part of the Ready Virginia emergency preparedness initiative that provides important emergency planning information for businesses and families. Disaster recovery and business continuity planning are processes that help organizations prepare for disruptive events—whether those events might include a hurricane or simply a power outage caused by a backhoe in the parking lot. Good business continuity plans will keep your company up and running through interruptions of any kind:

- IT system crashes
- Natural disasters
- Power failures
- Supply chain problems and more

Business continuity is the activity performed by an organization to ensure that critical business functions will be available to customers, suppliers, regulators, and other entities that must have access to those functions. These activities include many daily chores such as project management, system backups, change control, and help desk. Business continuity is not something implemented at the time of a disaster; business continuity refers to those activities performed daily to maintain service, consistency, and recover-ability.

The foundation of business continuity is the policies, guidelines, standards, and procedures implemented by an organization. All system design, implementation, support, and maintenance must be based on this foundation in order to have any hope of achieving business continuity, disaster recovery, or in some cases, system support. Business continuity is sometimes confused with disaster recovery, but they are separate entities. Disaster recovery is a small subset of business continuity.

## Disaster Recovery

Disaster recovery is the process by which you resume business after a disruptive event. The event might be something huge-like an earthquake or the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center-or something small, like malfunctioning software caused by a computer virus.

Given the human tendency to look on the bright side, many business executives are prone to ignoring “disaster recovery” because disaster seems an unlikely event. “business continuity planning” suggests a more comprehensive approach to making sure you can keep making money, not only after a natural calamity, but also in the event of smaller disruptions including illness or departure of key staffers, supply chain partner problems or other challenges that businesses face from time to time.

## **Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Plan (BC/DR)**

Despite these distinctions, the 2 terms are often married under the acronym BC/DR because of their many common considerations. BC/DR plans should consider how employees will communicate, where they will go and how they will keep doing their jobs. The details can vary greatly, depending on the size and scope of a company and the way it does business. For some businesses, issues such as supply chain logistics are most crucial and are the focus on the plan. For others, information technology may play a more pivotal role, and the BC/DR plan may have more of a focus on systems recovery.

But the critical point is that neither element can be ignored, and physical, IT and human resources plans cannot be developed in isolation from each other. Business leaders should work together to determine what kind of plan is necessary and which systems are most crucial to the company. They should decide which people are responsible for declaring a disruptive event and mitigating its effects. Most importantly, the plan should establish a process for locating and communicating with employees after such an event. In a catastrophic event, the plan should also take into account that many of those employees will have more pressing concerns than getting back to work.