

POLICY NUMBER: ELPOP-102
AUTHORITY: s. 252.365, F.S.
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Is the ELPOP included in the SR Plan? Yes No

POLICY STATEMENT: Pursuant to Florida Statutes, Chapter 252.365: Emergency Coordination Officers; disaster-preparedness plans, this Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) functions to ensure the continued execution of the mission essential functions for the ELCNC if an emergency threatens or incapacitates operations and requires the ELCNC to limit operations to the telework structure.

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PROCEDURE: The ELCNC maintains a main office in Crystal River, FL as well as a telework structure. The telework structure allows staff to provide services to the public via electronic communication methods from a remote location away from the main office on a regular basis. On the other hand, several essential operations are conducted from the main office and require a considerable amount of planning for the relocation of these functions during an emergency situation. As a result, the ELCNC's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) focuses on disaster response and recovery involving the main ELCNC office.

1. **COOP OBJECTIVES:** The objectives of this plan are to:
 - A. Ensure the continuous performance of the ELCNC's essential functions during an emergency.
 - B. Protect essential facilities, equipment, records, and other assets.
 - C. Reduce or mitigate disruptions to operations.
 - D. Provide for the safety of staff and visitors, reduce loss of life, minimize damage and losses.
 - E. Facilitate decision-making for execution of the plan and the subsequent operations.
 - F. Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency event and resumption of full service to all customers.

2. **ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS:** The following operations are considered essential operations that must be maintained in the event of an emergency for up to thirty (30) days, if possible. All other functions of the ELCNC may be deferred until normal operations are restored.
 - A. Executive direction
 - B. Security and control of information technology, facilities, and property
 - C. Essential Finance and accounting functions
 - D. Essential Human Resource management functions
 - E. Continuity of direct client services
3. **EMERGENCY COORDINATION OFFICER:** The Chief Executive Officer is the designated Emergency Coordination Officer for the ELCNC. In the event the Chief Executive Officer is not available to perform the functions of the Emergency Coordination Officer, the following succession plan will apply:
 - A. Director of Communications
 - B. Director of Human Resources
 - C. Director of Finance
 - D. Director of Eligibility
 - E. Director of Education
4. **EMERGENCY COORDINATION OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Emergency Coordination Officer is responsible for the planning and coordination of emergency preparedness plans for all offices and departments.
5. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:** In accordance with state guidance and emergency management principles, the ELCNC's COOP:
 - A. Will be maintained at a high-level of readiness.
 - B. Will be capable of implementation both with and without warning.
 - C. Will be operational no later than 12 hours after activation, if possible.
 - D. Will be capable of maintaining sustained operations for up to 30 days.
 - E. Will take maximum advantage of existing state or federal and local government infrastructures.
 - F. Will protect equipment and other ELCNC assets.
6. **PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY:** The following provides a list of individuals who are assigned to disaster response and recovery. Collectively, the individuals are known as the Disaster Response and Recovery Team.
 - A. Chief Executive Officer
 - B. Director of Communications
 - C. Director of Human Resources
 - D. Director of Finance
 - E. Director of Eligibility
 - F. Director of Education
 - G. Technology Manager

7. PRE-DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PREPAREDNESS: The following provides a list of the Emergency Coordination Officer's pre-disaster responsibilities.

- A. Review the COOP and all attachments annually to identify necessary resources to support COOP activities. The resources necessary to ensure adequate maintenance and operation of the COOP will be considered in the ELCNC's planning.
- B. Maintain a copy of insurance policies that includes emergency contact information for the insurance company or agent.
- C. Ensure that the following activities are completed at least annually by the Technology Manager:
 - 1) Telecommunication and information systems maintained at the office are tested for any inconsistencies or issues which may arise if the COOP is activated.
 - 2) Back-up plans to address disruptions in communications in the event of a disaster are readily available and working properly.
 - 3) Telecommunication capabilities are sufficient for the performance of mission essential functions under the COOP.
 - 4) Signs identifying building evacuation routes are posted in the areas of the ELCNC offices that are accessed by the public and employees. One evacuation route sign is placed on the wall in a highly visible location for each room, including the front lobby.
 - 5) Equipment and communications are tested on a monthly basis to ensure optimal performance during a telework period.
 - 6) All department records are stored in electronic format on the ELCNC's Office 365 site.
- D. Ensure that the following activities are completed by the Director of Communications:
 - 1) Training is provided to staff and Board members annually on the key aspects of COOP, the responsibilities of the Disaster Response and Recovery Team, and the COOP activation alert and notification procedures.
 - 2) Exercise programs are conducted to test staff awareness, response capabilities, and notification procedures.
 - 3) Personnel, Board member, and provider contract rosters are readily available for distribution to the Disaster Response and Recovery Team and members of the Executive Committee. The personnel roster includes primary and secondary emergency contact information for each employee and indicates the status of each employee (Disaster Response and Recovery Team or non-essential staff). The Board member roster includes primary contact information for each Board member as well as secondary emergency contact information for members of the Executive Committee.
 - 4) Media emergency roster that includes the contact information for local radio stations and newspapers is readily available.
 - 5) COOP plan is posted on the ELCNC website and social media platforms.
 - 6) Contact information for County Emergency Operations Center and the State of Florida Emergency Operations Centers is readily available.
- E. Ensure that the following activities of the Director of Finance are current:
 - 1) Development of a financial institute roster that includes emergency contact information for each banking institute utilized by the ELCNC, account numbers, and passwords or other security access tools.
 - 2) A backup copy of the ELCNC's finance and accounting system is maintained offsite.

8. PRE-INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: An infectious disease outbreak may not directly affect the physical infrastructure of an organization; however, an outbreak may threaten all operations by its impact on an organization's human resources. The health threat to personnel is the primary threat to maintaining essential functions and services during an infectious disease outbreak. The following pre-disaster preparedness plan is intended to mitigate the effects of a threatening infectious disease outbreak.

- A. Messaging and risk communications during an emerging infectious disease pandemic will be conducted by the Director of Communications with guidance from the Chief Executive Officer. Guidance and instructions on established infection control measures such as social distancing, personnel protective equipment, and telework polices will be provided to assist in limiting the spread of the infectious disease at the primary worksite.
- B. Within the workplace, social distancing measures may be taken. The measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Modifications to the frequency and type of face-to-face employee encounters (e.g., substituting teleconferences for face-to-face meetings).
 - 2) The release of instructions on handshaking, staggering breaks, posting infection control guidelines, etc.
 - 3) Flexible work hours or worksite, (e.g., telecommuting).
 - 4) Enforcing policies related to social distancing between employees and clients.
 - 5) Enforcing policies that require employees with an infectious disease to stay home at the first sign of symptoms.
 - 6) Limiting the right of entry to ELCNC buildings to staff members.

7) Enforcing travel restrictions and filed work restrictions.

9. DISTINGUISHING MINOR EMERGENCIES FROM MAJOR DISASTERS: It is imperative to make the distinction between a situation that requires building evacuation and one dictating the necessity to activate the COOP. The following disaster magnitude classification definitions are used to define situations where the execution of the COOP is necessary and when it is not necessary.

- A. Minor Disaster: Minor disasters are any disaster that is likely to be within the response capabilities of the ELCNC's evacuation plan. Such disasters would not necessarily require the full activation of the COOP. For example, a sudden emergency, such as a fire or hazardous materials incident may require the evacuation of a department or facility with little or no advance notice, but for only a short duration and would not automatically necessitate the activation of a COOP unless the facility is rendered untenable.
- B. Major Disaster: Major disasters are any disaster that will likely exceed the ELCNC's evacuation plan and would require a broad range of state and federal assistance. For example, an outbreak of an infectious disease or an emergency having severe impacts that render the facility unusable for a time frame long enough to affect normal operations, would likely justify and require the activation and execution of the ELCNC COOP.

10. ASSUMPTIONS: In the event of a major disaster, it is assumed that:

- A. Essential staff will be able to telework from their homes.
- B. All essential functions provided by other state agencies such as the Division of Early Learning and the Department of Children and Families will continue in accordance with their respective continuity of operations plans.

11. COOP ALERT: It is expected that, in most cases, the ELCNC will receive a warning of at least a few hours prior to an emergency event that would cause the activation of the COOP. This will normally enable the full execution of the COOP with a complete and orderly alert, notification, and deployment of the Disaster Response and Recovery Team to limit ELCNC operations to the telework structure. However, the ability to execute the COOP following an event that occurs with little or no warning will depend on the severity of the emergency and the number of personnel that survive it.

- A. The following scenarios may alert the activation of the COOP:
 - 1) An event or credible threats of an event that would preclude access or use of the ELCNC facility and the surrounding area.
 - 2) A widespread utility failure, natural disaster, significant hazardous material incident, civil disturbance, or terrorist or military attacks that cause the town, county, or school district to close during normal business hours.
 - 3) The outbreak of an infectious disease which is declared by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Department of Health (DOH).

12. COOP NOTIFICATION: This plan is designed to provide a flexible response to multiple events occurring within a broad spectrum of prevailing conditions. The degree to which this plan is implemented depends on the type and magnitude of the events or threats thereof.

- A. When a COOP alert allows for warning, the Emergency Coordination Officer will evaluate the capability and capacity levels required to support essential functions of the facilities and determine if the situation necessitates the limiting of ELCNC operations to the telework structure. If no warning is provided, the Emergency Coordination Officer immediately activates the COOP and limits operations to the telework structure.
- B. Immediately following the activation of the COOP, the Director of Communications completes the following:
 - 1) Issue a COOP activation notice to the Disaster Response and Recovery Team. The notice may be communicated via personal contact, telephone, cell phone, e-mail, text message, or a combination thereof. The notification will include notification that ELCNC operations will be limited to our telework structure.
 - 2) Issue COOP activation notices to the Chairman of the ELCNC Board, the Division of Early Learning, local government, and other pertinent local agencies. The notification will include contact information for the telework locations of key personnel assigned to disaster response and recovery, the estimated time of the Disaster Response and Recovery Team's arrival to the location, and any other pertinent information.
 - a. A minimum of two attempts are made to Executive Officers. If contact attempts are unsuccessful, the individuals are left messages. It is expected that Executive Officers will immediately contact the Director of Communications after a message is received.

- b. The Director of Communications will provide periodic notification reports and updates to the Emergency Coordination Officer until all Executive Officers are notified.
 - 3) Issue a COOP activation notice to Early Learning Providers and provide instructions for communication methods until the deactivation of the COOP. The Director of Communications will also provide mobile phone and email contact information for all staff members continuing operations under the telework structure of the ELCNC and request Early Learning Providers to notify parents of the same.
 - 4) Contacts the local media requesting a public announcement of the ELCNC's operations being limited to a telework structure due to emergency circumstances. The public announcement includes emergency cell phone numbers for Directors. Situation reports will be available on the ELCNC website. Essential communication phone numbers are not released to the general public. The Emergency Coordination Officer and the Director of Communications' cell phone numbers are considered to be essential communication phone numbers.
 - 5) Notify the US postal service of the mailing address of the Director of Communications and provide mail routing instructions as appropriate.
 - 6) Arranges for a notice of COOP activation to be published on the ELCNC website. The notice includes the identity of the Disaster Response and Recovery Team as well as appropriate cell phone numbers and email addresses.
 - 7) Shares educational resources about the major disaster that are obtained through appropriate agencies and websites, such as the CDC, DOH, Emergency Operations Centers, etc., with staff and stakeholders.
- C. Immediately following the activation of the COOP, the Director of Human Resources completes the following:
- 1) Issue a COOP activation notice to staff and instruct staff to go home or stay home until further notice. Staff will continue their work duties via the established telecommuting policy.
 - 2) A minimum of two attempts are made to contact staff. If contact attempts are unsuccessful, the individuals are left messages. It is expected that staff will immediately contact the Director of Human Resources after a message is received
 - a. The Director of Human Resources provides periodic notification reports and updates to the Emergency Coordination Officer until all staff are notified.
 - 3) In the case of an infectious disease outbreak, remind staff of the importance of refraining from coming to work when feeling sick and provide staff the current personal leave time policy and the number of banked leave time hours for each employee. In the event a staff person is diagnosed with an infectious disease, follow CDC guidelines with respect to placing the staff in a leave status and determining appropriate return to work procedures.

13. COOP EXECUTION: The Disaster Response and Recovery team complete the following tasks:

- A. The Technology Manager assesses the security and access controls to property and prepares the Disaster Response and Recovery Team to function effectively in the telework environment.
- B. The Disaster Response and Recovery Team evacuates the building while maintaining normal security procedures, if possible. The Emergency Coordination Officer and the Technology Manager take appropriate measures to ensure security of the administrative offices, equipment and records remaining in the building, if possible. The Director of Communications alerts the County Sheriff's Department of the evacuation.
- C. Within 12 hours of COOP activation, the Disaster Response and Recovery Team is operating under the telework structure and has established essential operations of the ELCNC for a period up to thirty (30) days, pending the return to normal operations. During non-working hours, the Disaster Response and Recovery Team operate remotely under the telecommuting policy from their location at the time of COOP activation.
- D. The Disaster Response and Recovery team will determine the need and hours of work for affected staff. COOP activation should not, in most circumstances, affect the pay and benefits of either the Disaster Response and Recovery Team members or other personnel. Non-essential personnel may be directed to fulfill other duties that exceed their current job description and will be compensated for travel expenses, when necessary, in accordance with the ELCNC's travel policy. Staff may also be advised to remain at home for the duration of the emergency operation or to telework until the affected facility can be reoccupied or another facility is established. The ELCNC authorizes staff to telework when the following are present:
 - 1) It is not safe for travel to and from work, during the emergency.
 - 2) Staff's home and/or cell phones are operational.
 - 3) Staff's home has electricity and internet connections.
 - 4) Staff have access to the tools necessary to perform their assigned duties in their homes.

- 5) Staff who are not prepared to continue their work duties under the telework policy will be placed in a personal leave time status.
- E. The Director of Communications in conjunction with the members of the Disaster Response and Recovery team will develop informative memorandums for dissemination to staff, the Executive Officers of the ELCNC Board, the Division of Early Learning, Early Learning Providers, parents, and community agencies with regard to childcare payments, payroll, time and attendance, duty assignments, and travel authorizations and reimbursements.
- F. Within 24 hours of an emergency that requires the ELCNC to limit operations to the telework structure or when it is ascertained that the emergency situation has ended and is unlikely to recur, the Technology Manager will assess and initiate operations to salvage, restore, and recover the administrative office.
- G. Based on the assessment of the administrative office, the Emergency Coordination Officer will authorize the deactivation of the COOP plan when the Technology Manager determines that appropriate security, safety, and health conditions of the office are suitable for operations.

14. COOP DEACTIVATION:

- A. The Director of Communications in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer will develop a deactivation of the COOP that ensures an orderly transition of all applicable functions, personnel, equipment, and records from the telework structure to the restored facility or a new location.
- B. The deactivation plan will be communicated by the Director of Communications to the Disaster Response and Recovery Team, staff, the Executive Officers of the ELCNC Board, the Division of Early Learning, Early Learning Providers, parents, and community agencies through the ELCNC website, local media, email, etc. The notification will include the anticipated completion date of the deactivation plan.
- C. The Director of Human Resources and the Technology Manager will oversee the orderly transition of all applicable functions, personnel, equipment, and records from the telework structure to a new or restored facility.

15. REVIEW AND REVISIONS:

- A. An after-action review (information collection process) will be initiated by the Emergency Coordination Officer. The information to be collected will, at a minimum, include information from any employee working during the COOP activation and a review of the strengths and weaknesses at the conclusion of the operations.
- B. Recommendations for changes to the COOP and any accompanying documents will be developed by the Emergency Coordination Officer and incorporated into the COOP annual review process.