

# Continuity of Operations (COOP) for Child Care Programs

What is it and Why is it Important?

# Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- ❖ Articulate the importance of having Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) in child care
- ❖ List the primary components of a COOP Plan
- ❖ Identify the resources available to child care programs to help support the COOP

# What is a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)?

COOP is a plan to eliminate or minimize interruptions to normal business operations in the event of an emergency/disaster.

# Is a COOP Required?

- \* All licensed child care programs must have a COOP according to the current NH Child Care Licensing Rules
- \* License-exempt child care programs that are enrolled to receive NH Child Care Scholarship must have a COOP according to the current NH License Exempt Rules

# NH CCLU Rule He-C 4002.19(v)

“Programs shall develop Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed during, or resumed rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities...”

# Why have a COOP?

- \* Statistics show that 25% (1 in 4) businesses that are forced to close because of a disaster never reopen
- \* A COOP may decrease the time a child care program experiences disruption following an emergency/disaster

# Importance of Child Care

## Child care:

- Is an important support for families and communities
- Helps keep the economy moving by providing care for children while their families are working

What would happen if we lost a significant number of child care slots? Let's take a look at a scenario.

# Disaster Strikes . . .

Tornado



Flood



Hurricane





# Disaster Strikes . . .

the West Side of Manchester. The potential number of licensed child care center slots lost:

Child Care Centers	Address	Licensed Capacity
Alpha Bits II	Allard Drive W. Manchester	334
St. Peter's Home	Kelly Street W. Manchester	309
Easter Seals Child Development & FRC	S. Main Street W. Manchester	227
St. Marie Child Care Center	Wayne Street W. Manchester	106
The Growing Years	Harvell Street W. Manchester	111
<b>Total Licensed Capacity</b>		<b>1087</b>

# Disaster Strikes . . .

And the potential number of licensed school age slots lost:

School Age Programs	Address	Licensed Capacity
YMCA – Polaris	Coolidge Ave. W. Manchester	80
New Morning - Northwest	Youville Street W. Manchester	75
New Morning – Parker Varney	James Pollock Drive W. Manchester	50
Girls Inc.	Varney Street W. Manchester	92
<b>Total Licensed Capacity</b>		<b>297</b>

# A Day Without Child Care

\* Let's look at what happened in one town

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGpEXKgU2oA>



# Possible Implications

## Brainstorming activity

Children no longer have care

Families can't work

Businesses can't operate

Other?

# COOP COOP Checklist and Supporting Documents

- \* COOP Checklist
- \* Insurance Considerations
- \* Sample Contact Lists
- \* Sample Delegation of Authority Letter
- \* Hazard/Threat, Risk and Mitigation Assessment Worksheets
- \* Recovery Resources

# Readiness and Preparedness

## Readiness and Preparation:

- \* Program provides tools and resources to staff and enrolled families about personal emergency preparedness planning. See the Child Care Aware of NH website for information:  
<http://nh.childcareaware.org/emergency-planning/>
- \* Program has signed up for local and state electronic notification/alert systems
- \* Program has reviewed insurance coverage with insurance agent

# Let's talk COOP

## Key COOP Planning Elements

- \* COOP Teams
- \* Essential Functions
- \* Orders of Succession
- \* Delegations of Authority
- \* Alternate Facility(s)
- \* Alternate Facility(s) Communications
- \* Essential Records and Database Management
- \* Recovery of Operations
- \* Training and Practice

# COOP Teams

- \* A team has been assigned to write the COOP
- \* Notification Team – Staff has been identified to:
  - \* Notify staff of COOP activation
  - \* Notify families of COOP activation
  - \* Notify external partners of COOP activation

(Updated staff, family and external partners lists are maintained)

- \* Relocation Team – Staff has been identified to:
  - \* Move files
  - \* Move records
  - \* Move supplies and equipment



# Essential Functions

- \* Essential functions are what you do from day to day.
- \* In child care programs, essential functions may include:
  - Infant Program
  - Toddler Program
  - Preschool Program
  - Kindergarten Program
  - School Age Program
  - Administration Office

Other?

# Essential Functions (cont.)

After a disaster, programs may find their selected alternate facility may not allow them to perform all of the essential functions due to space or other considerations. They will need to prioritize which functions they are able to continue in the alternate facility.

# Essential Functions (cont.)

Consideration may be needed as to which programs (school-age, preschool, toddler, infant) generate the most income and have the least cost to operate, in order to maximize the income during the period of COOP activation

# Questions?



# Orders of Succession

- \* Programs will need to identify who will assume the program leader's role in the event that the individual is no longer able to continue in that role. (If possible, they will identify at least 2 alternatives.)
- \* Programs will need to identify who will assume other key roles.

# Delegations of Authority

Delegations of Authority are formal documents that identify, by order of succession position, the legal authority for individuals to make key decisions during a continuity event.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- \* Check signing
- \* Payroll
- \* Hiring
- \* Termination

# Delegations of Authority (cont.)

- \* It is encouraged that these Delegation of Authority letters are reviewed and approved by the program's legal counsel or other legal authority. They may need to be notarized.

# Alternate Facility(s)

- \* Alternate facility(s) should NOT be located in the same geographic area as the primary facility
- \* Agreement(s) with the alternate facility(s) should be created, signed, and included with important documents
- \* Detailed route(s) to the alternate facility(s) should be included in the COOP



# Alternate Facility Communications

- \* Programs will need to:
  - \* Develop processes and procedures to communicate with:
    - \* Leadership (administrators, executive director, BOD, etc.)
    - \* Staff
    - \* Families
    - \* Alternate facility(s) owner(s)
  - \* Identify how communication will take place (email, social media, mobile App., text, etc.)

# Essential Records and Databases

- \* Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - \* Emergency Operations Plan
  - \* Computer programs/databases
  - \* Accounts receivable/payable
  - \* Payroll
  - \* Children and staff records

# Essential Records and Databases (cont.)

- \* Programs will need to:
  - \* Develop a plan to protect confidential information – hard copies and virtual
  - \* Make decisions regarding storage/safekeeping of essential documents at alternate facility(s)
  - \* Assure Go-Files are up-to-date and ready to transport, if needed

# Annual Review of COOP

It is important to review the plan and train:

- \* At least annually
- \* If there is an actual COOP event that requires updates to procedures
- \* If there is any change in COOP staff/roles
- \* If alternate facility(s) no longer available, etc.

# Activation of COOP

Programs must identify a decision-maker for COOP activation. Once activated, programs will:

- \* Activate Orders of Succession and Delegation of Authority, if needed
- \* Determine which alternate facility will be used
- \* Notify internal and external contacts
- \* Relocate to pre-identified alternate facility; transport Go-Files and Go-Kits
- \* Perform essential functions at the alternate facility

# Recovery of Operations

## Programs will:

- \* Designate staff to determine when the original or new primary facility is ready to be occupied
- \* Designate staff to oversee the orderly transition back to the original or new primary facility
- \* Resume operations at the original or new primary facility when equipment, records, etc. are in place
- \* Notify appropriate partners indicating that operations have resumed at the original or new primary facility

# Reviewing, Training and Practicing COOP

- \* Annual training and practice of COOP policies and procedures (and if possible, at the alternate facility) is strongly recommended (could be one of the 2 required drills)
- \* Orientation and refresher training for COOP staff is recommended

# COOP and Recovery Planning Resources

For COOP Materials, see the Child Care Aware of NH website :  
<http://nh.childcareaware.org/emergency-planning/>

\* Materials include:

- COOP Checklist
- Insurance Considerations
- Sample Contact List
- Sample Delegations of Authority Letter
- Recovery Resources
- Cover sheets for your COOP



# Questions



# Contact Information

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# For Additional Questions About COOP

Please contact:

- \* Child Care Aware of NH: 1 (855) 393-1731 ext. 32
- \* Bureau of Child Development and Head Start  
Collaboration: (603) 271-8167

If you have questions regarding the Child Care Licensing Rules around COOP, please contact the Child Care Licensing Unit at (603) 271-9025.