

THINGS TO KNOW AS YOU PLAN

To plan effectively, we need to know what we can expect from OTHER UNITS, and from the CAMPUS, in the event of disaster. The items that follow will help you coordinate your planning with others. You will also find here other items of guidance or perspective that may be of assistance to you. Please let the Risk Management Office (ext. 2256) know what additional items you would like to see on this page.

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1. Human Resources

Performing our jobs under unusual circumstances gives rise to numerous staff issues. Human Resources Management has published two web documents that address some of those issues, and provides advice to managers. See the [BCP Checklist for Supervisors and Managers](#) and the [BCP HR Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information. Because of the wide variability of possible conditions during a time of crisis, and the complexity of some of the issues and processes, HRM will provide specific communication and training to campus managers when needed. This will include the provision of data-gathering forms as temporary workarounds if existing data systems should be inoperable. HRM is prepared to keep the payroll system working under most adverse conditions. Campus departments should make every effort to process and report payroll data to HRM as you normally do. Direct deposit of paychecks is an important strategy during times of crisis. Assuming that employees' financial institutions are functioning during the crisis, employees with direct deposit will have a greater chance of being paid on time than those employees who pick up a paper check. HRM encourages all employees to use direct deposit and suggests that departments urge any members of the faculty or staff who still receive a paper check to enroll in direct deposit.

2. Payroll.

The Payroll Office is prepared to keep paychecks flowing despite any adverse conditions. All campus departments should make every effort, in times of crisis, to process and report payroll data to the Payroll Office as you normally do. To whatever extent this becomes impossible, the Payroll Office will compensate. Under a worst-case scenario, the Payroll Office is prepared to issue current payroll checks using prior-period data, with the

understanding that corrections will be necessary when systems are back up and running. Direct deposit of paychecks is an important strategy in times of crisis. Depending on conditions, distribution of paper checks may encounter difficulties and delays. Presuming that the financial institutions are functioning, employees utilizing direct deposit will have higher assurance of being paid on time. In view of this, it is recommended that ALL departments doing continuity planning include an Action Item to "urge any faculty or staff still receiving paper checks to sign up for direct deposit."

3. Depositing of Payments.

Campus departments that receive payments (cash, check, or credit card) should plan as follows:

- if possible, continue to receive record and deposit the monies using normal processes.
- if that is not possible, expect a communication from the Controller department instructing you how to proceed.
- The instructions from the Controller department will depend on current conditions and may include paper recording of information if the TouchNet Market Place is not operating, and direct deposit to the bank is not functioning.
- Under no circumstances should holding of cash & checks in your department be utilized as a coping strategy.

4. Purchasing.

The ability to make purchases quickly and easily post-disaster is essential for every department's recovery. Following any major disruptive event, Procurement Management will proactively inform the campus about the status of campus procurement systems.

- To the extent that systems are operating normally, the normal procurement policies, procedures & restrictions will continue to apply.
- To the extent that systems are not working, Procurement Management will issue instructions on how to proceed.
- If the normal Purchase Order and Purchase Requisition systems are not operable, the UTD Purchasing Card may be the principal mechanism for making purchases for a temporary period. Should this happen, Procurement Management MAY act to raise card limits and/or remove restrictions on types of purchases. Procurement Management currently has 9 "emergency" purchasing cards to be distributed to departments needing to purchase emergency equipment, supplies and services.
- --Alternatively, most departments have access to the Small Order System (SOS) which is essentially a pre-approved purchase order with a maximum limit (typically \$500).
- All departments doing continuity planning should examine their purchasing process: Do you have backups assigned for your preparers, reviewers and

approvers in case some staff are not available? Are these backups REALLY capable of taking over if needed?

- All departments should also examine your Purchasing Card capability: Do you have enough staff with the UTD Purchasing Cards to cope when some are absent (remember that Purchasing Cards, like all credit cards, can generally be used ONLY by the individual to whom they are issued).
- During time of crisis, proper record-keeping for the UTD Purchasing Card purchases MUST be continued. The risks inherent in this system make diligent conformance to procedures even more important at such times.

5. Emergency contact lists.

The campus's preferred method for keeping/maintaining emergency contact lists is that each unit keeps its own lists. These lists should be:

- in a format of your choosing
- held by enough people to be useful
- treated as confidential
- kept securely at home and at work
- updated at least twice a year.

The following is a guide to the content of those lists:

- Name
- Position
- Home address
- UTD phone
- Home phone
- UTD cell
- Is UTD cell text capable?
- Personal cell
- Is personal cell text capable?
- UTD email
- Home email (if different from UTD email)
- Person to contact in emergency
- Contact information for that person
- Out-of-area contact person for relay of messages
- Contact information for that person

6. Social distancing.

During a contagious-illness epidemic, social distancing will be a widely-used strategy. That term means, quite simply, "do everything possible to keep people out of contagion range." Schools and workplaces may close, large and small gatherings may be discouraged, and transportation systems (planes, trains, buses) may be restricted. When such an event threatens, social distancing may be advised in anticipation, even while we

continue our daily work. Should the campus eventually close for a period, there are still many functions that cannot simply be "turned off": housing and feeding of students who cannot get home, certain critical lab research, care of animals, campus security, maintenance of environmental and utility systems, and others. For continuity planning, the social-distancing challenge is as follows — we must make sure that we have the communications systems that will allow us to function as needed while keeping our people safely away from each other. The good news is that contagious illnesses do not attack communication systems. We can look toward increased use of

- conference calls
- web meetings
- telecommuting (also called work from home)
- electronic dispatching of service personnel
- similar strategies.

Our continuity planning should include assurance that we will be ABLE to use such strategies when needed. Visualize how your unit might implement social distancing while continuing to function.

7. Working from home.

Working from home is a powerful strategy for functioning during crisis - as well as a very useful strategy for normal times. In practice, much remains to be done to develop this capability. An entire screen of The UTD Continuity Planning Tool is devoted to "getting specific" about who in your unit is currently able to work from home. As you plan, think what your unit (or the campus) could do to increase the number of staff and faculty who could do at least part of their work from home. Do your employees have the virtual privacy network (VPN) downloaded to their home computers? Have they enabled their work desktop computers to accept Remote Desktop Login from their home computer? When some disruptive event befalls us, we'll need to have people working from home — but we'd best learn how to do that now, not during the crisis.

8. Stockpiling.

In this era of just-in-time procurement and delivery, few of us keep much inventory. As you plan, ask what equipment & consumables your unit absolutely must have in order to carry on your critical functions. If a few weeks without deliveries is unthinkable, develop an inventory strategy.

9. Emergency generators.

Many of our buildings are equipped with emergency generators. Many are not. Here is what you should know about these:

- Emergency generators in almost all cases are designed to turn on automatically when normal power fails. There will, however, be a several-second delay while the engine starts, so equipment in your building will shut

down (unless protected by your own UPS - uninterruptible power supply - system). Learn in advance whether critical equipment, especially in labs, needs to be manually restarted after the generator is running.

- The generators will run indefinitely as long as someone replenishes the diesel fuel. At UTD, the Facilities Management Division will take care of this, presuming their suppliers have fuel to sell, and deliveries are possible.
- Generators practically never power entire buildings — only critical circuits & equipment. If your lab has critical freezers or other equipment, check that they are plugged into an "emergency outlet". These are often color-coded: orange in older buildings and red in newer ones.
- Question your building manager about maintenance. Generator systems need periodic testing and maintenance. At UTD, load testing is done twice a year; however, should failure occur during testing, power will be lost. Due to regular maintenance and frequent testing, this has not occurred, but is a possibility. We do not test individual circuits back to the outlet, as campus personnel are quick to notify us if an outlet is malfunctioning.