



**COVID-19
CONTINUITY OF
OPERATIONS PLAN**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Municipalities across the nation perform essential functions and services that may be adversely affected in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. In such events, municipalities should have continuity plans to assist in the continuance of their essential functions. Continuing to perform essential functions and provide essential services is vital to a municipality's ability to remain a viable entity during times of increased threats from all hazards, manmade or natural. Since the threat to a municipality's continuity of operations is great during a pandemic outbreak; it is important for municipalities, in particular the City of Tega Cay, to have a Pandemic COVID-19 Continuity of Operations plan in place to ensure it can carry out its essential functions and services to its citizens. While municipalities may be forced to suspend some operations due to the severity of a pandemic outbreak, an effective Continuity of Operations Plan can assist a municipality in its efforts to remain operational, as well as strengthen the ability to resume operations.

II. PURPOSE

This plan provides guidance to the City of Tega Cay (City) and may serve as the plan for maintaining essential functions and services during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance neither replaces nor supersedes any current, approved City continuity plan; rather it supplements it, bridging the gap between the traditional, all-hazards continuity planning and the specialized continuity planning required for a pandemic by addressing additional considerations, challenges, and elements specific to the dynamic nature of a pandemic.

This guidance stresses that essential functions can be maintained during a pandemic outbreak through mitigation strategies, such as social distancing, increased hygiene and similar approaches. COVID-19 may not, in itself, require a traditional continuity response, such as partial or full relocation of the organization's essential functions, although this response may be concurrently necessary due to other circumstances.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The City will monitor the severity of the pandemic and establish continuity activation triggers to address the unique nature of the pandemic threat. The Pandemic COVID-19 Continuity Plan will be implemented as needed to support the continued performance of essential functions.

IV. CONTINUITY PLANNING

All City personnel are to be informed regarding protective actions and/or modifications related to this plan. Messaging and risk communications during an emerging infectious disease or pandemic will be conducted by the City Manager in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager and Department Heads. Guidance and instructions on established infection control measures such as social distancing, personnel protective equipment and telework polices are provided by the City to assist in limiting the spread of COVID-19 at the primary and alternate worksites, which should include the following measures:

- Placing moratoriums on handshaking
- Substituting teleconferences for face-to-face meetings
- Staggering breaks
- Posting infection control guidelines
- Using Lysol or Clorox wipes to wipe down counter spaces and doorknobs frequently
- Halting all travel to conferences and meetings regardless of where they are located
- Establishing flexible work hours or worksite, (e.g., telecommuting). Department

- Heads must submit a staffing plan to the City Manager immediately.
- Promoting social distancing between employees and customers to maintain three-foot spatial separation between individuals; and
- Direct all employees with COVID-19, fever, respiratory distress or compromised immune systems to stay home at the first sign of symptoms.

The City will frequently communicate with employees, particularly any who are in harm's way to keep employees informed about developments in the organization's response, impacts on the workforce, and to reassure employees that the organization is continuing to function as usual. The City will develop and implement metrics for assessing worker conformance and workplace cleanliness, inclusive of the following:

- Monitor protection methods.
- Track and implement changes in approved or recommended protection measures.
- Pre-position material and equipment onsite.
- Ensure essential personnel are at the primary worksite.
- Reaffirm that essential suppliers have their material and personnel on-hand and are able to respond and support as planned.
- Coordinate with local public health and emergency response points of contact to ensure open, adequate communications.

V. PANDEMIC PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The overarching planning assumptions that were used in developing the City's Pandemic COVID-19 Continuity of Operations Plan include the following:

- Susceptibility to the pandemic COVID-19 virus will be universal.
- Efficient and sustained person-to-person transmission signals an imminent pandemic.
- Some persons will become infected but not develop clinically significant symptoms. Asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic individuals can transmit infection and develop immunity to subsequent infection.
- Rates of serious illness, hospitalization, and deaths will depend on the virulence of the pandemic virus and differ by an order of magnitude between more and less severe scenarios. Risk groups for severe and fatal infection cannot be predicted with certainty but are likely to include infants, the elderly, pregnant women, and persons with chronic or immunosuppressive medical conditions.
- The CDC identifies those at greatest risk for infection for the COVID-19 virus as:
 - Older adults, with risk increasing by age
 - People who have serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.
- Rates of absenteeism will depend on the severity of the pandemic. In a severe pandemic, absenteeism attributable to illness, the need to care for ill family members and fear of infection may reach 40 percent during the peak weeks of a community outbreak, with lower rates of absenteeism during the weeks before and after the peak. Certain public health measures (closing facilities, quarantining household contacts of infected individuals, "snow days") are likely to increase rates of absenteeism.
- The typical incubation period (interval between infection and onset of symptoms) for COVID-19 is approximately two hours to two weeks per the CDC.
- Persons are thought to be the most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the

sickest).

- Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new novel virus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- A pandemic outbreak in any given community may last about six to eight weeks for each wave of the pandemic.
- Multiple waves (periods during which community outbreaks occur across the country) of illness could occur with each wave lasting two-three months. Historically, the largest waves have occurred in the fall and winter, but the seasonality of a pandemic cannot be predicted with certainty.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

- The City will be provided with guidance and/or direction by the York County Emergency Operations Center in conjunction with SCDHEC and the CDC regarding the COVID-19 pandemic status in this area.
- The City will have actionable plans and procedures to assist in the ability to remain operational during a pandemic. Plans and procedures may include social distancing protocols, personal protection equipment (PPE), and temporary suspension of some non-essential activities.
- The City will review its continuity communications programs to ensure they are fully capable of supporting pandemic and other related emergencies, and give full consideration to supporting social distancing operations, including telework and other virtual office options.
- The City -controlled buildings will be accessible, but right of entry may be limited in the event of confirmed cases in York County.
- The City may deploy to its alternate facilities.
- Essential functions, operations, and support requirements will continue to be people dependent. However, human interactions may be remote or virtual, resulting in the employment of appropriate teleworking and other approved social distancing protocols.
- If the need for additional funding for the acquisition of additional equipment required for a possible surge in teleworking capabilities arises, the request will be taken immediately to City Council for consideration.

VII. PANDEMIC RESPONSE

A. PANDEMIC COORDINATORS AND PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAMS:

The City Manager or his/her designee will serve as the HQ Pandemic COVID-19 Continuity Coordinator. The City Pandemic COVID-19 Coordinator will oversee a Pandemic Response Team (PRT) to anticipate the impacts of a pandemic on the City of Tega Cay and to assist with developing strategies to manage the effects of an COVID-19 outbreak. A cross section of City Department Heads will serve as a member of the PRT to support the Pandemic Continuity Coordinator. The City's PRT is comprised of the following:

- City Manager
- Human Resources Manager
- Fire Chief
- Police Chief

- Operations Director
- Communication Manager

B. RISK COMMUNICATIONS:

The City will develop COVID-19 pandemic risk communications procedures for communicating with all internal and external customers. All communications will be delivered by the City’s Communication Manager.

VIII. ELEMENTS OF A VIABLE PANDEMIC COVID-19 CONTINUITY CAPABILITY

A. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Given the expected duration and potential multiple waves of pandemic outbreaks, Departments must review the process involved in carrying out essential functions and services in order to develop plans that mitigate the effects of the pandemic while simultaneously allowing the continuation of operations which support essential functions. The City has identified essential functions and services needed to sustain its mission and operations during a pandemic. The City's Essential Functions are listed here:

- City Management Operations
- Police Operations
- Fire/Medical Operations
- Utility Operations
- Permitting/Code Enforcement Operations

B. ORDERS OF SUCCESSION

Since COVID-19 pandemic may affect regions of the United States differently in terms of timing, severity, and duration, the City has identified orders of succession that are at least three deep per position. The City Orders of Succession are:

- 1) City Manager
 - a. Assistant City Manager
 - b. Finance Director
- 2) Police Chief
 - a. Police Captain
 - b. Admin Lieutenant
- 3) Fire Chief
 - a. Fire Captain
 - b. B Shift Lieutenant
- 4) Operations Director
 - a. PW Maintenance Superintendent
 - b. Assistant Utility Director
- 5) Utility Director
 - a. Assistant Utility Director
 - b. PW Maintenance Superintendent
- 6) Development Services Director
 - a. Planning and Development Services Manager
 - b. Business License Official
- 7) Communications Manager
 - a. Parks & Recreation Director
 - b. Assistant City Manager

C. DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

At the height of a pandemic wave, absenteeism maybe significant, as such, the City of Tega Cay has established delegations of authority that are at least three deep to take into account the expected rate of absenteeism and regional nature of the outbreak to help assure continuity of operations over an extended time period. See above Section B.

D. CONTINUITY FACILITIES

The traditional use of continuity facilities to maintain essential functions and services may not be a viable option during a pandemic. Rather, safe work practices, which include social distancing and transmission interventions, reduce the likelihood of contacts with other people that could lead to disease transmission. The City has developed preventative practices such as social distancing procedures, hygiene etiquette, and cancellation of the City's non-essential activities to reduce the spread of the pandemic. Plans have also been established to relocate to an alternate facility, if applicable. The City Continuity Facilities are listed here:

- City Hall would move to lower level of The Glennon Center
- Police Department would move essential office staff to the former Police Station. Prisoners would be transported directly to the Moss Justice Center in York.
- Fire Stations would operate out of Stations that were not affected. Essential Fire Admin staff would move to the lower level of The Glennon Center.

E. CONTINUITY COMMUNICATIONS

Workplace risk can be minimized through implementation of systems and technologies that facilitate communication without person-to-person contact. The City has identified communication systems needed to perform essential functions. The City Continuity Communications plan for pandemic COVID-19 is listed here as the City will communicate with City employees and citizens through:

- City Website
- City social media pages
- Code Red (automated telecommunications dialer)
- Electronic Message Board at City Hall
- Cable Channel 115

F. ESSENTIAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The City shall identify, protect, and ensure the ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information systems needed to support essential functions during a pandemic outbreak. The City has identified systems, databases, and files that are needed to ensure essential functions remain operational. The City's Essential Records plan for pandemic COVID-19 is listed here.

- Back up of all computer servers daily.
- Use Cloud technology as a secondary backup to manual server backups.
- Maintain contact with CCP to ensure all Systems are working properly.
- Maintain manning in PD, FD and Human Resources to access hardcopy documents.

G. HUMAN RESOURCES

Although a pandemic COVID-19 outbreak may not directly affect the physical

infrastructure of an organization, a pandemic will ultimately 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 a pandemic outbreak. The City has established plans to protect the entire employee population and their families, with additional guidance for key personnel, ERG members, and other essential personnel, should a pandemic COVID-19 outbreak occur. The City's Human Resource plan is listed here:

- Keep all employees informed of any Local Pandemic outbreaks.
- Ensure materials are available so employees can wash and sanitize their hands on a regular basis.
- Work with PEBA to ensure our employees and covered dependents have availability to any medications needed.

H. DEVOLUTION OF CONTROL AND DIRECTION

Devolution is the process of transferring operational control of one or more essential functions to a pre-determined responsible party or parties. Pandemic outbreaks will occur at different times, have variable durations, and may differ in the severity; therefore, full or partial devolution of essential functions may be necessary to continue essential functions and services. The City has established plans and procedures for devolution, which identifies how it will transfer operations, if pandemic COVID-19 renders leadership and essential staff incapable or unavailable. To the extent that York County is able to take on certain services, the City would transfer control of essential City departments to York County should the City be incapable of maintaining essential services to its citizens. These services would include public safety and utilities as may be necessary. In the event that York County is unable to assist, the City will work with surrounding municipalities and the state for assistance.

I. RECONSTITUTION

Reconstitution is the process whereby an organization has regained the capability and physical resources necessary to return to normal (pre-disaster) operations. The objective during reconstitution is to effectively manage, control, and, with safety in mind, expedite the return to normal operations. The City has developed reconstitution plans and procedures, to ensure facilities/buildings are safe to return. The City's reconstitution plan considers the possibility that not all employees may be able to return to work at the time of reconstitution and that it may be necessary to hire temporary or permanent workers in order to complete the reconstitution process. The City's Reconstitution plan for pandemic COVID-19 is listed here:

- Available manning will be reviewed by City Manager, HR and all Department Heads.
- Any manning shortages will be addressed by:
 - Requesting assistance from state and county agencies and surrounding local municipalities.
 - If the above does not cover needs, the City will work with local temp agencies to acquire needed staff. All temporary workers that may be utilized must first be screened by appropriate medical professionals before they will be allowed to work for the City.

J. CONCLUSION

Maintaining the City's essential functions and services in the event of pandemic COVID-19 requires additional considerations beyond traditional continuity planning. Unlike other hazards that necessitate the relocation of staff performing essential functions to an alternate operating facility, an COVID-19 pandemic may not directly affect the physical infrastructure of the organization. As such, a traditional "continuity activation" may not be required during a pandemic COVID-19 outbreak. However, a pandemic outbreak threatens an organization's human resources by removing essential personnel from the workplace for extended periods of time. Accordingly, the City's continuity plan addresses the threat of a pandemic COVID-19 outbreak.

Continuity Plans for maintaining essential functions and services in a pandemic COVID-19 should include implementing procedures such as social distancing, infection control, personal hygiene, and cross-training (to ease personnel absenteeism in a critical skill set). Protecting the health and safety of key personnel, and other essential personnel must be the focused goal of the organization in order to enable the City to continue to operate effectively and to perform essential functions and provide essential services during a pandemic outbreak.