

Pandemic planning as part of an overall resilience strategy

March 2020

Activities already taken by organizations to date

Governance

- Establish a Pandemic Planning/Preparedness Team consisting of executive-level members:
 - Human Resources (people and preparedness)
 - Finance (financial stress testing)
 - Business stakeholders (business continuity planning)
 - Supply Chain/Procurement
 - Marketing & Communications
 - Identify communication tools and spokespersons for internal and external communications
- Educate personnel, at both the family and employee level:
 - Personal hygiene/protection tips
 - Social distancing
 - Related pandemic terminology
- Sign up for local emergency management agency alerts

Human Resources

- Review/update/create work from home policy and confirm the policy addresses the following elements:
 - Paying hourly employees who are asked to work from home/take leaves of absence if they tested positive
 - Paying benefits to employees who are asked to take leaves of absence
 - Working with the business and IT to confirm employees have the capabilities to work from home
 - Working with Marketing/Communications to issue the policy to employees and ensure their awareness
 - Define alert levels/triggers
 - Travel Guidelines and Restrictions/Bans
 - Social Distancing Procedures
 - Telecommuting/Video Conferencing/Alternate Sites
 - Workplace and Leave flexibilities as well as pay and benefits in case of daycare/school closings, caring for ill family members, etc.
 - Align pandemic policies, standards, and procedures with public health recommendations as well as State/Federal laws
- Confirm employee contact information is current and distributed appropriately
- Update Intranet site to link to the World Health Organization (WHO), local public health departments, etc.

Activities that should have been accomplished to-date

Business Continuity/ Information Technology	— Confirm critical processes can be performed remotely or identify an alternative — Validate essential tools to work remotely are available (i.e., laptop, VPN, etc.) — Increased network bandwidth due to increased telecommuting, etc. — Remote security access capabilities — Establish a Help Line to assist employees who are not familiar with telecommuting or test thoroughly in anticipation of a pandemic — Review the organization's Risk Assessment and Business Impact Analysis to confirm the critical business sites, processes, products, services, and a prioritized list of customers that will be the focus of continued operations during a pandemic event — Determine which business processes will cease during the pandemic – deliver minimal viable product — Review the potential impacts to: – Legal/Regulatory Requirements – Reputation – Customer Service/Any Current Service Level Agreements – Operational Maximum Allowable Downtime — Sign-off that the Pandemic Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors or Committee annually — Validate the Pandemic Plan annually (i.e., through tabletop exercises, functional exercises, tests): – So personnel understand their roles and responsibilities – Validate critical business processes can continue with internal and external support – Confirm communication tools are available and operational
Marketing/ Comms	— Develop communication vehicles and frequencies targeting: – Employees – Customers/Clients – Regional Offices – Supply Chain/Service Providers – Board of Directors — Develop a communication plan to facilitate consistent internal and external communications — Determine the appropriate level of communication consistent with an organization's protocol—keep employees informed without introducing unnecessary stress — Determine appropriate level of communication with clients
Security/ Facilities/ Health & Safety	— Direct leadership to follow guidelines published by leading global authorities (e.g., CDC, WHO) — Inventory hand sanitizers, ensuring appropriate distribution of devices near restrooms, kitchens, common areas — Assess employee health and safety risks — Increased facility cleaning

Activities that should be performed now

Pandemic Planning/ Preparedness Team	— Closely monitor outbreaks and announcements as reported by WHO, the CDC, and local health and emergency management agencies — Activate the Pandemic Plan, if appropriate — Work with the area public health departments and emergency management agencies to understand local pandemic response plans and align accordingly – Travel Restrictions/Bans – Public Transportation – Daycare/School Closings – Government Shutdowns — Develop Situation Reports on employee absenteeism/check-ins (confidential information/Need to Know Basis) — Open limited service locations with limited services, if applicable — Migrate to 100% virtual operations if needed
Finance	— Review cash flow and revise expenditures as necessary — Work with supply chain to inventory forecasts and predict supply and demand — Assess financial stability and identify variables that will impact revenue and cost — Define scenarios that address global slowdowns, model cash flow, etc. — Include trigger-based moves in each scenarios to stabilization organizations
Business Continuity/ Information Technology	— Widen Virtual Private Network (VPN) to allow all employees to work remotely

Activities that should be performed following the event

Human Resources	— Issue guidelines provided by public health authorities: – Lifting of Travel Restrictions – Public Transportation – Daycare/School Openings – Government Openings — Communicate with personnel to return to the worksite, once they are healthy and/or no longer caring for an ill family member and after any quarantine periods
Pandemic Planning/ Preparedness Team	— Debrief and discuss any lessons learned — Assign any outstanding issues and report on the status of such issues until resolution — Protect customers by facilitating a no-penalty situation/fees for cancellations — Consider offering discounts to customers to preserve loyalty
Business Continuity/ Information Technology	— Update the Pandemic Plan and any other related Business Continuity/Resiliency Plans based on lessons learned



References to consider during Pandemic Planning activities

The following references, along with company-specific guidance, should be considered during planning activities to obtain planning tools and templates and to remain aware of the latest information related to the situation.

References	Reference links
World Health Organization (WHO)	https://www.WHO.int
Center for Disease Control (CDC)	https://www.cdc.gov
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	https://www.fema.gov
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	https://www.dhs.gov
Ready.gov	https://www.ready.gov/pandemic
National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza	http://www.pandemicflu.gov
National Institutes of Health	https://www.nih.gov
Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council	https://it handbook.ffiec.gov/it-booklets/business-continuity-management.aspx

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