

activity should have a disaster recovery plan. Accordingly, COOP teams should consult with IT professionals during COOP planning for recovery of vital electronic records. COOP teams should also identify restoration and recovery resources for non-electronic records.

2. Vital Systems and Equipment

A system or piece of equipment is vital if it is essential to emergency operations and/or to the continuance of critical processes and services during a crisis for a minimum of fourteen days. COOP planning for critical systems and equipment should proceed in the same way as planning for vital records. The first step is to identify vital systems and equipment and the second step is to select and arrange protection methods for them.

Many of the critical processes supporting essential functions include or consist entirely of IT systems and applications. For this reason, the IT component of any organization plays a vital role in COOP planning. Many IT activities already have recovery plans in place.

Since there may be other non-electronic vital systems and equipment (e.g. telephone and transportation systems), a COOP team should not rely solely on the IT staff to provide for backup, protection, and recovery of vital systems and equipment.

For vital systems to remain operational in the event of an emergency, an organization should aim to generate a COOP plan sufficiently detailed to allow non-technical employees to recover basic systems during an emergency. This requires establishment of clear priorities to resume each essential function and its supporting vital systems and equipment.

a. Identify Vital Systems and Equipment

Use Worksheet # 20 to complete this task.

As with vital records, identify those systems and equipment that are essential to the functioning of the agency and the continuance of its mission. Bear in mind that not every system or piece of equipment is vital—even if it is important. The timing of a system's or piece of equipment's use may help determine whether or not it is vital. For example, NCDOT's snowplows are vital during and immediately after a blizzard, but are not vital during the summer.

After identifying critical systems and equipment COOP planners should establish priorities for systems/equipment recovery after a disruption. When setting priorities, consider the critical processes and services that these systems support. Review the IT disaster recovery plan or any in-place EOPs.