

HOT SITE	A hot site is an alternate facility that already has in place the computer, telecommunications, and environmental infrastructure necessary to recover the organization's essential functions.
Warm Site	A warm site is an alternate work site equipped with some hardware and communications interfaces, as well as electrical and environmental conditioning that are capable of providing backup after additional software or customization is performed and/or additional equipment is temporarily obtained.
Cold Site	A cold site is an alternate facility that has in place the environmental infrastructure necessary to recover essential functions or information systems, but does not have preinstalled computer hardware, telecommunications equipment, etc. Arrangements for computer and telecommunications support must be made at the time of the move to the cold site.

From the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Continuity of Operations Planning Manual

Criteria for selection of an alternate work site should include the following:

Location – Select a site that provides a risk-free environment, if possible, and is geographically dispersed from the primary work location. This will reduce the chance that the site will be affected by the same event that required COOP activation.

Construction – The alternate facility should be constructed so that it is safe from the high-risk hazards in the area.

Space – The alternate facility must have space to house the personnel, equipment, and systems required to support all of the organization's essential functions.

Billeting and Site Transportation – Billeting and site transportation should be available at or near the alternate facility. Sites that are accessible by public transportation and that provide billeting or are near hotels offer important advantages.