

Disaster Recovery Planning and Preparedness



**Records Management
Secretary of State Tre Hargett**

July 12, 2023

Announcements

- Records Holding Report
 - Due August 4th
 - Reach out if you need a deadline extension
- Next PRC meeting
 - September 28th
 - Deadlines
 - RDA Submission due August 23rd at noon
 - Signed Forms due September 1st by end of day

What is a Disaster Recovery Plan?

- A documented process/set of procedures to protect a business & recover in the event of a disaster
 - Clearly designates responsibilities
 - Identifies essential records
 - Records required to function in the event of a disaster
 - Provides instruction on record preservation and protection
 - Steps to take, parties for assistance, etc.

Disaster Plan—Notes

- The plan should be customized to meet your agency's needs
 - Personnel structure, specific risks, records, etc.
 - Reach out to RMD for help creating a tailored plan for your agency
- In order to be useful, plans should be in place before disasters take place
 - Proactive vs. reactive action

Scenarios to Consider

- A single office is affected
 - Steps to take if business is interrupted for a single office/division
- Several offices/buildings are affected
 - Steps to take if the interruption is more widespread across the agency
- The interruption is temporary/short-term
- The interruption is permanent/long-term

Disaster Examples

- Electronic:
 - Crashes, outages, etc.
- Man-made:
 - Breakroom fires, criminal activity, etc.
- Natural disasters:
 - Tornados, earthquakes, etc.

Natural Disasters in Tennessee

- Floods
 - Consider if your offices are in areas prone to flooding
- Tornados/severe weather
 - Statewide risk
- Earthquakes
 - New Madrid Faultline
- Forest Fires
 - Consider if your offices are in areas prone to fires



Tornado damage

DHS 2nd Avenue Office, Nashville, 2020



Tornado damage

TRICOR warehouse, Nashville, 2020



Wildfires

2016 Great Smoky Mountains Wildfires



Flooding

Downtown Nashville, 2010



Flooding

Downtown Nashville, 2010



Flooding damage

State Records Center, Nashville, 2010

Risk Factors

- Historic
 - What disasters have taken place in your area in the past?
- Geographical
 - What disasters may occur as a result of your location?
- Man-made
 - What disasters may occur as a result of employee error or activity?

Creating a Plan

- Utilize a team approach
 - Who in the organization should be responsible for creating the plan?
 - Who in the agency makes decisions in the event of a disaster?
 - How are responsibilities distributed?
 - Be sure to assign duties based on knowledge and experience

Creating a Plan, cont'd.

- All team members should know and agree on:
 - What qualifies as a disaster
 - What items/tasks take priority
 - The procedures for notifying, warning, and communicating with necessary personnel and vendors
 - Evacuation, shelter, and accountability procedures
 - Locations and use of emergency equipment
 - Emergency shutdown procedures

Creating a Plan, cont'd.

- Items to include in your recovery plan:
 - List of personnel and their duties
 - Index of records
 - Data from Assessments, Records Holding Reports, etc.
 - Supplies needed in order to recover records
 - Include safety supplies for personnel
 - Contact information for record recovery
 - Procedures on caring for damaged records

Items Needed for Recovery

- Safety equipment:
 - Latex gloves
 - Face masks
 - First Aid kits
- Electronic equipment:
 - Scanners/printers
 - Laptop computers
 - VPN accounts
- Other equipment:
 - Fans
 - Tarps
 - Trash bags
 - Paper towels

Safety Checks

- Check with security, facility management, and/or emergency personnel for site conditions
- Engage system shutoffs
- Prevent further damage where possible
- Report conditions to appropriate parties
 - Type of water (contamination, sewage, etc.)
 - Structural damage to building, etc.

Records in an Emergency

- Safety first, then:
 - Stabilize the situation/prevent further damage
 - Document RDAs/retention periods for records that need treatment/recovery
 - Determine the order in which records should be treated/recovered
 - Do not recover records that are past their retention unless there is an ongoing litigation hold
 - Leave the cleaning to the professionals, especially with historic records and large volumes

Documentation

- Document the situation/damage thoroughly with notes and photographs
 - Revisit affected sites or acquire regular updates
 - Disposable waterproof cameras are useful
- Estimate damages by record series, formats, dollar amounts, etc.
- Create spreadsheets and update regularly
- Communicate to ensure accuracy

Questions to Ask

- Are the damaged items records?
 - Are the damaged items copies or original records?
 - Do the damaged records exist in other formats?
- Do the damaged records have historic or essential value?
 - Which damaged records take priority?
- Are the box labels and identifiers accurate?
 - Does an inventory exist?

Water Damage

- Many paper-based materials will respond well to simple air drying as long as minor physical distortion is acceptable:
 - Small quantities may be spread out on top of clean blotting material (paper toweling, etc.) in a cool, dry location with plenty of air circulation
 - As long as materials are not too densely packed and active drying conditions are maintained, mold growth should be mitigated

Water Damage, cont'd.

- Air drying, cont'd.:
 - While high heat and harsh sunlight will dry records quickly, they may permanently damage record materials and should be avoided
 - Quantities too large to handle within the first 48 hours should be frozen either for defrosting and air drying at a later date, or for referral to Belfor

Handling Wet Microfilm

- Priority Actions:
 - Deliver reels to a microfilm lab to be rewashed and dried within 48 hours
 - Wet film must be kept wet until it can be reprocessed; breakdown of the emulsion from the base film will begin immediately if the microfilm is allowed to dry
 - Film should not remain underwater for more than three days

Handling Wet Microfilm, cont'd.

- Recommendations:
 - Do not move microfilm until a place has been prepared to receive it
 - Do not remove wet microfilm from boxes – hold cartons together with rubber bands
 - Pack wet film boxes into a container lined with plastic bags
 - Add cool, clean, distilled water to make sure film stays wet
 - Wipe outside of film boxes with a sponge before moving
 - Keep identification labels with objects
 - Always seek professional assistance

Recap:

- Include the following in your plan:
 - Supplies for personnel safety and record recovery
 - Prioritized recovery steps and procedures
 - List of personnel and clearly-defined duties
 - Templates for documenting damage
 - Index of records
 - Contact information for recovery
 - Procedures on caring for damaged records
 - Steps to resume normal business operations

Contacts

- **Statewide Contract #817 – Belfor Disaster Recovery**
 - Address: 595 Stewarts Ferry Pike, Nashville
 - Phone: 615-885-6577
 - 24/7 Emergency Number: 888-452-1300
 - <https://www.belfor.com/en/us>
- Call Department of General Services (DGS) for assistance
- Call staff in your division to arrange for remote worksites and/or a recovery worksite
- Keep RMD updated