

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)
NEBRASKA STATE SUPREME COURT SYSTEM

Nebraska _____ County District Court Model Plan

March 17, 2020

WARNING: This document is an operational plan for responding to emergencies within the court system.

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

I-1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

This Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) establishes guidance to ensure the execution of the **mission essential functions** for the _____ County District Court in the event that an emergency in county/state/nation threatens or incapacitates operations, and the relocation of selected personnel and functions to an **alternate facility** is required. Specifically, this plan is designed to:

- a. Ensure that the _____ County District Court is prepared to respond to emergencies, recover from them, and mitigate against their impacts.
- b. Ensure that the _____ County District Court is prepared to provide critical services in an environment that is threatened, diminished, or incapacitated.

The objective of this COOP is to ensure that a viable capability exists to continue **mission essential functions** across a wide range of potential emergencies, specifically when the primary facility is either threatened or inaccessible requiring relocation to an **alternate facility**.

I-2 APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

- a. This document is applicable to the District Courts and the State Court Administrator.
- b. Support from state agencies and local governments will be coordinated primarily through the District Court Judge and the Clerk of the District Court as described below.

I-3 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A viable COOP must be maintained at a high-level of readiness. A viable COOP must also:

- 1 Be capable of implementation both with and without warning;
- 2 Be operational no later than three hours after activation;
- 3 Provide guidance regarding sustaining operations for up to 30 days; and
- 4 Take maximum advantage of existing State or Federal and local government infrastructures.

SECTION II: PLAN ELEMENTS

II-1 COOP EXECUTION

Emergencies, or potential emergencies, may affect the ability of the _____ County District Court to perform its mission essential functions from any or all primary court facilities in counties included in the plan. The following are scenarios that could mandate the activation of the District Court COOP.

- Any primary court facility in _____ County is closed to normal business activities as a result of an event or credible threats of an event that would preclude access or use of the court facility and the surrounding area.
- Any city in _____ County is closed to normal business activities as a result of a widespread utility failure, natural disaster, significant hazardous material incident, civil disturbance, or terrorist or military attacks. Under this scenario there could be uncertainty regarding whether additional events such as secondary explosions, or cascading utility failures could occur.

II-3 MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

It is important to establish a set of mission essential functions before an emergency. Any function that is essential and can not be deferred for a 30 day period should be included as a mission essential function. Any function not deemed mission essential must be deferred until additional personnel and resources become available.

A template is provided as Appendix B to assist with the development of mission essential functions.

For courts with a staff of five or more it is encouraged to delegate functions to staff people. It is also important that the staff is trained on the COOP if the Judge and Clerk responsible for implementing and executing the COOP are unavailable.

II-4 ALTERNATE FACILITIES

It is important to predetermine viable alternate facilities before an emergency to ensure staff can relocate if necessary. Disasters can be local in nature or affect large geographical areas. Selecting two sites, one near the court and one farther away, is optimal.

Factors to consider when choosing an alternate facility include the availability of parking, telephone line access, internet access, and handicap accessibility, and the security of the facility. Agreements regarding the use of the alternate facilities should be executed prior to an emergency event with local emergency agency and any other appropriate organization.

A template is provided as Appendix C to assist in the development of alternate facilities.

II-5 DIRECTORIES

Appropriate contact information should be established prior to the outset of an emergency event. Two templates, an agency directory and an employee directory are provided as Appendix D and E, respectfully to assist in the development of these directories.

II-6 COMMUNICATIONS

The primary individual to assimilate and disseminate information for _____ County District Court is _____. _____ will serve as the backup person to assimilate and disseminate information. The following steps are in the assimilation and dissemination for the court are:

- 1 Assimilation of information and situation by the Judge and Clerk of the District Court.
- 2 Notification of the State Court Administrator's office.
- 3 Notification of the Presiding Judge for the judicial district of the District Courts.
- 4 Notification of local media including press, radio, television of situation.

APPENDIX A

_____ County District Court Emergency Management Group

Instructions: List in the table below all relevant stakeholders necessary for the development of **local policies** for preparing, responding and recovering from emergencies. Add or delete columns and rows as needed.

		Contact Information	
		Phone Numbers	Email
District Court Judge		Work: Home: Cell:	
Clerk of the District Court		Work: Home: Cell:	
Court Administrator	Corey Steel Amy Prenda	(402) 471-3182 (402) 471-2921	corey.steel@nebraska.gov amy.prenda@nebraska.gov
Presiding Judge		Work: Home: Cell:	
Deputy Court Administrator - IT	Jennifer Rasmussen	(402) 471-3049	jennifer.rasmussen@nebraska.gov
Supreme Court IT Help Desk		(402) 471-2423	NSC.IT@nebraska.gov

Appendix B

Mission Essential Functions and _____ County District Court Emergency Management Team

Instructions: Mission essential functions for your court must be determined and prioritized. The performance of highest priority items will need to be resumed as quickly as possible and should be grouped under item 1 below. The template allows for both a second tier of items grouped under item 2 and a third tier under item 3. If you need more than three groupings, additional groupings can be added. Regardless of the number of groupings, all court functions must be resumed within one month of the disruption. Also, spaces are provided to list the CEMT members assigned to perform the mission essential functions if the COOP is activated.

1 - Functions to be Performed on Day One of Disruption		
Mission Essential Functions	CEMT Members	CEMT Backup Members
Assess Damage to the Court Facility		
Determine if the court will be closed		
Notify local media of Closing		
Communicate situation to employees		
Contact the State Court Administrator		
Contact the Presiding Judge		
Contact Local Law Enforcement		
Additional actions To Be Determined		
<i>(Include as many additional rows as necessary)</i>		
<p>Note: After one day of emergency operations either normal operation must be reinstated or emergency operations must ensure the functions listed in 2, below are performed.</p>		

**2 - Functions to be Performed Given a Disruption Greater than One Day
but Less than One Week**

Mission Essential Functions	CEMT Members	CEMT Backup Members
Determine Staff requirements and court schedule.		
Contact the Telephone Company and Internet Service provider to determine outages.		
Contact local bar members and distribute information regarding the reconstitution of the court.		
Begin acquiring equipment necessary for the court to function.		
Find alternative Court location.		
Find alternative Clerk of the District Court's Office location.		
Begin file reconstruction/ transportation/ safeguarding.		
Additional actions To Be Determined		
<i>(Include as many additional rows as necessary)</i>		
<p>Note: All functions listed in 1, above must continue to be performed. After one week of emergency operations either normal operation must be reinstated or emergency operations must ensure the functions listed in 3, below are performed.</p>		

3 - Functions to be Performed Given a Disruption Greater than <u>One Week</u> but Less than <u>One Month</u>		
Mission Essential Functions	CEMT Members	CEMT Backup Members
Find alternative Court location.		
Find alternative Clerk of the District Court's Office location.		
Gather needed operating equipment for deployment to alternative working locations including but not limited to cell phones, PC's, laptops, printers and appropriate software.		
Obtain Chief Justice Order to suspend Court operations (if necessary).		
Office Supplies, Copiers, Scanners, Fax Machines.		
Determine schedule of court and prioritize hearing schedule based on capacity.		
Determine staffing needs and contact Presiding Judge and Court Administrator for acquiring more staff.		
Additional actions To Be Determined.		
<i>(Include as many additional rows as necessary)</i>		
Note: All functions listed in 1, above must continue to be performed. After one week of emergency operations either normal operations must be reinstated or emergency operations must ensure the functions listed in 3, are performed.		

APPENDIX C

Alternate Facilities

Instructions: Both a primary alternate facility and a secondary alternate facility must be named for each current facility in your district/circuit. If you have more or less than five current facilities you should add or delete rows in this table as necessary. For each current facility, the fields in italics are required.

Current Facility	Primary Alternate Facility	Secondary Alternate Facility
<u> </u> <i>District Court</i>	<i>Facility Name</i> <i>Facility Address:</i> Driving Directions: Facility Contact (if applicable): Phone Number(s): Additional Information:	<i>Facility Name</i> <i>Facility Address:</i> Driving Directions: Facility Contact (if applicable): Phone Number(s): Additional Information:

APPENDIX D

Agency Directory

Instructions: The template below can be used to develop detailed contact information for all appropriate emergency agencies. Please add or delete rows as needed.

Agency Directory	
Nebraska State Patrol	(402) 471-4545
_____ County Sheriff	
City Police - _____	
Medical -	
Fire and Rescue	
American Red Cross	1-800-733-2767
_____ County Emergency Management Office	
Nebraska State Emergency Management Office	(402) 471-7421
Federal Emergency Management Agency:	<u>1-800-621-FEMA (3362)</u>
Nebraska Fire Marshal	(402) 471-2027
Lt Governor (Homeland Security)	(402) 471-2256
Nebraska.gov	(402)-471-6582
State Court Administrator	(402)-471-3730

