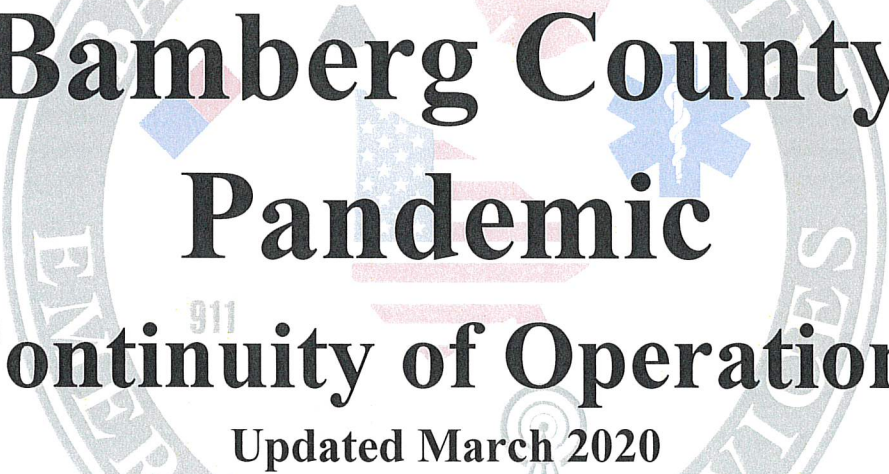


Bamberg County Emergency Services
Pandemic Continuity of Operations

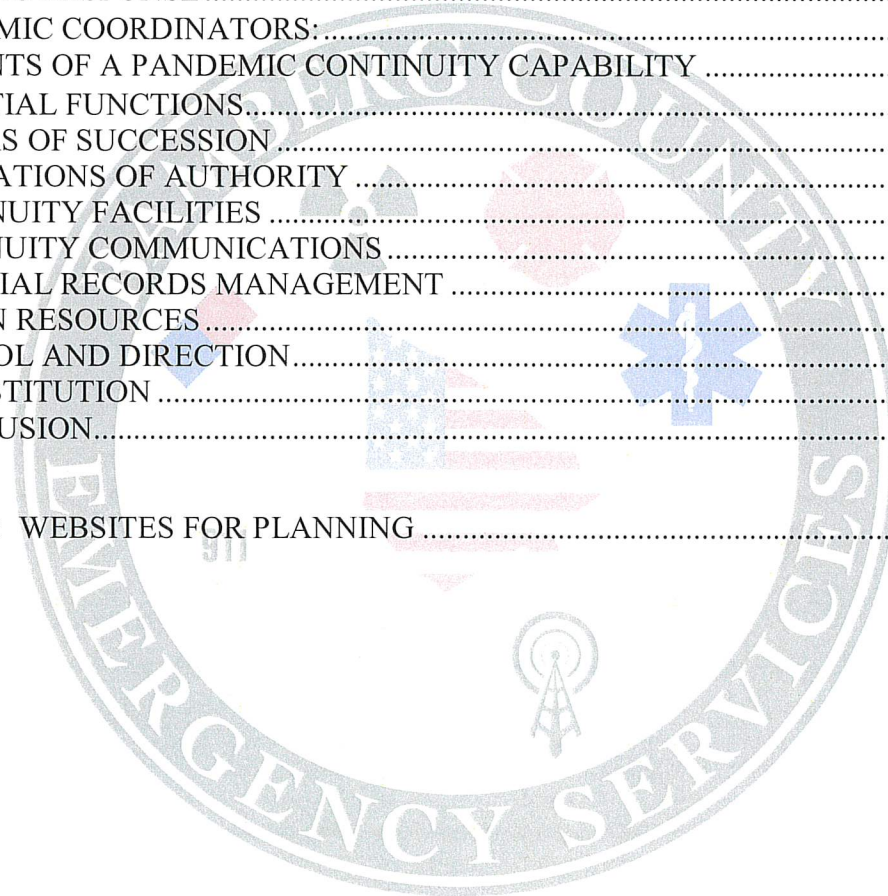
A large, light gray watermark of the Bamberg County Emergency Services logo is centered on the page. The logo is circular with the text "BAMBERG COUNTY" at the top and "EMERGENCY SERVICES" at the bottom. Inside the circle, there is a stylized American flag, a radiation symbol, a red fire hydrant, and a blue Star of Life. The number "911" is also visible within the logo.

Bamberg County Pandemic Continuity of Operations

Updated March 2020

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I. INTRODUCTION

Organizations across the Nation perform essential functions and services that may be adversely affected in the event of a pandemic situation. In such events, departments should have continuity plans to assist in the continuance of their essential functions, which is vital to a department's ability to remain a viable entity during times of pandemic. It is important for departments in Bamberg County to ensure it can carry out its essential functions and services. While departments may be forced to suspend some operations due to the severity of a pandemic outbreak, an effective Continuity of Operations Plan can assist a department in its efforts to remain operational and strengthen the ability to resume operations.

II. PURPOSE

This plan provides guidance to Bamberg County and serves as the plan for maintaining essential functions and services during a pandemic. This guidance neither replaces nor supersedes current, approved Bamberg County plan; rather it supplements it, bridging the gap between the traditional, all-hazards continuity planning and the specialized continuity planning required for a pandemic by addressing additional considerations, challenges, and elements specific to the dynamic nature of a pandemic. This guidance stresses essential functions need to be maintained during a pandemic outbreak.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Bamberg County will monitor the severity of the pandemic. The Pandemic Continuity Plan will be implemented as needed to support the continued performance of essential functions. This plan is to be read in conjunction with the Bamberg County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), as appropriate. It supplements the EOP plan by addressing considerations and elements specific to pandemic events and emerging infectious diseases.

IV. CONTINUITY PLANNING

All department heads will be informed regarding protective actions as needed. Internal and public messaging and communications during a pandemic situation will be conducted by Bamberg County Emergency Services. Guidance and instructions on pandemic control measures will be provided by Bamberg County Emergency Services, Center for Disease Control, and SC DHEC.

Within the workplace, social distancing will be encouraged. These measures could be modifying the frequency and type of face-to-face employee encounters, establishing flexible work hours or worksite flexibility, promoting social distancing between employees and customers to maintain three-foot spatial separation between individuals, and implementing strategies that request and enable employees with illness to stay home at the first sign of symptoms.

Department heads are encouraged to communicate with their employees. The messages should follow the Bamberg County Administrators message and should echo the same themes. Regular

contact is important to keep employees informed about developments in the situation and with Bamberg County's response and impacts on the County's daily operations.

Emergency Services will work with County department heads to share methods to measure, monitor, and adjust actions to changing conditions and improved protection strategies. Each department will in conjunction with emergency management:

- Develop formal workplace protection strategy, which should include metrics for assessing worker conformance and workplace cleanliness.
- Monitor protection methods.
- Report any changes implemented concerning protection measures to emergency management.
- Identify potentially needed material and equipment.
- Ensure personnel have access to needed cleaning supplies.

An assessment will be done by each department head to identify or review key function(s), number of employees, and any potential gaps to perform the department's key function(s). This information will be communicated with emergency management.

V. PANDEMIC PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

A. NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PANDEMIC IMPLEMENTATION ASSUMPTIONS

- Susceptibility to the pandemic virus will be universal.
- The clinical disease attack rate will likely be 30 percent or higher in the overall population during the pandemic. Illness rates will be higher among school-aged children, the elderly, and individuals with compromised immune systems.
- Some persons will become infected but not develop clinically significant symptoms. Asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic individuals can transmit infection and develop immunity to subsequent infection.
- While the number of patients seeking medical care cannot be predicted with certainty, in previous pandemic about half of those who become ill sought care.
- Rates of serious illness, hospitalization, and deaths will depend on the specific pandemic virus.
- Rates of absenteeism will depend on the severity of the pandemic. In a severe pandemic, absenteeism attributable to illness, the need to care for ill family members, and fear of infection may reach **40 percent**.
- On average, infected persons will transmit infection to approximately two other people.

- A pandemic outbreak in any given community will last about six to eight weeks for each wave of the pandemic.
- Multiple waves of illness can occur with each wave lasting two-three months. Historically, the largest waves have occurred in the fall and winter, but the seasonality of a pandemic cannot be predicted with certainty.

B. COUNTY ASSUMPTIONS

- Department heads will be provided with guidance and/or direction by Federal, State, and local government regarding current pandemic status.
- Department heads should have plans and procedures to assist in the ability to remain operational during a pandemic. Plans and procedures may include social distancing protocols, personal protection equipment (PPE), and temporary suspension of some nonessential functions.
- Bamberg County has an Emergency Operations Plan. Each County Department should have or develop a Continuity of Operations Implementation Strategy.
- Bamberg County will review its continuity communications programs to ensure they are fully capable of supporting pandemic giving full consideration to supporting social distancing operations, including telework and other virtual office options.
- Bamberg County-controlled buildings will be accessible, but entry may be limited.
- Leave policy will need to be reviewed concerning sick leave, annual leave, and paid administrative leave.
- Additional funding will need to be concerned because of potential increased costs related to the pandemic situation.

VI. PANDEMIC RESPONSE

A. PANDEMIC COORDINATORS:

Bamberg County Emergency Services will serve as the Pandemic Coordinator and will coordinate with key stakeholders. Department heads serve as the point of contact for their departments for information updates and sharing. Bamberg County EOC will serve as the coordination location if needed. A virtual EOC would also be reviewed as a potential alternate if needed.

Bamberg County's key stakeholders will be:

1. Bamberg County Administrator;
2. Bamberg County Emergency Services Director;
3. Facilities Director;
4. Human Resources Director;

5. Sheriff or designee;
6. EMS Director;
7. Fire Coordinator;
8. County Corner;

VII. ELEMENTS OF A PANDEMIC CONTINUITY CAPABILITY

A. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Given the uncertainty of pandemic situations, department heads will develop or review the processes involved in carrying out essential functions to develop plans to continue operations during a pandemic situation.

B. ORDERS OF SUCCESSION

County ordinance has identified key County orders of succession. Each department head is responsible for identifying their department's order of succession.

C. DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

County ordinances and policies will be followed. If ordinances or policies need to be superseded, a County State of Emergency will be voted on by the Bamberg County Council.

D. CONTINUITY FACILITIES

Each department head is encouraged to identify an alternate facility location for their department. If an alternate facility is unknown, the department head will identify the specific space requirements and other needs. The alternate facility or specific space requirements will be provided to emergency management.

E. CONTINUITY COMMUNICATIONS

Bamberg County will develop pandemic risk communications procedures for communicating with all internal and external stakeholders using normal communication channels unless they are compromised. Department heads will be responsible for maintaining and updating current contact information for their employees, which will be share with emergency management as requested.

F. ESSENTIAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Bamberg County shall identify, protect, and ensure the ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information systems needed to support essential functions during a pandemic situation. Bamberg County has identified systems, databases, and files that are needed to ensure essential functions remain operational.

G. HUMAN RESOURCES

Although a pandemic situation may not directly affect the physical infrastructure of a department, a pandemic will ultimately threaten all operations by its impact on the department's human resources. The health threat to personnel is the primary threat to maintaining essential functions and services during a pandemic situation.

I. CONTROL AND DIRECTION

Pandemic situations will occur at different times, have different durations, and may differ in severity. It is important for each department to identify the process of transferring operational control of one or more essential functions to a pre-determined alternate department, which could be another County's department.

J. RECONSTITUTION

Reconstitution is the process when a department has regained the capability and physical resources necessary to return to normal operations. The objective during reconstitution is to effectively manage, control, and efficiently return to normal operations. Each department in Bamberg County should develop reconstitution plans and procedures, which should consider returning with limited staffing.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Bamberg County essential functions and services during a pandemic situation requires additional considerations. Unlike other hazards, a pandemic situation may or may not directly affect facilities. However, a pandemic situation threatens a department's human resources by removing employees for an extended period of time. Each department will have a role in ensuring that County Government essential functions are maintained.

APPENDIX 1: WEBSITES FOR PLANNING

- <http://www.opm.gov/pandemic/index.asp> - Links to policies on leave, pay, hiring, alternative work arrangements and other critical issues related to a pandemic.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>
- <https://scdhec.gov/health/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- <https://scemd.org/>
- <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>
- SCDHEC - <https://www.scdhec.gov/health/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- John Hopkins Center Global Tracker - <https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>
- CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

