



University of Houston Clear Lake

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Version 24202

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RECORD OF CHANGE

Date	Page/Section	Description of Change	Entered By
7/21/2022	Plan	Initial Draft of document	NYV

RECORD OF REVIEW

Date(s)	Version	Reviewed By

APPROVALS

The University of Houston-Clear Lake Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is hereby approved. Version 22352 of the EMP supersedes all previous versions of this document.

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2022 COOP Plan

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

1.0 Development

The COOP was developed by the Office of Emergency Management using the Continuity Planning Crosswalk and in coordination with:

- Academic and Students Affairs
- Administration and Finance
- Employment Services & Operations
- Information Technology
- Facilities Management
- UHCL Police Department
- Risk Management
- Environmental Health & Safety
- Communications

The President of the University will have final approval of the plan and any substantial changes following the annual review.

1.1 Maintenance

The COOP will be reviewed each year and updated or revised as appropriate. The Director of Emergency Management will lead the review and revision process. Units within the organization having roles and responsibilities established by this plan are expected to alert the Director of Emergency Management of any changes concerning those roles/responsibilities that could substantively impact the COOP.

In compliance with Section 412 of the Texas Labor Code, State Office of Risk Management (SORM) will review continuity plans and provide guidelines and models (including Continuity Planning Crosswalk) to state agencies. As necessary, the SORM will publish additional rules in the Texas Administrative Code as required to implement its continuity responsibilities. The SORM review and any additional published rules may result in changes to the COOP.

Additional interim revisions will be made when:

- A change occurs with a UHCL site or facility configuration that materially alters the information contained in the plan or materially affects the implementation of the plan
- A change occurs with UHCL policies, procedures, or departmental structure that alters the information in the plan or execution of the plan
- There are lessons learned and best practices identified from exercises and real-world events that should be incorporated
- There are changes in response resources, structure, and/or policies of the agencies and

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- organizations, public or private, with which inter-local agreements exist
- New laws, regulations, or directives are implemented that affect the contents or implementation of the plan

1.2 Distribution

Copies of this plan and its appendices will be electronically distributed in compliance with Texas Education Code Subchapter E, Sec. 51.217, Subsection (f) to those campus leadership, departments and organizations tasked in this document.

Due to the sensitive nature of continuity plans and supporting documents, the COOP will be labeled *"For Official Use Only."* Section 552.101 of the Texas Government Code exempts information from public disclosure if considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision. Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code provides that certain information, including information relating to risk or vulnerability assessments, critical infrastructure, and security systems, is confidential in specific circumstances.

2.0 PURPOSE

The UHCL must ensure operations are performed efficiently with minimal disruption during the response to and recovery from any incident, disaster or emergency, regardless of the nature, origin, or complexity. An *all-hazards* approach relies on effective contingency planning that will minimize the impact of an emergency situation on the University's mission, personnel, and facilities.

The UHCL Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a roadmap for implementing and managing the Continuity Program in supporting the resilience of critical business functions, recovery and restoration of business functions that fail, and contingency actions that establish a readiness to cope with disasters, incidents or emergencies. The COOP will be implemented to ensure the continuation or rapid resumption of the essential functions during a continuity event.

The continuity plan ensures that the University of Houston-Clear Lake:

- Can implement the continuity plan with and without advance warning
- Identifies critical infrastructure that must be robust/resilient to support the recovery of other essential functions
- Can restore urgent or short-term essential functions within 12 hours after activation of the continuity plan
- Can reinstate academic class within two weeks of the disruption either through traditional or alternative methods/locations
- Can maintain alternate operations for up to 30 days
- Includes regularly scheduled testing, training, and exercising of University personnel, equipment, systems, processes, and procedures used to support the University during a continuity event
- Supports the location of alternate facilities in areas that enhance the ability to initiate, maintain continuity of operations

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- Supports the identification and documentation of temporary operating procedures which enable the performance of essential functions
- Promotes the development, maintenance, and annual review of division/department continuity capabilities

3.0 SCOPE

This plan applies to the functions, operations and resources necessary to continue UHCL's essential functions in the event normal operations at the University are disrupted or threatened with disruption. This plan applies to all University personnel and students since there may be situation(s) that call for activation of individual division, department, or college continuity plans, but not the continuity plan for the University. All personnel should be familiar with continuity policies and procedures as well as their respective continuity roles and responsibilities.

This plan covers all facilities, systems, vehicles, and buildings operated or maintained by UHCL. This plan supports the performance of essential functions and the maintenance or restoration of critical infrastructure from alternate locations due to a facility becoming unusable, provides continuity of leadership and decision making at UHCL if senior administration is unavailable.

This plan does *not* apply to temporary service disruptions, such as minor IT systems or power outages and any other scenarios where essential functions can be quickly restored.

4.0 SITUATION OVERVIEW

UHCL is subject to natural, technological, and human caused hazards that may require activation of the Continuity of Operations Plan. Some emergencies may provide an advanced warning (hurricanes), while others will be immediate. The UHCL Emergency Management Plan contains a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) of major emergencies or disasters that are most likely to occur and affect the University.

5.0 ASSUMPTIONS

Continuity planning requires both a commonly accepted set of assumed operational conditions and an honest, reasonable assessment of the threats faced by the entity/organization. Collectively these constitute the planning assumptions, and the standard practice is to plan with the assumption that a disaster or catastrophic incident will one day occur.

This Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is based on the following assumptions:

- Threat or damage to critical infrastructure on campus and to the surrounding communities/jurisdictions may result in limited resources such as fuel, utilities, telecommunication, information systems, financial services, public health services, security services, and transportation for an extended period resulting in a disruption of UHCL essential functions.
- Personnel and other resources from the University of Houston System outside the affected zone will be made available if required to continue essential operations.

- Emergencies and threatening events will differ in order of priority or impact.
- UHCL Emergency Relocation Site (ERS) would not be adversely impacted by the crisis creating a continuity event for UHCL.

- When a continuity event is declared, implementing the COOP will ensure the continuity of minimal essential UHCL operations with an incremented return of critical functions during the crisis.
- Essential function prioritization will be flexible to fit the circumstances of each continuity event.
- There will be a sufficient number of available administrators with adequate supporting personnel to continue the essential functions of the University.
- Recovery of a critical subset of the University's functions and application systems will occur and allow essential functions to continue.
- Colleges, divisions, departments, and other areas completing a Business Continuity Planning Template will report their dependencies and the business processes needed to maintain business operations for their departments. Interdependent processes between departments can be indicated within the template. The process of Business Impact Analysis (BIA) for each department enhances recognition of possible disruptions which may occur during a continuity event. Each area/department will complete a continuity plan, which will in turn be utilized to create college/division plans, resulting in a comprehensive MEF assessment tool for the Department of Emergency Management needed for continuity events affecting the campus.
- A disaster may require students, faculty, staff and the public to function with limited support services and some degradation of services, until a full recovery is made.
- The computer systems at UHCL are backed up regularly and access to vital systems and records will be available to the ERS.
- In the event of a disaster, the University will work in cooperation with the City of Houston, The City of Pasadena, Harris County, Brazoria County, and other authorities having jurisdiction.

An emergency condition may require moving the UHCL's Emergency Relocation Group (ERG) members to the continuity facility known as an Emergency Relocation Site (ERS) at one of the University of Houston System component campuses which have agreed to the following:

- The University of Houston includes student classrooms, faculty facilities, advising space, computing resources, a library, and large public meeting spaces.
- The University of Houston-Downtown includes student classrooms, faculty facilities, advising space, computing resources, a library, and large public meeting spaces.
- The University of Houston-Victoria includes student classrooms, faculty facilities, advising space, computing resources, a library, and large public meeting spaces.
- UHCL operates teaching centers in partnership with the Collage of the Mainland and Lone Star Collage. These facilities offer classroom space, computer labs, testing center, faculty offices, and student support/advising staff.
- The University of Houston System campuses will support ERG members and the continuation of information systems within 12 hours or less from the time the Continuity of Operations Plan is activated for the potential of up to 30-days or until normal operations can be resumed. Each facility will review their plans and facilities annually to ensure continuity requirements are met.

- If UHCL is unable to deploy an ERG to an ERS due to loss of personnel, UHCL will devolve to one of the University of Houston System campuses.

6.0 OBJECTIVES

The University of Houston-Clear Lake continuity objectives are:

- Reducing the loss of life and minimizing property damage and loss
- Executing an effective order of succession with accompanying authorities in the event a disruption renders the leadership of UHCL unable or unavailable to perform their responsibilities and authorities
- Reducing and mitigating disruptions to operations
- Ensuring that Mission Essential Functions (MEF) can be performed under all conditions
- Verifying possible Emergency Relocation Sites (ERS) and availability
- Protecting personnel, facilities, equipment, records and other assets critical to the performance of essential functions in the event of a disruption
- Achieving timely and orderly recovery of reconstitution from an emergency
- Confirming and validating continuity readiness through robust Training and Exercise program.

7.0 SECURITY AND PRIVACY STATEMENT

This document is for “*Official Use Only*” as it may contain information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision. Portions of the Plan may contain information that raises personal privacy or other concerns, and those portions may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (see United States Code 552.41 Code of Federal Regulations Part 105-60). This plan is to be controlled, stored, handled, transmitted, distributed, and disposed of in accordance with University security policies and is not to be released without prior approval of the President or designee, to the public or other personnel who do not have a valid “need to know.”

Disclosure of certain information in this Plan could endanger the privacy and safety of employees, compromise the security of essential equipment, services, and systems of UHCL or otherwise impair its ability to carry out essential functions. Distribution of the UHCL Continuity of Operations Plan in whole or in part will be limited to personnel who need to know the information in order to successfully implement the plan.

8.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The Continuity of Operations Plan provides overall guidance to ensure continuity of services be maintained, when possible, for all University of Houston-Clear Lake facilities, colleges, and departments before, during and after an emergency/incident. The overarching goal is to identify all university Mission Essential Functions (MEF), ensure that those functions can be maintained throughout a continuity event with minimal disruption, and return to normal operations.

There are four phases in Continuity of Operations:



Phase I – Readiness and Preparedness: Activities to ensure personnel can continue essential functions.

Phase II – Activation and Relocation: Activation of the COOP plans, procedures and schedules to transfer activities, personnel, records and equipment to alternate facilities within 12 hours of activation and have little disruption of operations.

Phase III – Continuity of Operations: Initial arrival process at the continuity site and operational procedures for continuation of essential functions.

Phase IV – Reconstitution Operations: Process to return to normal operations.

8.1 Phase I: Readiness and Preparedness

The University of Houston-Clear Lake will participate in readiness and preparedness activities to ensure personnel can continue essential functions in an all-hazard/threat environment. UHCL readiness activities are divided into two key areas: Organizational Readiness and Preparedness and Personnel Readiness and Preparedness.

Organization Readiness and Preparedness

The University applies the UHCL Emergency Management Plan (EMP) to ensure readiness and preparedness. The EMP provides a general framework for all phases of emergency management activities, levels of readiness, policies, procedures and emergency notifications.

Personnel Readiness and Preparedness

All personnel should be prepared for a continuity event. Colleges, divisions, and departments must complete a Business Continuity Planning Template. The information contained in the template will be updated annually no later than 30 days prior to the COOP annual review. University personnel

will prepare for a continuity event by participating in training and exercises related to the EMP and COOP, as well as plan in advance to secure personal and work related resources necessary to suddenly relocate operations to another site.

8.2 Phase II: Activation and Relocation (0-12 hours)

Activation of the plan is a scenario driven process that allows flexible and scalable responses to any hazard/threat that could disrupt operations with or without warning and during work or non-work hours. Plan activation is not required for all emergencies or disruptions, since other actions may be more appropriate. Should circumstances require initiation of the plan, operational capability at the continuity site should occur within 12 hours of plan activation to facilitate the continuation of essential functions.

Declaration of Emergency

The University's Readiness and Response Levels are outlined in the University of Houston- Clear Lake's Emergency Management Plan (EMP). The university Senior Leadership Team will determine the level of Readiness and Response by considering certain criteria. Details on this process and declaration of a campus emergency are found in the EMP.

Activation of the University of Houston-Clear Lake Continuity of Operations Plan

Only the President or his/her designee has the authority to activate the COOP. The members of the EMB and/or their designees will make recommendations to the President on activation tailored for the situation, based on projected or actual impact and severity. This plan may be activated with or without advanced notice during duty and non-duty hours. The following matrix may be useful in the decision making process.

Decision Matrix for Continuity Plan Implementation		
	Duty Hours	Non-Duty Hours
Events with warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the threat aimed at the facility or surrounding area? • Is the threat aimed at organization personnel? • Are employees unsafe remaining in the facility and/or area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the threat aimed at the facility or surrounding area? • Is the threat aimed at organization personnel? • Who should be notified of the threat? • Is it safe for employees to return to work the next day?
Events without warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the facility affected? • Are personnel affected? • Have personnel safely evacuated or are they sheltering-in-place? • What are instructions from first responders? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the facility affected? • What are instructions from first responders? • How soon must the organization be operational?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How soon must the organization be operational? 	
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As the decision authority, the President or his/her designee will be kept informed of the threat environment using all accessible means in order to evaluate all available information relating to:

- Direction and guidance from higher authorities
- Health and safety of personnel
- The ability to execute essential functions
- Changes in readiness or advisory levels
- Intelligence reports
- The potential or actual effects on communication systems, information systems, office facilities and other vital equipment
- The expected duration of the emergency situation

Emergency Notifications

In the event normal operations are interrupted or if an incident appears imminent, UHCL will take steps to communicate the University's operating status with students, staff, faculty, Office of the UHS Chancellor, response partners, interdependent entities and the community regarding continuity activation or to reconstitute following an event. All UHCL personnel, both continuity and non-deployed, will be given instructions and guidance regarding the continuity activation and relocation.

The University notification system has many types of publication modes. The decision to use all or a selection of the modes will be based on the classification of the message to be issued. Combining standardized descriptions for urgency, severity and certainty with society dominant "warning" labels, creates quick message classification for the sender and fast label recognition by the recipient.

Observing two primary features of Incident Command, common terminology and consistent messaging, UHCL notifications incorporates values from the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for definitions and style of labeling. Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) is a simple but general format for exchanging all-hazard emergency alerts and public warnings over many different communication systems for interoperability.

More detailed information regarding the modes of publication used to communicate between senior leadership members only, the University to staff communications, the community and/or the media may be found in the EMP Emergency Notifications Annex. Web based modes can be accessed off-site and are therefore available for use at continuity locations provided that internet is available.

Relocation Process

Following activation of the plan and notification of personnel, UHCL will move personnel and vital records to a continuity facility to perform essential functions and other continuity tasks. A listing of potential Emergency Relocation Sites (ERS) is provided in Annex D of this document and aerial maps for the ERS can be found via web links listed.

- Emergency procedures during duty hours with or without warning:
 - Continuity personnel will depart to their designated continuity facility from the primary operating facility or their current location using approved transportation.
 - Individuals who are not continuity personnel will receive instructions. In most circumstances, they will be directed to proceed home or to other facilities to wait for further instructions.
 - At the time of notification, information will be provided on routes to use during departure from the primary facility, if available, or other safety precautions.
- Emergency procedures during non-duty hours with or without warning:
 - Continuity personnel will depart to his/her assigned continuity facility from his/her current location using approved transportation.
 - Individuals who are not continuity personnel will remain at his or her residence to wait for further instructions *unless* doing so presents a safety hazard.

Personnel not identified as continuity staff may be required to replace or augment the identified continuity personnel during activation and should remain available as required. These activities will be coordinated within the department as appropriate.

An activation of the COOP may require procurement of necessary personnel, equipment and supplies that are not already in place for continuity operations on an emergency basis. The processes for procurement will not change unless directed by the President or his/her designee(s).

8.3 Phase III: Continuity Operations

Upon activation of the COOP, the University will continue to operate at its primary operating facility until ordered to cease operations by the President of University of Houston-Clear Lake or an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) as given by the State of Texas. Should operations be ceased at the primary facility, essential functions will transfer to a continuity facility and become operational within the minimal acceptable period for Mission Essential Function (MEF) interruption or within 12 hours. Continuity of operations includes:

- Reception, in-processing and accounting for all personnel
- Transition of responsibilities to the Emergency Relocation Group (ERG)
- Guidance for non-deployed personnel
- Identification of replacement personnel
- Execution of MEF at the continuity facility
- Activation of processes to acquire resources needed to continue essential functions and sustain operations
- Redeployment plans for the return to the primary facility

8.4 Phase IV: Reconstitution

During continuity operations, UHCL Facilities Management will assess the status of the facilities affected by the event. Upon obtaining the status of the facility, UHCL will determine how much time is needed to repair the affected facility and/or acquire a new facility. After replacement facilities are identified and acquired, personnel will be notified through various means of continuity communications. The reconstitution process will begin when the President, or his/her designee, ascertains that the emergency situation has ended and is unlikely to reoccur. Once this determination has been made, one or a combination of the following options may be implemented:

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- Continue to operate from the continuity facility
- Reconstitute the UHCL primary operating facility and begin orderly return to the facility
- Begin to establish a reconstituted UHCL in some other facility in the metro area or at another designated location

Personnel, equipment, and documents will return to the normal operating facility or move to another temporary or permanent primary operating facility upon verification that the required capabilities are available and operational and all essential functions can be accomplished. The phase-down and return of personnel, functions and equipment will follow a priority-based plan and schedule established by the Emergency Management Board (EMB).

Information Technology (IT) will identify any records affected by the incident and will effectively transition or recover vital records and databases, as well as other records that have not been designated as vital records. The critical systems recovery process is found in the University of Houston-Clear Lake Office of Information Technology.

Employment Services and Operations (ESO) will be responsible for developing a process for receiving and processing employee claims during the continuity event, including but not exclusive to, workman's compensation and overtime pay.

The Department of Emergency Management will conduct an After Action Review (AAR) once it is back in the primary operating facility or established in a new operating facility. The Director of Emergency Management is responsible for initiating and completing the AAR. All members of the EMB and/or their designees will have the opportunity to provide input to the AAR. The AAR will study the effectiveness of the continuity plans and procedures, identify areas for improvement, document these in the UHCL Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and then develop a remedial action plan as soon as possible after the reconstitution. The AAR for activation of the COOP may be combined with the AAR for the incident which prompted response and recovery. This will ensure cohesive efforts for improvement in all phases of emergency management and continuity.

8.5 Devolution of Control and Direction

Devolution of Control and Direction is the capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from an agency's primary operating staff and facilities to other agency employees and facilities and to sustain that operational capability for an extended period.

The University of Houston-Clear Lake is prepared to transfer all essential functions and responsibilities to personnel at a different location should emergency events render leadership or staff unavailable to support the execution of essential functions. The University of Houston-Clear Lake will transfer statutory authority and responsibilities of essential functions from the University's primary operating staff and facilities to one or more of the University of Houston System component university campuses' personnel and facilities in order to sustain that operational capability for an extended period.

9.0. COORDINATION WITH UHS COMPONENT UNIVERSITIES, LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

An emergency may require integration and coordination with other component universities of the University of Houston System, the private sector, as well as governmental and non-governmental responding entities in order to promote interoperability, prevent redundancies and conflicting lines of authority. Such collaboration builds relationships and ensures unity of effort. Examples of coordination may include:

- Collaborating to incorporate capabilities of other entities into the organization's continuity planning and exercise activities to the extent possible;
- Coordinating on risk assessments to identify hazards relevant to the organization's mission and location;
- Partnering with these entities to develop continuity plans that are coordinated to the extent possible; Participating in information sharing, training, and exercises, as appropriate;
- Working together to identify interdependencies and ensuring resiliency with critical infrastructure and services at all levels;
- Coordinating continuity resource and security requirements, as appropriate.
- Participating in other coordinating activities, as appropriate.

10.0 CONTINUITY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section provides general information related to the roles and responsibilities in continuity planning, activation and reconstitution. This information may be modified as needed to fit the continuity event to ensure essential functions for the University are maintained. The lists provided are not representative of the entire role an individual or department may have during the planning process of or activation during a continuity event. The continuity roles should be reviewed annually within departments/divisions prior to the annual review of the COOP.

University President

- Provide overall direction of continuity activities for all departments/divisions
- Authorize activation of the UHCL Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Authorize cancellation of classes or a campus closure, if necessary

Emergency Management Board (EMB)

- Determine level of Readiness and Response by considering certain criteria
- Provide recommendations to the President on activation based on projected or actual impact and/or severity
- Develop a priority-based plan and schedule for continuity operations, reconstitution and devolution (if necessary)
- Participate in the After Action Review (AAR), Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and remedial action plan processes

General for All Departments

- Develop, maintain and exercise departmental Business Continuity Plan (BCP) to ensure essential university function can continue during a continuity event
- Provide copies of the department BCP to the Department of Emergency Management by no later than June 30 for electronic filing
- Print a hard copy of the department BCP for emergency readiness
- Store an electronic copy of the department BCP to be accessed via VPN or direct means to a computer via portable hard drive or USB device
- Ensure personnel have been trained and are clear on their roles and responsibilities during a continuity event

University Relations and Advancement

- Provide updates to the campus community during a continuity event
- Develop accurate, accessible and timely information for use in press/media briefings
- Monitor media information for rumor control

Academic Affairs

- Make recommendations for class cancellation to the President during a continuity event
- Distribute and coordinate decisions within academic units
- Coordinate teaching and course content delivery, assessment and grading during a continuity event
- Provide student advising via electronic means or off-site locations
- Protect research assets

Employment Services and Operations

- Ensure payment of employees and processing of benefits via PeopleSoft or other means through University of Houston System (UHS) if PeopleSoft is unavailable for an extended period
- Maintain standard employee reports and implement a process to store the reports off-site
- Process new employees using PeopleSoft and People Admin systems if available. If the systems are not available, coordinate with UHS to use manual processes

Administration and Finance

- Manage financial operations for the University during an emergency and/or continuity event, including procurement, vendor payment, employee reimbursement, asset management, contracts and accounting
- Monitor current continuity event for additional fiscal needs

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Police Department

- Ensure safety and security of campus facilities, students, staff, faculty, and the public
- Protect intellectual property, research, public health and the environment

Information Technology

- Identify, protect and ensure availability of Essential Records
- Supply training on protection of systems and records
- Maintain communication capabilities for UHCL, UHCL Police Dispatch, executive leadership and media relations
- Advise the EMB of hardware, software and virtual requirements for continuity

Facilities Management

- Review contracts for needed recovery efforts and ensure the contracts are up-to-date
- Advise the EMB on the ongoing status of primary facilities and infrastructure during response, recovery and activation of the Emergency Management (EMP) and Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans
- Provide guidance in the planning process of the EMP and COOP

Emergency Management

- Assist in the Business Impact and Business Process Analysis
- Lead the review and revision process of the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Coordinate with colleges, divisions and departments in Business Continuity Plan (BCP) development, maintenance, review, revision and exercising
- Submit a copy of the COOP to the State Office of Risk Management (SORM) annually
- Monitor the incident and advise EMB
- Coordinate Emergency Relocation efforts
- Conduct After Action Review (AAR), Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and remedial action plan processes

11.0 DIRECTION AND CONTROL

During activation of the COOP, the President maintains responsibility for control and direction of the UHCL. Should the President become unavailable or incapacitated, order of succession and delegation of authority documented in the Emergency Management Plan