

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

Lake Charles City Court

800 Bilbo Street

Suite D

Lake Charles City Court



OVERVIEW

This Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan has been developed according to *Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Headquarters Continuity of Operations (COOP) Guidance Document, dated April 2004.*

Questions concerning this guide can be directed to:

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan establishes policy and guidance to ensure the execution of the essential functions for Lake Charles City Court in the event that an emergency threatens or incapacitates operations, and the relocation of selected personnel and functions of the Court is required. Specifically, the plan is designed to:

- Ensure that Lake Charles City Court is prepared to respond to emergencies, recover from them, and mitigate against their impacts.
- Ensure that Lake Charles City Court is prepared to provide critical services in an environment that is threatened, diminished, or incapacitated.

II. INTRODUCTION

The City of Lake Charles has developed plans to protect the citizens in the event of a disaster, civil disturbance, or unusual occurrence. Preparation to manage an event of this nature requires a realistic combination of the efforts of different agencies. Lake Charles City Court will be responsible for all Lake Charles City Court employees.

III. PURPOSE

The following plan will establish leadership guidelines for managing unusual occurrences and the continuity of essential court functions. An unusual event may be natural or man-made and may cause services to be interrupted. This plan is designed to prioritize the continuation, mitigation, and restoration of City Court operations that may be interrupted due to unusual occurrences. The objectives of the plan include:

- Ensure the continuous performance of the Court's essential functions/operations during an emergency;
- Protect essential equipment, records and other assets;
- Reduce or mitigate disruption of operations;
- Identify and designate principals and support staff to be relocated;
- Facilitate decision-making for the execution of the Plan and the subsequent conduct of operations;
- Achieve a timely and orderly recovery from the emergency and resumption of full service to all customers.

IV. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

- This document is applicable to Lake Charles City Court.
- Support from other agencies and local governments as described herein will be coordinated with the responsible office as applicable.

V. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

It is important to establish priorities before an emergency to ensure that the relocated staff can complete the essential functions during an emergency. All designated persons shall ensure that the essential functions can continue or resume as rapidly and efficiently as possible during an emergency relocations. Any task not deemed essential must be deferred until additional personnel and resources become available. All functions of Lake Charles City Court can be deferred until additional personnel and resources become available.

VI. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

The Judges and Judicial Administrator are the authorizing figures in ensuring the Lake Charles City Court COOP plan. Supporting authorities are the Civil Head Clerk and the Violation Head Clerk. Assisting authorities are the Ward 3 Marshal's Office and the Prosecutor Office of the City of Lake Charles.

VII. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

All matters heard by Lake Charles City Court on a daily basis would have to be rescheduled at such a time when adequate resources become available. Some examples of hearings that could be rescheduled under emergency conditions are as follows:

- Traffic Arraignments
- Traffic Trials
- Civil Proceedings
- Civil Trials
- Payments.

A. PHASE I: ACTIVATION AND RELOCATION

Decision Process

The Judicial Administrator with the approval of the Judges is responsible for declaring a state of emergency at the Lake Charles City Court.

Alert, Notification, and Implementation Process

If the situation allows for warning, the Judges and staff may be alerted prior to the activation of the COOP. Information will normally be passed telephonically by the Judicial Administrator, the Civil Clerk, and the Violation Clerk using the *Emergency Calling Directory*. All staff should remain at their office until specific guidance is received. The Judicial Administrator under the direction of the Judges will order the activation of the Lake Charles City Court COOP. The Judicial Administrator will notify the Mayor.

The Judicial Administrator will then contact will then contact the Civil Clerk and the Violations Clerk, who will contact the remaining staff of the emergency.

Leadership

a. Orders of Succession

The Lake Charles City Court notification process as related to COOP activation should allow for a smooth transition of the Judges and essential staff. Notification may be via personal contact, telephone, cell phone, pager, email, radio and TV broadcasts, or a combination thereof.

The Administrative staff will be responsible for the implementation of the COOP. The administrative staff includes the following individuals:

- Judicial Administrator
- Judges Secretary
- Comptroller
- Civil Clerk
- Violation Clerk

Successors
<u>Senior Judge</u> -The Judicial Administrator will contact Senior Judge for authorization to activate COOP.
<u>Alternate Judge</u> -The Judicial Administrator will contact the Alternate Judge in the absence of the Senior Judge or in conjunction with the Senior Judge.
<u>Judicial Administrator</u> -The Judicial Administrator will contact the Administrative staff and relay information pertaining to COOP.
<u>Administrative Staff</u> -The Administrative Staff will assist in contacting employees.
<p>* In the event a person listed here is not available the successor will perform duties.</p>

B. PHASE II: ALTERNATE FACILITY OPERATIONS

In the event Lake Charles City Court becomes inoperable, the governing authority of the City of Lake Charles would be responsible for providing a place to hold Lake Charles City Court hearings when feasible and making all necessary provisions for the conduct of business of the City Court and providing all necessary expenses in connection with its operations.

Mission Critical Systems

Lake Charles City Court is an electronic driven department. Most functions of the court are now managed via computer.

The following tables list those systems that must be maintained. The list is prioritized for restart order in the event of a shut down.

System Name	Current Location	Other Locations
SQL Database	City Court	Back-up tapes Stored Off-Site
FTR Gold Recorders	City Court	Back-up tapes
QuickBooks Accounting Software	City Court	Back-up tapes Stored Off-Site

Vital Files, Records, and Databases

Vital File, Record, or Database	Form of Record (e.g., hardcopy, electronic)	Pre-positioned at Alternate Facility	Hand Carried to Alternate Facility	Backed up at Third Location
SQL Database	Electronic		X	
FTR Gold	Electronic		X	
QuickBooks/Payroll	Electronic		X	
Court Records	Hardcopy			
Employment Records	Hardcopy			

The following table shows sample vital files, records, and databases pertaining to COOP coordination for Lake Charles City Court:

Vital File, Record, or Database	Form of Record (e.g., hardcopy, electronic)	Pre-positioned at Alternate Facility	Hand Carried to Alternate Facility	Backed up at Third Location
COOP Plan	Electronic		X	
Phone Roster	Hardcopy		X	

C. PHASE III: RECONSTITUTION

The Administrative staff will develop reconstitution plans and schedules to ensure an orderly transition of all Lake Charles City Court functions, personnel, equipment, and records from the temporary alternate location to a new restored court facility. City Court Judges will approve the plans and schedules prior to the cessation of operations. Administrative staff of City Court will oversee the reconstitution process.

VIII. COOP PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for developing, editing, and revising this plan is a concerted effort between Lake Charles City Court Judges and the Judicial Administrator.

Responsibility	Position
Update COOP plan annually.	Judges, Judicial Administrator
Update telephone rosters monthly.	Judicial Administrator, Civil Clerk, Violation Clerk
Review status of vital files, records, and databases.	Judicial Administrator, IT Director
Develop and lead COOP training.	Judicial Administrator

IX. LOGISTICS

A. ALTERNATE LOCATION

The primary and secondary locations will be designated by the Judges and Office of the Mayor of the City of Lake Charles.

Alternate facilities should provide:

- (1) Sufficient space and equipment
- (2) Reliable logistical support, services, and infrastructure systems
- (3) Consideration for health, safety, and emotional well-being of personnel
- (4) Interoperable communications
- (5) Computer equipment and software

B. INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS

The Judges will notify media of any changes in the Court's docket. Updates on emergency status will be delivered to the public and City Court employees via radio, TV broadcasts, and the

Web. Arraignments and Trials will be rescheduled when possible by City Court personnel and notification will be sent to all concerned parties or they will be served with notices of their new hearing dates.

X. TEST, TRAINING, AND EXERCISES

Rehearsals will be used when possible to test the elements of this plan quarterly. The purpose of this plan is promoting safety. Elements of this plan may be adjusted to provide a smoother or safer operation.

XI. MULTI-YEAR STRATEGY AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN

Year 1: Development and Implementation of Continuity of Operations Plan.

Year 2: Evaluation of Plan. Drills will be conducted quarterly to ensure that staff is aware of the procedures set forth by COOP. The plan will be evaluated at those times to ensure its effectiveness.

Year 3: Review plan. Renew or rewrite if necessary.

XII. COOP PLAN MAINTENANCE

This plan is subject to frequent changes. The Judicial Administrator is responsible for the review of this plan as well as providing updates for this plan.

Annex A: Authorities and References

Lake Charles City Court Organizational Chart

Annex B: Operational Checklists

- **Emergency Calling Directory**
- **Key Personnel Roster** (*Refer to “Leadership” template on page 4 of COOP*)
- **Emergency Equipment Checklist**

Annex C: Alternate Location/Facility Information

The City of Lake Charles shall provide quarters for Lake Charles City Court and shall also make all necessary provisions for the conduct of the business of the City Court and provide all the necessary expenses in connection with its operation.

Annex D: Maps and Evacuation Routes

Annex E: Definitions and Acronyms