

## **Checklist: Emergency Preparedness for Human Resources**

This checklist includes considerations for HR in planning for emergencies. A multidisciplinary emergency planning team should be established within the organization to include members of the HR department.

### **Employee Safety Training Topics**

- Types of hazards and emergencies.
- Evacuation procedures.
- Shelter-in-place locations.
- Lockdown procedures.
- First aid supplies.
- Automated external defibrillators (AEDs).
- Assistance for employees with disabilities.
- Communication methods.
- Emergency response team members and contact information.
- Staffing expectations—essential employees, offsite work, layoffs.

### **HRIS/Employee Records**

- Maintain electronic records for all employee information.
- Ensure that electronic files are backed up and maintained at an offsite location.
- Confirm offsite access to electronic files for HR and management.

### **Payroll**

- For outsourced payroll, confirm that the payroll processing organization has offsite data storage and a continuity plan should the payroll company's processing location be impacted.
- For in-house payroll, determine how payroll will be processed in the event that the payroll office is not accessible.
- Determine how live checks will be distributed to employees in the event the office is closed.

- Determine how direct deposit will be processed if the bank is impacted by disaster.

### **Benefits**

- Maintain current contact information for all benefit plans and administrators.
- Determine how eligibility data will get to the administrator in the event the HR department is closed.
- Determine how payments will get to vendors for monthly premiums or funding for benefit plans.
- Determine how 401(k) hardship withdrawal requests will be processed.
- Ensure that an EAP service is available for impacted employees (knowing that a local service may be strapped at the time).

### **Communications (Before, During and After Crisis)**

#### *Before:*

- Establish companywide communication systems to keep employees informed, including how to communicate if an area is affected by major power outages.
- Ensure managers maintain a contact list of personal phone numbers and e-mail addresses for department employees, and identify a staff person to be responsible for updating company intranet with critical status updates for employees.
- Require managers to develop a contact process to inform and/or locate department employees in the event of a disaster. Establish a combined organizational plan.

#### *During:*

- Establish who will ensure all employees are located and accounted for and provide emergency response teams with information on missing employees.
- Determine who will contact family members and how, as warranted.
- Determine how to keep key employees informed of operational needs, and who should share relevant information with all employees.

#### *After:*

- Provide employees with appropriate EAP information for counseling or other assistance.

Ensure a process for ongoing communications to keep employees informed of status updates and responsibilities.

### **Recruiting**

- Maintain a backup of the applicant database.
- Determine a means to communicate with applicants to provide status updates.
- Determine an alternate recruiting method if not able to return to the office for a period of time.

### **Compliance/Legal**

- Determine employee pay and benefit obligations should business operations cease.
- Ensure that legal documents in electronic format are properly backed up and paper records are stored in a manner to limit damage and/or loss.
- Maintain current contact information for state and federal agencies in the event that required filings are delayed.