

## Importance of Continuity

Every day, individuals, organizations, communities, and governments provide critical services and perform essential functions upon which neighbors and citizens depend.

### The vision

for continuity is a more resilient Nation through whole community integration of continuity plans and programs to sustain essential functions under all conditions.

Continuity ensures that the whole community plans for sustaining these services and functions when normal operations are disrupted.

Implementation of continuity principles ensures that organizations, communities, and governments are able to support citizens in need. Development and maintenance of continuity capabilities helps build and sustain a more resilient Nation equipped to sustain essential functions, deliver critical services, and supply core capabilities under all conditions.

### Definition of Continuity

**Continuity of operations (COOP)** ensures an individual organization can continue to perform its essential functions, provide essential services, and deliver core capabilities during a disruption to normal operations.

**Continuity of government (COG)** is a coordinated effort within each of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed before, during, and after an emergency or threat. COG is intended to preserve the statutory and constitutional authority of elected officials at all levels of government across the United States.



**Enduring constitutional government (ECG)** is the cooperative effort among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to preserve the constitutional framework under which people are governed.

### Continuity Guiding Principles

**Preparedness and Resilience.** Continuity is an important element of preparedness and an integral part of each core capability across the five mission areas within the National Preparedness System. Continuity planning and operations increases the likelihood that organizations can perform essential functions and deliver core capabilities and essential services.

**Whole Community Engagement.** The Nation cannot be strong if the communities that comprise it are vulnerable to the effects of the threats and hazards that it faces. Whole community is a focus on enabling the participation in national preparedness activities of a wider range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors in order to foster better coordination and working relationships

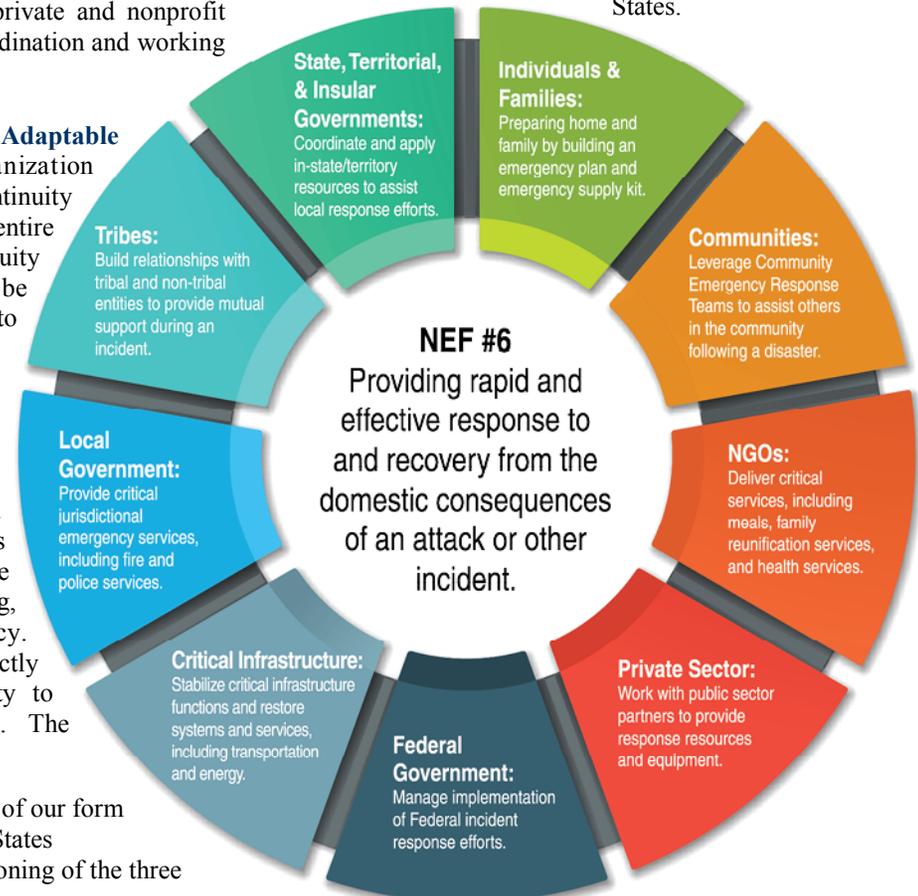
**Scalable, Flexible, and Adaptable Continuity Capabilities.** No organization or entity is the same. A robust continuity program and culture across the entire national spectrum requires continuity programs and capabilities to be scalable, flexible, and adaptable to meet evolving requirements.

### Basis for Continuity

The National Essential Functions (NEFs) are the foundation of all continuity programs and capabilities and are the primary focus of the federal government before, during, and after a catastrophic emergency. The whole community directly contributes to the Nation's ability to continue performance of the NEFs. The eight NEFs are:

1. Ensure the continued functioning of our form of government under the United States Constitution, including the functioning of the three separate branches of government.

2. Provide leadership visible to the Nation and the world and maintain the trust and confidence of the American people.
3. Defend the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and prevent or interdict attacks against the United States or its people, property, or interests.
4. Maintain and foster effective relationships with foreign nations.
5. Protect against threats to the homeland and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the United States or its people, property, or interests.
6. Provide rapid and effective response to and recovery from the domestic consequences of an attack or other incident.
7. Protect and stabilize the Nation's economy and ensure public confidence in its financial systems.
8. Provide for federal government services that address the national health, safety, and welfare needs of the United States.



## Applicability of Continuity Planning

National preparedness and sustainment of essential functions is a shared responsibility of the whole community. Every community and organization, no matter how large or how small, has essential functions that support the continuation and resiliency of the Nation.



This all-inclusive approach focuses efforts and enables a full range of stakeholders to participate in continuity activities and maintain resilient communities. Government resources alone cannot meet all the needs of those affected by disasters. All elements of the community must be activated, engaged, and integrated in order to continue essential functions during any event or incident that may disrupt operations.

Proactive efforts to collaborate and coordinate with federal and non-federal organizations prior to and during events and incidents reduce disruptions to essential functions, core capabilities, and critical services. There are a multitude of existing coordinating structures in which continuity planners should participate to integrate continuity planning, operations, and responsibilities into emergency management, preparedness, and resilience efforts.

## Continuity Guidance Circular

The Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC) serves as a resource for Federal and non-Federal entities to appropriately integrate and coordinate continuity efforts. To promote consistency across the Nation, entities are encouraged to review the CGC and update plans and capabilities, as necessary. This assists in enhancing jurisdictional continuity plans and capabilities and aligning those plans and capabilities with national continuity doctrine, as identified within the CGC. The CGC is found at [www.fema.gov/continuity-guidance-circular](http://www.fema.gov/continuity-guidance-circular).

## Continuity Resource Toolkit

FEMA has developed a supporting Continuity Resource Toolkit that provides examples, tools, and templates for developing and maintaining a continuity capability. In the future, FEMA will continue to build and distribute tools and information to assist federal and non-federal entities develop and maintain a successful continuity program and plan. The Toolkit is found at [www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit](http://www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit).

## Continuity Assessment Tool

To accompany the updated CGC, FEMA NCP has revised the Continuity Assessment Tool (CAT). The CAT provides a tool for organizations to assess their continuity plan and program against the requirements for a viable continuity program and plan as outlined in this document. The CAT should be used on a regular basis as a method for determining whether gaps exist in the agency's continuity program and plan. The CAT is found at [www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit](http://www.fema.gov/continuity-resource-toolkit).

## Additional Information

For more information about continuity, the CGC, or the Continuity Resource Toolkit, please contact [fema-cgc@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-cgc@fema.dhs.gov).



## Whole Community Continuity

## National Continuity Programs



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