



BUSINESS PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

STEPS TO BECOME A HOWARD COUNTY RESILIENT BUSINESS

1. Get Informed

- ☐ [Review the Community Hazard Handbook](#) to understand threats that may impact Howard County
- ☐ Follow Howard County Government and Howard County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) on [Facebook](#) and [X](#)
- ☐ Join the [State of Maryland Private Sector Integration Program](#) for access to free resources

2. Make a Plan

- ☐ [Create a Business Continuity Plan](#) using the fillable template
- ☐ [Develop an Emergency Action Plan](#) for evacuations and drills
- ☐ [Make a Personal Plan](#) to prepare yourself, family, and pets
- ☐ Encourage your employees to develop Personal Plans

3. Build a Kit

- ☐ [Build a Kit for your business](#) using the Disaster Recovery Checklist
- ☐ You can also [reference the checklist on Ready.gov](#) to assist with building a kit

4. Be Involved

- ☐ Attend Howard County's quarterly [Local Emergency Planning Committee \(LEPC\) Meetings](#)
- ☐ Attend Howard County's quarterly [Business Disaster Preparedness Workshops](#) hosted in partnership with the Economic Development Authority
- ☐ Sign up for *Hands-Only CPR* and *Stop the Bleed Training* by emailing outreach@hcdfrs.org or by calling (410) 313-2016
- ☐ Contact OEM's outreach team by emailing emergencymanagement@howardcountymd.gov or by calling (410) 313-6030

WHY CHOOSE PREPAREDNESS?

Businesses and non-profits, large or small, play a critical role in serving Howard County. With the many demands on your time and resources, making an emergency plan may not seem like a priority. But when emergencies happen, organizations without a plan are more likely to suffer losses and may never re-open.

It doesn't take a lot of time or money to take steps toward preparedness. Follow these four easy steps to ensure that your organization is resilient during and after an emergency.

For more information and resources about preparing your organization, visit [OEM's ReadyHoCo Program website](#).

Step 1: Get Informed

It is important to be informed about potential hazardous weather events, facility and event closures, and ways to protect your organization from an approaching or current hazard. Enclosed in this folder is Howard County's Community Hazard Handbook, which is designed to identify and prioritize our county's threats. This is an invaluable tool that should serve as the foundation for your organization's business continuity plan.

By following Howard County Government on Facebook, you will have access to timely and accurate information on disasters impacting the community. Also, by following the Howard County Office of Emergency Management on Facebook, you can learn helpful emergency preparedness tips and stay in the know about upcoming events. Additionally, joining the State of Maryland's Private Sector Integration Program (PSIP) will give you access to additional preparedness resources, training opportunities, and state-wide disaster information for businesses.

- ☐ Review the Community Hazard Handbook to understand threats that may impact Howard County
- ☐ Follow Howard County Government and Howard County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) on Facebook and X
- ☐ Join the State of Maryland Private Sector Integration Program for access to free resources

Step 2: Make a Plan

Taking actionable steps to prepare your organization, employees, and household can not only save lives and property but can alleviate anxiety and stress over hazardous events impacting our community. By making a plan for your organization and reviewing the Community Hazard Handbook, you will have a thorough understanding of the potential hazards that could impact your organization and acquire actionable steps to protect yourself, prepare employees, and stay open for business.

Building a business continuity plan or an emergency action plan will empower you to feel confident that you have the resources and procedures in place to react to an emergency. Additionally, developing a personal preparedness plan, as well as encouraging employees to develop their own personal plans, will ensure that you and your employees know that your families are prepared. If employees know their families are secure, they can better help revive and protect their workplace. Lastly, protecting your investment through simple strategies will reduce the impacts of disasters and save you time and money!

- ☐ Create a Business Continuity Plan using the fillable template
- ☐ Develop an Emergency Action Plan for evacuations and drills
- ☐ Make a Personal Plan to prepare yourself, family, and pets
- ☐ Encourage your employees to develop Personal Plans

In addition to protecting your employees, it is important to protect your company's physical and virtual assets. Take the following steps:

- Review your insurance coverage and understand what your policy covers. Consider expanding your insurance to include coverage for direct and indirect costs associated with a disaster.
 - Examples of direct costs include hazard-specific property insurance (e.g., fire, flood) and data breach and cyber liability insurance.
 - Examples of indirect costs include business interruption/continuation policy insurance, business income insurance, and extra expense insurance.
- Think about what equipment is necessary for the survival of your business and where you will obtain replacement parts if it is damaged.
- Protect your data and information technology systems. Create backups of all of your information and store copies somewhere safe.

Step 3: Build a Kit

Building a preparedness kit, or a “Go Bag,” is the best way for your organization’s leadership and employees to be prepared for any disaster. Encouraging the building of kits for the office and home will ensure that your essential employees can accomplish their critical business functions. Here are some examples of items commonly seen in personal and business preparedness kits:

- Copies of important documents (insurance documents, IDs, banking information)
- Emergency supplies (food, water, flashlight, batteries, NOAA weather radio, etc.)
- Contact information for employees’ households and support networks
- Medical prescriptions and/or equipment
- Critical IT that is vital for business recovery (back-up server, continuity plans, etc.)

Building a kit can be quick and easy, and the contents of the kit should be checked regularly to make sure contents are up to date and properly working.

- ☐ Build a Kit for your business using the Disaster Recovery Checklist
- ☐ You can also reference the checklist on Ready.gov to assist with building a kit

Step 4: Be Involved

Lastly, by attending events and presentations offered by the Howard County Office of Emergency Management, you will have the opportunity to make connections, ask questions, engage with the County's preparedness community, and hear about special emergency topics to help you better prepare your organization.

- ☐ Attend Howard County's quarterly Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Meetings
- ☐ Attend Howard County's quarterly Business Disaster Preparedness Workshops hosted in partnership with the Economic Development Authority
- ☐ Sign up for *Hands-Only CPR* and *Stop the Bleed Training* by emailing outreach@hcdfrs.org or by calling (410) 313-2016
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COUNTY RESOURCES

- Howard County Office of Emergency Management
 - www.ReadyHoCo.com
 - 410-313-6030
- Howard County Fire & Rescue Services
 - outreach@hcdfrs.org
 - 410-313-2016
- Howard County Economic Development Authority
 - <http://www.hceda.org/>
 - 410-313-6500
- Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits:
 - <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Inspections-Licenses-and-Permits>
 - 410-313-2455
- Department of Planning and Zoning:
 - <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning>
 - 410-313-2350

OTHER EMERGENCY PLANNING RESOURCES

- United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration
 - www.osha.gov
 - 1-800-321-OSHA (6742)
 - Insurance Information Institute
 - www.iii.org
 - 212-346-5500
 - Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety
 - www.disastersafety.org
 - 813-286-3400
 - Department of Homeland Security: US-Computer Emergency Readiness Team
 - www.us-cert.gov
 - 888-282-0870
 - U.S. Small Business Administration
 - www.sba.gov
 - 800-827-5722
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UTILITY INFORMATION

- Baltimore Gas & Electric
 - 800-685-0123
- FirstEnergy
 - 1-888-544-4877
 - Potomac Edison (1-800-686-0011)
- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission
 - 301-206-4002
- Colonial Pipeline
 - 1-800-926-2728
- Washington Gas
 - 703-750-1400 or 800-752-7520
- Williams Gas Pipeline
 - 800-945-5426
- Comcast
 - 1-800-934-6489
- Verizon
 - 1-800-837-4966