**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.