



DSW PROGRAM TOOLKIT GUIDANCE AND TEMPLATES

Table of Contents

1. Guidance for Establishing Essential Functions.....	1
2. DSW Activity Descriptions	5
3. DSW Messaging Templates for Executives and Department Heads	10
4. Resources to Support Local DSW Programs	12



1. Guidance for Establishing Essential Functions

Defining Essential Functions

During disruptions to routine operations, resources or access to resources may be limited and staff may be unavailable or unable to report to work, thus making it a challenge for an organization to conduct business as usual. This type of disruption will trigger an activation of the organization's continuity of operations (COOP) plans. Within a COOP plan, a subset of functions determined to be critical to carrying out the core mission of the organization is defined as its **essential functions**. These essential functions become the focus during disruptions when resources and staff are limited and priorities must be established. Dependencies, technical support, alternate locations, succession planning, and devolution are all a part of the continuity planning process.

The Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) has a COOP/Continuity of Government (COG) Toolkit available on the Bay Area UASI website consisting of a planning handbook, a plan template, a gap and recommendations report, and forms and worksheets to be used to assist and support development of a COOP or COG plan. The COOP/COG Toolkit can be accessed here at <http://bayareauasi.org/coopcog>.

Non-essential Functions

Just because some functions are not deemed "non-essential" does not mean they are not important to the jurisdiction. It means that, during a disruption, those functions could be temporarily suspended with little to no consequences. A jurisdiction should focus its time, money, resources, and efforts on functions that are critical to services that absolutely must not be interrupted—those functions that, if not performed, will have negative consequences for the county, city, department, or agency.

If a jurisdiction has pre-identified its essential functions, then it is able to ensure adequate staffing and can better use resources to continue as many functions as possible. It is also helpful to consider activities that a jurisdiction may not perform on a daily basis but may be expected to conduct during certain events or disruptions. Understanding essential functions and the staff necessary to carry out those functions allows a jurisdiction to more effectively redirect and use Disaster Service Worker (DSW) staff. Jurisdictions should consider reassigning DSWs from functions that are temporarily suspended to essential city, county, or special district government

functions. If more staff are needed, jurisdictions should consider using DSWs from other jurisdictions within the Operational Area (OA) to support essential functions. Jurisdictions should also consider collaborating with local nonprofit organizations to register volunteers as DSW volunteers. These volunteers must be registered before being deployed and used. Information on the DSW volunteer program is available at <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/administrative-services/disaster-service-worker-volunteer-program>.

Jurisdictions should ensure they use their internal workforce to the fullest extent by pre-identifying activities that may be conducted by DSWs. Prior to requesting mutual aid from neighboring jurisdictions or the state, jurisdictions need to use all available local workforce resources, including DSWs from across the OA, and activate partnerships with local nonprofit organizations and private-sector partners that may have furloughed or otherwise available staff. This is especially critical in situations where the disruption affects multiple jurisdictions simultaneously, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

When all jurisdictions experience similar stresses on their workforce, being as efficient as possible with the existing workforce before requesting state assistance will ensure that state-level resources will be available when jurisdictions have truly exhausted all internal resources. Table 1 shows an example of the number of DSWs (county or city, as indicated) that could be available for each jurisdiction across the Bay Area UASI region. Please note that the information shown in the table is updated regularly. This table is for example purposes only and may contain aged data. Information for all California counties and cities is available at <https://transparentcalifornia.com/>.

Table 1: Total Number of Jurisdictional Employees¹

Jurisdiction	Number of Public Employees
Alameda County	10,271
Contra Costa County	11,898
Marin County	3,102
Monterey County	6,078
Napa County	1,885
San Benito County	650
San Francisco City/County	44,525
San Mateo County	7,705
Santa Clara County	24,953
Santa Cruz County	4,295
Solano County	3,735
Sonoma County	5,295
City of Oakland	5,840 (based on 2018 data, 2019 data not yet available)
City of San Jose	8,554
Potential County & Major City DSWs	138,786

¹ Data presented in Table 1 was gathered through the Transparent California website at <https://transparentcalifornia.com/> on 9/17/2020. Data changes regularly.

Determining Essential Functions:

In determining which functions are essential, use the following questions as a guide:

1. Is the function required by statute, regulation or executive order?
2. Is the function necessary to provide vital services, continue civil authority, maintain the safety and well-being of the general public, or to sustain critical support to the citizens?
3. Does the function generate revenue?
4. Will the city, county, department, or agency face economic, administrative, or legal impacts if the function is not performed?
5. Does the city, county, department, or agency have a legal requirement to perform the functions? If so, what is the threshold? For example, courts legally have to conduct first appearances within 72 hours to set bail for someone who has been arrested and is in jail. Courts cannot legally let someone languish in jail. Not conducting first appearances within 72 hours could have legal consequences for the city, county, department, or agency.
6. Does the function have a pre-determined time that an application or function can be down before resulting in significant damage to the jurisdiction and the time that it takes for the system to go from loss to recovery, i.e., the recovery time objective (RTO)?
7. Is the function a dependency for another city's, county's, department's, or agency's essential function?

An affirmative response to one or more of these questions means the function is most likely an essential function.

Once essential functions have been established, they can be tiered depending on their recovery time objectives to better prioritize and use available resources more efficiently:

- Category 1: Services that must remain operational at all time
- Category 2: Services that must be brought back online as soon as possible and no later than 12 hours after an incident
- Category 3: Services that need not be restored in full until the incident has passed and Category 1 and 2 services are operational

Upon establishing essential functions, jurisdictions proceed to identify dependencies, such as software, hardware, file, or technology, for each essential function that are necessary to operate that function. Alternate locations in which the function may be carried out should be identified along with any special instructions on access, parking, and any resources the alternate location may need to be viable. Succession planning is also important at this stage. Jurisdictions need to identify those personnel with limited and full authority to step into management positions in the event current management is not available. Finally, devolution must be considered. This involves identifying another department, agency, or possibly a neighboring jurisdiction with the ability and authority to implement and manage the essential function in the event no one from the organization is available. Completing the COOP planning process, including training and exercising, will ensure that management and staff members understand their roles and

responsibilities during a disruption and that there is minimal delay in providing core essential services.



2. DSW Activity Descriptions

Resources

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS) [Emergency Operations Center Skill Set User Guide](#) explains what emergency operations center (EOC) skillsets are and how to use them to construct EOC Position Task Books.

Additionally, the DSW Program Toolkit also includes a list of resources to support local governments and their DSW programs. Links are included which may assist local governments in creating job descriptions and guidance regarding core capabilities and leadership qualities. The two links below from the California Department of Human Resources include competency resources to guide development of core competency and leadership skills. This may be useful when considering soft skills needed for certain emergency activities as local governments recruit for DSW activities.

- ✓ **California Department of Human Resources Core Competencies:**
 - <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Training/Pages/competencies-core-model.aspx>
- ✓ **California Department of Human Resources, Leadership Competencies:**
 - <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Training/Pages/competencies-leadership-model.aspx>

The link below from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration is a database of occupational characteristics and worker requirements collected from sectors all across the U.S. economy. It includes occupations in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required and how the work is performed in terms of tasks, work activities, and other descriptors to assist in developing activity and job descriptions for DSWs.

- **U.S. Department of Labor Listing of Job Descriptions:**
<https://www.onetonline.org/>

How to Use this Template

The following are templates to assist local governments in developing Disaster Service Worker (DSW) job descriptions. It includes a list of potential DSW activities with descriptions that can be amended to fit local government recruiting efforts. Jurisdictions should keep in mind that DSW volunteers can also be available to fill these roles if properly registered. Information on the DSW volunteer program is available at <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/administrative-services/disaster-service-worker-volunteer-program>.

Words or phrases in black font represent information that may be left unmodified, and words or phrases bracketed in [blue font] indicate where information tailored to the specific local government should be developed and inserted. Although the words and phrases in black font may be left unmodified, they may also be altered, and entire sections may be rearranged, removed or expanded to fit the needs of the local government.

These templates may be incorporated into a local government's emergency operations plans (EOPs), continuity of operations (COOP) plans, and continuity of government (COG) plans to assist local governments in establishing and strengthening DSW capabilities, resources, and needs in response to emergencies.

DSW Activity Descriptions

Animal Rescue, Care and Shelter: The [enter jurisdiction, agency, department] is in need of veterinarians, veterinary support staff, and animal handlers and specialists able to provide support services in the rescue, clinical treatment, euthanasia, disposal, and transportation of animals, including companion animals, livestock, birds, fish, horses, exhibition animals, zoo animals, laboratory and research animals, and wildlife; assist in procurement of shelters, equipment, and supplies; and document arrival, sheltering, treatment, and discharge or placement of animals. Services are needed in the [add geographical region or area] for the following dates and times [add dates and times]. Please contact [add contact information and instructions] to apply.

Call Center Support: The [enter jurisdiction, agency, department] is in need of staff support in a call center environment. Activities may include staffing a phone bank, managing call center staffing, and recordkeeping. Call center staff will be expected to convey up-to-date information and be prepared to provide referral information when necessary. The call center is located at [add location address(es)]. Services are needed for the following dates and times [add dates and times]. Please contact [add contact information and instructions] to apply.

Clerical Support: The [enter jurisdiction, agency, department] is in need of staff support with clerical activities such as data gathering, documentation, courier services, call center support, cost and activity tracking, [add any specific activities]. Staff support is needed at [add specific location(s)] for the following dates and times [add dates and times]. Please contact [add contact information and instructions] to apply.

Communications: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of technical assistance to install, operate, and maintain various communications systems *[add specific activities]*. Support needs are located *[add location(s)]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Member: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of CERT members to support emergency personnel or a designated team leader in assisting emergency units within a block, neighborhood, or other area assignment. Activities include surveying area conditions, disseminating information, securing data needed for emergency preparedness planning, reporting incidents, and generally assisting officials *[add specific activities]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs Support Services: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to ensure that service-delivery sites are fully accessible to those with disabilities and access and functional needs at the following site(s) *[add specific location(s)]*. Activities may include assessing the physical accessibility of the site, ensuring accessible restrooms, and ensuring that any information or commodities that are being distributed are accessible to anyone with a disability or other access or functional need. This may also include identifying the need for and requesting communications support such as American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation or other necessary assistive devices. Support is needed for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Donations Coordination: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to coordinate, catalogue, track, and report solicited and unsolicited donations *[add specific activities]* provided to *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]*. Position may also work with *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* finance and legal leadership to establish a mechanism for cash donations management and coordinate with Public Affairs *[add specific name of public affairs department]* to ensure donation information is provided through various public channels such as social media and *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* website. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)/Incident Command (IC): The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support in the *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department's EOC/DOC]* to assist in coordination of response support activities to an incident, including gathering information, validating data, and tracking resource requests *[insert specific activities]*. EOC experience and training is *[preferred, required, provided onsite]*. *[If training is required, insert training desired]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Feeding Support: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to provide food supplies to community members in need. Activities may include stocking food items, inventory of food items, sorting, and packaging food portions, and food distribution, *[insert specific activities]*. Some activities may require lifting of items greater than 50 pounds. Work locations could include either mobile or fixed-feeding units and congregate shelters. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Human Services: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to assist in providing food, clothing, bedding, shelter, and rehabilitation aid; register evacuees to promote reuniting families and support the needs of vulnerable populations; assist with compiling and vetting information of missing persons; and other phases of emergency human services, such as maintaining morale and administering to the mental health, religious, or spiritual needs of persons suffering from the effects of the disaster *[insert specific activities]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Interpretive/Translation Services: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of interpretive and translation services to assist with communications efforts between *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* and local communities. Activities may include providing interpretive services to residents in their primary or preferred languages to ensure critical emergency communications is shared and ensuring full accessibility to emergency and/or disaster information in appropriate languages. Translator services required may be either written and spoken. Languages in need include *[list languages needed]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Logistics: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support in procurement, warehousing, and managing supplies, equipment materials, or other resources *[insert specific activities]*. Activities may also include assistance in identifying and coordinating public and/or private transportation resources required for the movement of persons, materials, and equipment. *[Position requires a forklift certification]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Transportation/Delivery: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to provide transportation services in support of response activities. This may include transportation of staff between field locations or delivering needed supplies to service delivery areas, field sites, and other business locations. A valid California driver's license is required. Use of vehicles and fuel will be *[provided or will be reimbursed for use]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Utilities Support: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support to assist utility personnel in the repair and restoration of public utilities damaged by disaster. *[Insert specific training, certifications, experience necessary]*. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.

Volunteer Coordination: The *[enter jurisdiction, agency, department]* is in need of support with coordinating community volunteers being used for various emergency response activities. This may include supporting volunteer recruitment efforts, providing any necessary orientation or training, tracking volunteers, and providing information updates as needed. Support is needed in *[add geographic locations or addresses]* for the following dates and times *[add dates and times]*. Please contact *[add contact information and instructions]* to apply.



3. DSW Messaging Templates for Executives and Department Heads

How to Use this Template

This document provides templates for the purpose of assisting local governments in developing messaging for executives and department heads to garner general support for the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) program, training and planning, and language to communicate DSW activation and DSW assignment requests.

Words or phrases in black font represent information that may be left unmodified, and words or phrases bracketed in **[blue font]** indicate where information tailored to the specific local government should be developed and inserted. Although the words and phrases in black font may be left unmodified, they may also be altered, and entire sections may be rearranged, removed or expanded to fit the needs of the local government.

These templates may be incorporated into a local government's emergency operations plans (EOPs), continuity of operations (COOP) plans, and continuity of government (COG) plans to assist local governments in establishing and strengthening DSW capabilities, resources, and needs in response to emergencies.

Language for DSW Engagement, Training, and Support:

In times of emergency, **[insert City/County]** must be prepared to quickly respond to maintain critical functions of **[insert City/County]** and deliver services to residents affected by the emergency. Within **[insert City/County]**, *our greatest asset is our staff*. With the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) program, we have the available human resources and an engaged response workforce. With ample support, training, and engagement for the DSW program, **[insert City/County]** can muster appropriate personnel to quickly respond to disasters as they arise and minimize costs of bringing in resources from other areas.

As we learned in 2020, in an emergency that affects the entire region or, in the case of COVID-19, the entire country, mutual aid resources may not be available. Having a capable and accessible DSW workforce allows **[insert City/County]** to act as good stewards of local taxpayer dollars by using internal resources instead of bringing in outside resources at a cost.

Language for DSW Activation for Executive Staff and Department Heads:
Per *[insert City/County] [enter authorizing agency such as CEO, City Manager, Mayor, Emergency Management Director, etc.]*, *[insert City/County]* has activated the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) protocol in response to *[insert incident or reason for activation]*. The *[insert City/County] [enter authorizing agency such as CEO, City Manager, Emergency Management Director]* requests that you implement your Continuity of Operations protocols, including staff communications to assess their safety status and their availability to report for duty. Please confirm that you have communicated with your staff and report the number of your staff who are available for reassignment to DSW activities to the *[Staffing Unit within the EOC or include other instructions]*.

Language for DSW Assignment Requests:

The *[insert City/County]* has declared a local emergency and requires activation of the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) protocols. All Department Leadership have been asked to report their staff availability for reassignment to DSW activities to the *[Staffing Unit within the EOC or include other instructions]*. DSWs are needed for the following activities immediately *[enter assignments]* and *[enter shifts]*. A complete list of open DSW assignments and shifts is located at *[insert link]*. Please share with your staff and request they sign up for assignments, if available.



4. Resources to Support Local DSW Programs

Federal Resources

- **FEMA's Public Assistance Guidelines:**
[FEMA Public Assistance and Policy Guide, June 1, 2020.](#)
(Pages 70–71 specifically address force account labor and instances when straight time can be covered through reimbursement. Retirees would fall under Category 3 as temporary/contracted hires to assume the role of someone who is engaged in eligible disaster services.)
- **Additional FEMA Public Assistance Resources:**
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781>
- **FEMA Reimbursement Application Portal:**
<https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/public-assistance-simplified-application>
- **FEMA Response Library Tool:**
<https://rtlt.preptoolkit.fema.gov/Public>
- **United State Department of Labor Listing of Job Descriptions:**
<https://www.onetonline.org/>

California Resources

- **California Government Code pertaining to DSW program:**
[California Government Code 3102: Disaster Service Workers and Public Employees](#)
- **California DSW Volunteer Program Guidance:**
[California Office of Emergency Services \(Cal OES\) Disaster Service Worker \(DSW\) Volunteer Guidance, dated October 2016](#)
- [Additional Guidance for the California DSW Volunteer Program](#)
- **California Statewide MAC Guide:**
[California Statewide Multi-Agency Coordination System \(CSMACS\) Guide, dated February 13, 2013.](#)
- The two links below from the California Department of Human Resources are competency resources to guide development of core competency and leadership skills. These may be useful in considering soft

skills needed for emergency activities. Understanding the skillsets necessary to perform emergency activities will also aid in peacetime recruitment and training of DSWs.

- ✓ **California Department of Human Resources Core Competencies:**
 - <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Training/Pages/competencies-core-model.aspx>
- ✓ **California Department of Human Resources, Leadership Competencies:**
 - <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Training/Pages/competencies-leadership-model.aspx>
- **Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Regional Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Analysis, December 2020**
<http://www.bayareauasi.org/dsw>
- **Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) DSW Program Toolkit**
<http://www.bayareauasi.org/dsw>
- **Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government Toolkit**
<http://www.bayareauasi.org/coopcog>

Local DSW Resources

- **Sacramento County Department of Health Services DSW Training Video:**
<https://dhs.saccounty.net/PUB/Emergency-Preparedness/Pages/GI-Disaster-Service-Worker-Training-Video.aspx>
- **City of Sacramento Disaster Service Worker Webpage:**
<https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Emergency-Management/Disaster-Service-Worker>
- **California State University, Monterey Bay, University Police DSW Virtual Academy**
<https://csumb.edu/police/disaster-service-worker-dsw-virtual-academy>
- **Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Management, Disaster Service Worker Training Video:**
<http://www.stanoes.com/disaster-workers.shtm>
- **Listos California All Disaster Preparedness Training**
<https://listos.arist.co/courses/5f2d926f80f4321e394c1d54>
- **The State Controller's Government Compensation in California website provides the number of full-time employees and a variety of other information for government entities in California.**
<https://publicpay.ca.gov/>