

**Louisiana Department of Health**  
**Office of Public Health, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program**  
**HIV Services Unit**  
**Continuity of Operations Plan**

Purpose	The purpose of this Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is to document and give guidance for response to emergencies in order to ensure Louisianans living with HIV maintain access to care and medications.
Scope	<p>The information in this document is specific to the HIV Services Unit's operations for the State of Louisiana, Department of Health, Office of Public Health, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program (SHHP).</p> <p>Additional information related to emergency preparedness is available at the <a href="#">Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness</a> (GOHSEP) website. The website has resources for disaster preparedness, tips on personal evacuation plans, maps of State Police contra-flow plan, and information on road closures. All employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the information provided. Additionally, employees can review the Governor's issuance of emergency proclamations <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

**Institutional Checklist**

What to do just before the beginning of Hurricane Season (mid-April – mid-May):

- ☐ Update COOP, including appendices.
- ☐ Schedule annual hurricane/emergency preparedness communications (LA HAP and RWB community).
- ☐ Assign essential personnel and determine remote locations.
- ☐ Conduct inventory of and ensure availability and functioning of critical supplies/equipment.
- ☐ Review internal call down list, including procedure for getting in touch with employees.
- ☐ Provide HIV Services Unit hurricane preparedness training to Services staff, sign SHHP confidentiality policy if not already completed during annual SHHP process, and sign Services Telework Requirements and Confidentiality Practices During Emergencies agreement.
- ☐ Update early refill and eligibility extension procedure with essential personnel.
- ☐ Update continuity of payment processes and operations.
- ☐ Update procedure for backing up computer systems, protecting critical equipment, and maintaining access to essential digital files in and outside of the Unit.
- ☐ Update Services Unit Emergency Contacts and securely stored passwords lists.
- ☐ Update Unit communications plan and hierarchy of decision makers.
- ☐ Develop "location" and time for employees to gather during storm/watch/warnings and designate essential personnel to report for recovery operations.
- ☐ Initiate contact with GOHSEP partners [Health and Social Services (HSS) Recovery Support Function (LA RSF 3) as identified in the [Louisiana State Emergency Operations Plan](#)].

Authority Under the Plan	
Executive Decision	<p>The Director of SHHP is the final authority to activate the Plan. The HIV Services Manager has the authority to implement the Plan.</p> <p>Activation is based solely on executive decision as described above. For example, declaration of a hurricane watch by the National Weather Services does not automatically activate any part of the Plan. SHHP personnel should not begin implementing the Plan before official notification of the executive decision.</p>
Essential and Non-essential Employees	<p>Essential employees are those designated by the HIV Services Manager as essential to the continued performance of the HIV Services Unit's operations during an emergency. Not all personnel classified as essential will be required to perform duties under the COOP in the event of an emergency. The type of emergency will determine who is essential.</p> <p>Non-essential employees are not required to perform special duties during an emergency. They may not, however, be relieved of their work responsibilities until released by their supervisors, and they must return to work as usual after the emergency condition has ended.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of all employees to monitor radio, television, email, cell phones/voicemail/text, and LAHHUB.ORG SHHP Staff Emergency website communications to receive instructions regarding the state of emergency and return to work notice.</p>
Communications	<p>The HIV Services Manager, in cooperation with the Treatment Access Supervisor and Support Services Supervisor, is responsible for managing all external and internal communications before, during, and immediately after an emergency. The Treatment Access and Support Services Supervisors are responsible for drafting community notices and updating the relevant websites, social media, mass emails, and Constant Contact listservs.</p>
Shutdown Team	<p>The Shutdown Team is a group of specifically designated personnel that coordinates adjustments to Unit operations in advance of an emergency. The Team's duties include, but are not limited to, ensuring communications to the RWB and LA HAP community via listservs, websites and social media, ensuring coordination with GOHSEP partners, ensuring communication/preparation of all Services staff, including verifying set-up of public facing 'away'/emergency status messages on email and voicemail, coordinating call forwarding, and checking in with Health Systems staff.</p>
Startup Team	<p>The Startup Team is a group of specifically designated personnel that coordinates the resumption of normal Unit operations after an emergency. The Team's duties include, but are not limited to, A specifically designated group responsible for ensuring communications go out to RWB and LA HAP community via list serves, websites and social media, coordinating with GOHSEP partners, ensuring communication/check-ins with all Services staff, and conducting status checks of systems functionality.</p>

Activation of Hurricane Plan
Alert (72 hours in advance)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff reports for duty.</li> <li>• Inform all staff of Alert Status and Preparedness Plan.</li> <li>• Verify availability of contact information for essential personnel.</li> <li>• Review inventory list, location, and functionality of supplies.</li> <li>• Check To-Go Document folders for each work area, verifying needed information is contained and that designated staff is</li> </ul>

<p>in possession of the folder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commence emergency shutdown actions to protect SHHP infrastructure as instructed by Health Systems Unit.</li> </ul>
<b>Watch (48-72 hours in advance)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform staff of watch via phone tree.</li> <li>Personnel will remain on duty as instructed by supervisor or designee.</li> <li>Charge computer, hot spot, cell phone, batteries and radios.</li> <li>Assemble equipment for use during hurricane.</li> <li>Conduct final review of work assignments with staff and essential personnel.</li> </ul>
<b>Warning (24-48 hours in advance)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep getting ready and monitoring weather conditions.</li> <li>Inform supervisor or designee of your location.</li> <li>Notify essential personnel of procedures for reporting to work following the storm for recovery operations.</li> </ul>

Weather Condition	Responsible Person(s)	Action
Hurricane – Alert (72 hours before onset of tropical storm force winds)	SHHP Director	Activate COOP.
	HIV Services Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activate call down list.</li> <li>2. Activate communications plan.</li> <li>3. Advise sub-unit's preparation steps.</li> <li>4. Conduct check-in with Health Systems Unit.</li> </ol>
Hurricane – Watch 48-72 Hours	SHHP Director	Declare watch condition.
	HIV Services Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update communications.</li> <li>2. Activate call down list.</li> </ol>
Hurricane – Warning 36-48 Hours	SHHP Director	All staff other than shutdown teams must vacate the office as communicated.
	HIV Services Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update communications.</li> <li>2. Release non-essential employees.</li> <li>3. Secure work areas as needed.</li> </ol>
	Essential Employees and Shutdown Team	Prepare for closure.
	Non-essential Employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leave facilities.</li> <li>2. Monitor designated modes of communication.</li> </ol>

<b>Emergencies without Notice</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HIV Services Manager will alert essential personnel to meet at "location" and designate a time to report for recovery operations.</li> <li>Alert all staff via phone tree that essential personnel will be meeting for recovery operations and request all staff communicate their status, location, and availability of power and wifi.</li> </ul>

- Essential personnel meet at “location” to report for recovery operations.
- Continue to assess staff status, location, and functional status of equipment and systems.
- Make arrangements for early fills and/or eligibility extension access.
- Initiate contact with GOHSEP partners [Health and Social Services (HSS) Recovery Support Function (LA RSF 3) as identified in the [Louisiana State Emergency Operations Plan](#)].
- Send communications to RWB and LA HAP community via list serves and websites.

## Startup

- At 9 AM CT following passage of the emergency (as ascertained by the SHHP Director), essential personnel meet at “location” for recovery operations.
- Check staff status, location, and functional status of equipment and systems.
- Initiate recovery contact with GOHSEP partners [Health and Social Services (HSS) Recovery Support Function (LA RSF 3) as identified in the [Louisiana State Emergency Operations Plan](#)].
- Send communications to RWB and LA HAP community via listservs and websites, and HIP and PBM by cell phone.

## Ongoing Recovery

Once emergency has passed, and coordination with other state authorities has taken place, one or a combination of the following options may be implemented, depending on the situation:

- Continue to operate from remote locations; with support from other state agencies if necessary.
- Begin an orderly return to the Benson or Bienville buildings and reconstitute from remaining OPH or other resources as instructed.
- Begin to establish a reconstituted OPH office in some other facility in the New Orleans or Baton Rouge vicinity or other non-affected area.

Operations will continue during recovery, including:

- Continue recovery communications with GOHSEP partners [Health and Social Services (HSS) Recovery Support Function (LA RSF 3) as identified in the [Louisiana State Emergency Operations Plan](#)].
- Continue communications to RWB and LA HAP community via remote meetings, listservs, and websites.

### Appendices:

- A. Services Unit Emergency Contact Lists [Staff, subrecipients and contractors, Louisiana Part As administrators, neighboring state ADAPs, GOHSEP] (note: suppressed in public document)
- B. Away status email and voicemail script
- C. Client Emergency Preparedness Guides
- D. PBM: Program Administrative Letter (PAL) Formats for Early Fills and Eligibility Extension (note: suppressed in public document)
- E. Health Insurance Program: Sample HIP Payment Policy Communication (note: suppressed in public document)
- F. Sample Constant Contact Formats
- G. Telework Requirements & Confidentiality Practices During Emergencies (note: suppressed in public document)
- H. To-Go Document Folder File Schema (note: suppressed in public document)
- I. Planning Tool (blank in public document)
- J. Response and Recovery Actions Tool (blank in public document)
- K. Call Forwarding Instructions (note: suppressed in public document)