

## Hardware Contingency Plan Guidelines

A critical operation depends upon certain tools necessary to complete the job. These tools may include electricity, telephone, computer, pencil, paper, special forms and various other items. Therefore, to insure that a critical operation continues, it may become necessary to identify alternative procedures to maintain critical operations.

As an example in a large organization where a receptionist operates the PBX and the assigned person does not show for work, a decision must be made: 1) do not answer telephones or 2) temporarily re-assign another trained person.

The same scenario is also true with computerized processing systems. Should the printer that prints customer payment receipts become inoperative, a decision must be made to: 1) replace the printer, 2) hand write receipts, 3) re-direct printing to another printer or 4) stop collecting payments.

Therefore, a plan should be developed to address these types of issues. Rather than attempting to identify every conceivable scenario of failure, it would be better to identify each piece of critical equipment with an indication of what to do in case of failure.

More specific questions as below should also be addressed. Undoubtedly, many of the hardware components will be covered by a maintenance agreement; however, someone must be responsible for initiating appropriate action.

What happens if one of the server's become inoperative?

What happens if the backup media is corrupt?

What happens if critical telephone circuits become disabled?

In order to facilitate this plan, each piece of critical equipment should be identified and assigned a necessity code. The necessity code will identify how long this piece of equipment can be out-of-service before operations are impacted. Sample necessity coding might be as follows:

0	Critical
1	1 hour
2	2 hours
3	3 hours
4	4 hours
8	8 hours

Documentation should then be kept by site (building) as illustrated below for reference. Basically, the equipment is identified with its necessity code and other pertinent information to facilitate an easy decision making process. The first three columns (Location, Equipment, Model) are self-explanatory. The **Critical Time** column identifies during what time period is the equipment critical. The **Code** column is the necessity code as previously discussed. The **Forms** column is used to indicate whether a printer uses any

special printed forms. The **Network** column will indicate whether the device is attached to the local area network.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Model</u>	<u>Critical Time</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Forms</u>	<u>Network</u>
Collections	Computer	Compaq X	7:00am-4:00pm	0	n/a	Yes
Collections	Dot Matrix	Epson 1140	7:00am-4:00pm	0	Stock	Yes
Inspections	Dot Matrix	Epson 1140	7:00am-Noon	0	Stock	Yes
Call Center	Dot matrix	Epson 1140	7:00am-Noon	8	Stock	No

This information may also be combined with the **Site Configuration Data Sheet**. In this case, there would be one source of information the support unit.