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Operations Plan (COOP), 2018

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Merit Systems Protection Board

1615 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20419 Fax: (202) 653-7130 Email: mspb@mspb.gov

FOIAonline

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U.S. MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD

Office of the Clerk of the Board

1615 M Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20419-0002

Phone: 202-653-7200; Fax: 202-653-7130; Email: foiahq@mspb.gov

September 25, 2019

SENT VIA EMAIL

RE: Final Response Letter MSPB-2019-000107

This is the final response to your March 1, 2019, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) seeking "a copy of the MSPB's Continuity of Operations Plan." On March 20, 2019, we acknowledged your request and assigned it as FOIA Tracking Number MSPB-2019-000107.

We conducted a comprehensive search of the departments most likely to have records responsive to your request. We were able to locate one document, consisting of 52 pages. After careful review, we have determined that the entire 52 pages will be withheld in full pursuant to FOIA Exemption 7(A), 7(C), 7(E), and 7(F). See 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(A), (b)(7)(C), (b)(7)(E), and (b)(7)(F).

If you have any questions regarding this request, or if you disagree with this disposition, in whole or part, you have the right to seek assistance from the FOIA Public Liaison, appeal the determination, or contact the Office of Government Information Services to participate in dispute resolution services. If you wish to contact the FOIA Public Liaison, you may do so via email to foiahq@mspb.gov or telephone at (202) 254-4475.

If you wish to participate in dispute resolution services, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Service
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001
E-mail at ogis@nara.gov
Telephone at 202-741-5570
Toll free at 1-877-684-6448
Facsimile at 202-741-5769

If you wish to appeal the determination, you may do so by submitting your appeal through FOIAonline or by mailing your appeal to:

Chairman, c/o Clerk of the Board U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board 1615 M Street, NW Suite 500 Washington, DC 20419

Your appeal should be identified as a "FOIA Appeal" on both the letter and the envelope, if applicable. It should include a copy of your original request, a copy of this letter and your reasons for appealing this decision. You may also submit your appeal by email to foiahq@mspb.gov or by fax at (202) 653-7130. Your appeal must be filed within ninety (90) days from the date of this letter.

Sincerely,

//signed//

Karin Kelly Government Information Specialist U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board



U.S. MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD

Office of the General Counsel 1615 M Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20419

Phone: (202) 653-6772; Fax: (202) 653-6203; E-Mail: OfficeofGeneralCounsel@mspb.gov

General Counsel

NOV 2 0 2019

RE: FOIA Appeal Tracking No. FOIA-MSPB-2020-000002

This letter responds to your October 1, 2019 appeal of the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) Office of the Clerk's September 25, 2019 denial of your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. In accordance with my responsibilities as the MSPB's chief executive and administrative officer, and for the reasons discussed below, I am denying your appeal in part and granting your appeal in part.

On March 1, 2019, you submitted a FOIA request for a copy of the MSPB's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). On September 25, 2019, the Clerk's Office denied your request, withholding the entire 52 pages pursuant to FOIA Exemptions 7(A), 7(C), 7(E), and 7(F). 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(A), (b)(7)(C), (b)(7)(E), and (b)(7)(F).

On October 1, 2019, you appealed this determination, asserting that "the denial in full was improper because there are segregable releasable portions of this record such as the title page or cover page. In addition, there are likely portions of the table of contents that are releasable and would not produce foreseeable harm." On October 30, 2019, I informed you that I would render a decision on your appeal by November 29, 2019.

I am granting your appeal in part and denying your appeal in part pursuant to FOIA Exemptions (7)(A), 7(C), (7)(E), and (7)(F). I am providing the MSPB COOP with redactions made pursuant to these exemptions, as indicated in the document. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(A), (b)(7)(C), (b)(7)(E), and (b)(7)(F). I am providing sections of the COOP that do not require redaction and are reasonably segregable from the redacted portions.

Portions of the COOP have been redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemption 7(A), which protects law enforcement records if their release could reasonably be expected to interfere with

¹ Because there are currently no Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed Board members, pursuant to the MSPB's November 16, 2018 Continuity of Operations Plan, the functions of the MSPB's chief executive and administrative officer – including responsibility for deciding FOIA and Privacy Act appeals – are vested in the General Counsel.

enforcement proceedings. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(A). With respect to the COOP, this includes records which could reasonably be expected to jeopardize the operation of the MSPB.

The identities of certain individuals have been redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemption 7(C), which permits withholding of information which "could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(C). Certain identifying information has been redacted as we have determined it would violate the privacy interests of specific individuals. See DOJ v. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, 489 U.S. 749, 774-775 (1989).

Certain sensitive security information has been redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemption 7(E), which protects law enforcement records if their release would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(E). For the materials that have been withheld under 7(E), we have determined that distributing this information could reduce or even nullify the safety and security procedures established in the COOP. See Djenasevic v. Executive Office of United States Attorneys, 319 F. Supp. 3d 474, 490 (D.D.C. 2018).

Finally, portions of the COOP have been redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemption 7(F), which protects law enforcement records if their release could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(F). See Living Rivers, Inc. v. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 272 F.Supp.2d 1313, 1321-22 (D.Utah 2003). For the materials that have been withheld under 7(F), we have determined that releasing them could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of MSPB employees.

This is the MSPB's final decision in your FOIA appeal. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C § 552(a)(4)(B), you have the right to judicial review of this decision in an appropriate United States District Court.²

² The 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. Nor does using OGIS services or contacting OGIS toll or extend the statute of limitations or any other deadline. If you are requesting access to your own records—which is most often but not always considered a Privacy Act, or first-party, request—you should know that Privacy Act matters fall outside the scope of OGIS's mission. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Mail: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001; e-mail: ogis@nara.gov; telephone: (202) 741-5770; toll-free: 1-(877) 684-6448; fax: (202) 741-5769.

Sincerely,

Tristan L. Leavitt

TLL/dev

Attachments:

Continuity of Operations Plan, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, November 2018 (partially redacted).

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

U.S. MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD (MSPB) November 2018



Merit Systems Protection Board 1615 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20036

QUICK REFERENCE INFORMATION

This Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is intended to provide overall guidance for managers and employees in the event of an emergency affecting any of the facilities occupied by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). It provides a format for decision making and facilitates the performance of executive branch essential functions during all-hazards emergencies or other situations that may disrupt normal operations.

The information below provides quick reference to various sites that can be accessed for the latest information during an incident:

MSPB Web-site: www.mspb.gov

MSPB Emergency Information Line: (b) (7)(F)

Medical Emergency Intercom Paging, HQ: (b) (7)(F

https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-

OPM Web-site: <u>procedures/current-status/</u>

HQ Shelter-In-Place: Attachment 6

HQ AED Locations:

Federal Protective Service (FPS): 877-437-7411

FOREWORD

The mission of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) is:

To protect Federal merit systems and the rights of individuals within those systems.

The MSPB carries out its statutory responsibilities and authorities primarily by adjudicating individual employee appeals and by conduction merit systems studies. In addition, the MSPB reviews the significant actions of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to assess the degree to which those actions may affect merit.

The bipartisan Board consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and a Member, who are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The MSPB Headquarters is located at 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, DC, and houses approximately (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F). The employees work in eight regional and field offices located in Atlanta, GA, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX, Lakewood, CO (commonly referred to as the Denver Office), New York, NY, Oakland, CA, Philadelphia, PA, and Arlington, VA (commonly referred to as the Washington Regional Office).

Although the impact of an emergency cannot be fully predicted, planning for operations under such conditions can mitigate the impact of the emergency on our employees, facilities, and mission. The following Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) has been developed to provide the necessary guidance needed to ensure that MSPB can maintain operations and or rapidly and efficiently resume operations during or in the aftermath of an emergency.

Continuity of Operations Plan

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1 **GENERAL**

1.1 OVERVIEW

As a baseline of preparedness for the full range of potential emergencies, all Federal agencies are required to establish and maintain a viable Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure continuity of essential functions during an emergency.

This document provides overall guidance for the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) to maintain operations and/or rapidly and efficiently resume operations during or in the aftermath of an emergency.

This COOP incorporates by reference other contingency plans, risk assessments, and recovery plans. It includes the Information Resources Management (IRM) risk assessments, IRM contingency plans, records manual directives on the reconstruction of damaged or lost case files, and possible security risk assessments provided by the General Services Administration's (GSA) Federal Protective Service (FPS).

Each MSPB organizational element must be prepared to continue to function or to efficiently and effectively resume essential operations if interrupted. This plan includes the steps to be taken for the planned restoration to full and normal functionality. It assigns responsibilities and outlines procedures under several scenarios.

1.2 DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY

An "emergency" is defined as any situation that may significantly disrupt MSPB's normal operations. This definition shall include a situation where there is no Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed Board member serving a term at MSPB pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 1202.

1.3 AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

The COOP ensures the continuance and uninterrupted delivery of essential services to the public, other Federal agencies, contractors, and MSPB personnel, which are necessary to enable MSPB to comply with existing statutes, Executive Orders, and mandates, among which are the Stafford Act (Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000), and other applicable laws and regulations.

Principal documents mandating the development and implementation of the COOP include:

- National Security Act of 1947, dated July 26, 1947, as amended thru 1947:
- Executive Order 12148, Federal Emergency Management, dated July 20, 1979, as amended;
- Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions, April 3, 1984, as amended thru Feb 28, 2003 by Executive Order 13286 and Executive Order 13407;
- Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities, as amended, November 18, 1988;

- Executive Order 12919, National Defense Industrial Resources Preparedness, June 6, 1994;
- Presidential Decision Directive 39, U.S. Policy on Counter-terrorism, June 21, 1995;
- Presidential Decision Directive 63, Critical Infrastructure Protection, May 22, 1998;
- 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 101-2, Occupant Emergency Program, revised as of, July 1, 1998;
- 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1236, Management of Vital Records, revised as of, July 1, 1998;
- Presidential Decision Directive 67, Enduring Constitutional Government and Continuity of Government Operations, October 21,1998;
- Federal Preparedness Circular 65, Federal Executive Branch, Continuity of Operations, July 26, 1999;
- The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010;
- Office of Personnel Management's Guide to Telework in the Federal Government April 2011;
- MSPB Organization Functions and Delegations of Authority April 2011; and
- National Security Presidential Directive 51, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 20, May 9, 2007

1.4 POLICY

It is the policy of the MSPB to respond quickly at all levels in the event of an emergency or threat in order to continue essential internal operations.

1.5 OBJECTIVE

The objectives of a COOP include:

- Ensuring the continuous performance of an agency's essential functions/operations during or in the aftermath of an emergency;
- Protecting essential facilities, equipment, records, and other assets;
- Reducing or mitigating disruptions to operations;
- Reducing loss of life and minimizing damage and losses; and
- Achieving a timely and orderly recovery from an emergency and resumption of full service to customers.

The site-specific objectives of this COOP are to:

- Ensure the safety of MSPB employees, contractors, and visitors during or in the aftermath of an emergency;
- Reduce disruptions to operations;
- Protect essential equipment, records, and other assets;
- Minimize damage and losses;
- Provide organizational and operational stability;
- Facilitate decision-making during an emergency;
- Achieve an orderly recovery from emergency operations; and
- Mitigate risks.

1.6 ESSENTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Since the mission of MSPB is not considered critical to national security or protecting the nation's infrastructure, response standards for COOP implementation at MSPB reflect those measures necessary to ensure timely recovery of MSPB's essential business activities.

1.6.1 Adjudication of Cases

The adjudication of cases includes the receipt and processing of:

- Appeals, Petitions for Review (PFR), original jurisdiction cases; and
- Reconstruction of damaged or destroyed case files.

1.6.2 Support Functions

The support functions include:

- Mail;
- Time and Attendance reporting/payroll processing;
- Vendor payments;
- Emergency contracting, including procurements for goods or services; and
- Voice and data (telephone, email, website) communication with employees, other government agencies, and customers.

1.7 DETERMINATIONS

This COOP is based on the following determinations:



1.8 VULNERABILITY

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

1.9 RESPONSIBILITIES, DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING REVIEW

1.9.1 Chairman

As head of the MSPB, the Chairman has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the COOP. Note: In the event the Office of the Chairman is vacant or the Chairman is temporarily unable to perform the duties of the office, authority to implement the COOP will reside with the Vice Chairman, or, if both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman are unable to perform, the responsibility resides with the Member of the Board.

Specifically, the Chairman is responsible for:

- Approving the Board-wide COOP; and
- Appointing the Executive Director as MSPB's COOP program Point of Contact (POC);

1.9.2 Executive Director



1.9.3 Office and Regional Directors

As part of their other duties, Office and Regional Directors will ensure that personnel are aware of the COOP and of their individual COOP responsibilities as stated in 1.8.1.6 and MSPB's telework policy.

1.9.4 MSPB Emergency Coordinator



- Ensuring development of a COOP multi-year strategy and program management plan;
- Ensuring annual testing of agency alert and notification system procedures;
- Ensuring site(s) maintenance and readiness for the Event Management Team's emergency meetings;
- (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E)
- **(b)** (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)
- Participating in periodic interagency COOP exercises to ensure effective interagency coordination and mutual support;
- Ensuring intra-agency COOP efforts are coordinated in relation to Presidential Decision Directive 63, Critical Infrastructure Protection, Executive Order 13636, Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity, and Presidential Policy Directive-21, Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience;
- Providing advice and assistance to other ECs and personnel in the regional/field offices for arrangements unique to their location;
- Assisting in the conducting, development, and evaluation of COOP exercises for MSPB;
- Coordinating the development of the MSPB COOP;
- (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E)
- (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

1.9.5 Office Directors, Regional Directors and Chief Administrative Judges

Each MSPB Office Director, Regional Director and Chief Administrative Judge (CAJ) is responsible for:

- Designating an Office Emergency Coordinator and reporting the name to the MSPB Emergency Coordinator;
- Maintaining a current list of the home phone numbers and emergency contacts for all employees in their offices;
- Implementing the emergency telephone recall tree or other emergency contact procedures as needed; and

 Approving or making modifications to telework arrangements to meet emergency needs and to provide for emergency operations.

1.9.6 Regional/Field Office Emergency Coordinator

Each Regional and Field Office COOP Emergency Coordinator (EC) is responsible for:

- Assuming the responsibility, as appropriate and directed for coordinating the development and maintenance of site-specific COOP arrangements, including the alternate site;
- Serving as the site EC or designating another employee to serve as EC and directing and supporting the site EC in developing and maintaining individual COOP site-specific arrangements for the individual offices;
- Providing advice and assistance to other ECs and personnel in the development of sitespecific COOP arrangements;
- Assisting in the development, execution, and evaluation of local COOP exercises;
- Providing advice, assistance, site specific evaluations/recommendations and training, as appropriate in COOP procedures, and continually evaluating the effectiveness of the program;
- Participating with Federal, State, and local emergency response organizations and developing a working relationship with those agencies compatible with COOP activities and plans; and
- Coordinating the MSPB COOP as appropriate with the emergency plans and procedures
 of other site tenants and entities likely to be affected by COOP execution.

1.9.7 Occupant Emergency Plan Official

As noted below, the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) is a site-specific plan for emergency evacuation of a building for threats that may include fire, snow/ice, storm, bomb, and hazardous material situations. (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

The OEP Designated Official is responsible for:



1.9.8 Chief Information Officer

The Information Resources Management (IRM) Director, who serves as the Chief Information Officer (CIO), is responsible for:

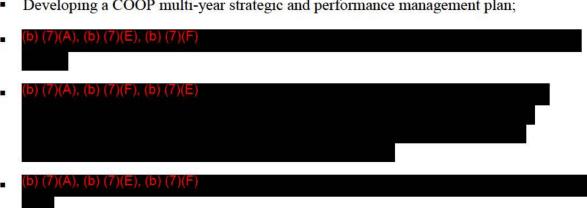


1.9.9 MSPB Facilities Officer

The MSPB Facilities Officer is responsible for:



Developing a COOP multi-year strategic and performance management plan;

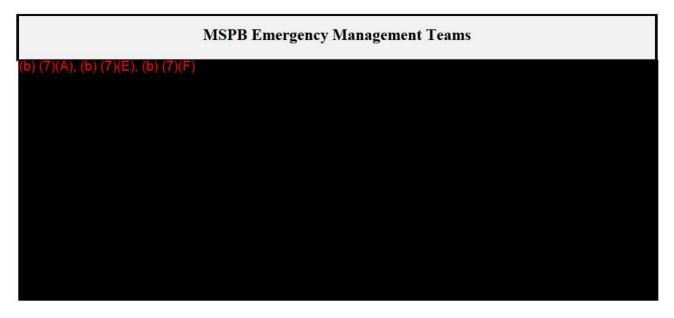


(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

1.9.10 Event Management Team

Each location has an Event Management Team (EMT) that is chaired by the (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

- The EMT handles the operation of the COOP, including restoration to full normal operations and analysis and reporting once the COOP has been implemented by the Chairman or Executive Director; and
- The EMT must be prepared to assemble at a remote site or in conference for the COOP implementation.
- The EMTs are composed as follows:



2 COOP RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 MSPB EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITIES





2.2 DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

Authority to approve the contents of the COOP Plan and the implementation of the COOP resides with the Chairman or any Member of the Board acting as the MSPB's chief executive and administrative officer. This authority may be delegated to the Executive Director (ED).

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)

Note: In the event the Office of the Chairman is vacant or the Chairman is temporarily unable to perform the duties of the office, authority to implement the COOP will reside with the Vice Chairman. If the Vice Chairman is unable to perform, the Member of the Board will perform these duties.

2.3 LEADERSHIP AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

2.3.1 Chairman

As head of the MSPB, the Chairman is responsible for emergency planning and is assisted by the Executive Director who serves as the agency's headquarters continuity coordinator.

2.3.2 Office Directors and Deputy Directors

As the heads of MSPB's major offices, the Office Directors and Deputy Directors are responsible for identifying the essential functions and vital records of the organization.

2.3.3 Emergency Coordinator

This individual works with the Continuity Coordinator and Chairman to ensure continuity capability. The Deputy Director of FAM and Facilities Officer have been designated to perform this role and are responsible for developing emergency procedures and (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E)

2.3.4 Human Resources Officer

The Human Resources Officer (HRO) is responsible for coordinating with the Office of Personnel Management, the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant and Health Inspection Services' (APHIS) Human Resources Office and the National Finance Center (NFC) on human resource matters. The HRO will ensure notices of pay, benefits, or death/injury are

provided in a timely manner and that employees continue to be paid during an emergency. The agency has implemented telework agreements and/or arrangements for eligible employees, which would take effect should an emergency occur.

2.3.5 Chief Information Officer



2.3.6 Budget Officer

The Budget Officer is responsible for budgetary and payroll issues as necessary during or in the immediate aftermath of an emergency and oversees the coordination with the Bureau of the Fiscal Services (BFS) and the Office of Management and Budget.

2.3.7 Contracting Officer

The Contracting Officer is responsible for procuring goods or services needed during a COOP event or in the immediate aftermath of an emergency to bring the agency back to full functionality.

2.3.8 Time and Attendance Coordinator

The Time and Attendance (T&A) Coordinator, along with the Human Resources Officer and the Budget Officer, are responsible for ensuring employees are paid to the fullest extent possible and that employee T&A is transmitted to NFC.

2.3.9 Travel Coordinator

The Travel Coordinator, along with the Budget Officer will assist employees that are in travel status to return to their duty station.

2.3.10 Order of Succession for Implementing COOP

To ensure rapid response to an emergency and minimize disruptions requiring COOP implementation, MSPB has other pre-delegated authorities for making certain decisions. The Delegations of Authority specify who is authorized to act on behalf of the agency head or other officials for certain purposes. The current Delegations of Authority (April 2011) may be found on the MSPB Portal.

The following order of succession for implementing the COOP will be executed:

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)



This order of succession applies only to implementing the MSPB's COOP plan. It does not apply to an emergency as defined in Paragraph 2.3.11.

2.3.11 ORDER OF SUCCESSION TO SERVE AS MSPB'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY WHERE THERE IS NO PRESIDENTIALLY APPOINTED, SENATE-CONFIRMED BOARD MEMBER SERVING A TERM.

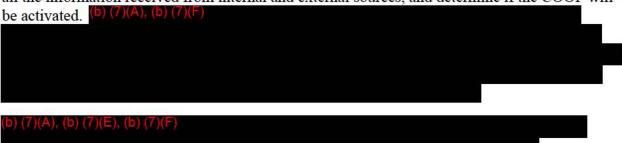
In the event of an emergency where there is no Presidentially-Appointed, Senate-Confirmed Board Member (either a Chairman, Vice Chairman, or Remaining Member) serving a term at MSPB under 5 U.S.C. § 1202, the following order of succession shall apply for purposes of serving as MSPB's chief executive and administrative officer:



Anyone serving in an acting capacity in any of the foregoing roles will be not be in the line of succession to serve as MSPB's chief executive and administrative officer.

2.4 COOP ACTIVATION

The expected manner in which the COOP will be activated is for the Chairman, or the next designated individual in the order of succession, to receive notification of an emergency event disrupting the normal business operations of one or more locations. The Chairman will consider all the information received from internal and external sources, and determine if the COOP will be activated.



This will include the nature of the emergency and an evaluation of the critical nature of the event; the impact of the event on the

affected office(s), as well as on organization operations throughout the country; the estimated duration of the emergency; and whether movement to the alternate site is warranted.

2.4.1 Decision Process

The decision matrix for MSPB's COOP plan will function the same way in all situations below.



2.4.2 Alert, Notification, and Implementation Process

MSPB Points of Contact will notify the FEMA Operations Center (FEMAOC), (540) 665-6100 or (800) 634-7084, and other appropriate agencies. The Chairman or designee will contact the White House and other Executive Branch department officials of any COOP activation regardless of agency location and the time of execution or activation of call-down procedures. The FEMAOC is responsible for relaying notification information to the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC) and the Office of National Security Coordination (ONSC). The MSPB website will also be used to relay information to the general public and MSPB staff on the status of MSPB operations.

2.4.3 COOP Deployment Planning

The team members should have the following available or readily accessible at an off-site location:

- A current copy of the COOP and any associated contingency/recovery plans;
- A laptop computer with software and passwords necessary to remotely access HQ communications systems, including voice, data, fax, security system;
- Information for contacting Administrative Officers and support staff;
- Information for contacting the United States Postal Service (USPS), United Parcel Service, and FedEx for rerouting of shipments;
- Any required security badges, cardkeys, etc. for 24-hour access to the alternate site;

- Information and authorization necessary to contact NFC, BFS and APHIS on payment, accounting, payroll and personnel issues;
- A government travel card (for all EMT members) and a government purchase card; and
- A valid contracting officer's warrant or immediate access to permit the holder to make emergency purchases, or an individual designated to make emergency purchases, as well as the ability to obligate/commit the government to secure goods or services under emergency conditions at the EMT alternate meeting sites.

2.5 EMT MEETING SITES (ALTERNATES)

The purpose of an alternate meeting site is to provide MSPB with a means of accomplishing its COOP mission-essential planning and coordination functions in the event of an emergency or threat if the MSPB primary/principle location cannot be occupied. For a COOP activation involving the MSPB HQ facility, the EMT may be able to conduct initial work via telephone or email.



The Alternate Facility must have available the following:

- A copy of the COOP.
- EMT Members should have their own laptop with a wireless internet card available. The site should have an active high speed WAN connection to HQ or a high speed wireless card available;
- A complete roster of all current MSPB employees and home/emergency telephone numbers;
- A list of all government purchase and travel cardholders, and their card numbers;
- Any software documentation necessary to access data, voice, and security systems;
- A current copy of the property inventory for all offices;
- A copy of any MOU related to COOP services; and
- A copy of any MOU related to NFC, BFS, APHIS, FPS and GSA.

2.6 ALTERNATE FACILITIES



2.7 COOP/RECOVERY PLANS

2.7.1 Cases: Receipt and Reconstruction

The Clerk of the Board has developed a contingency/recovery plan that addresses the issues related to the receipt of cases when a COOP has been implemented. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference. It includes information on how to contact the Federal Register when the place of filing of a case changes on either a temporary or permanent basis. It also includes instructions on processing cases when the Case Management System (CMS) is unavailable and how materials received should be handled once CMS capability is restored.

Procedures for the reconstruction of case files are contained in the records manual and are incorporated into this COOP by reference. The Clerk of the Board will coordinate these requirements and serve as a resource for regional/field offices.

2.7.2 Support

2.7.2.1 Mail Operations

FAM has developed a mail manual. It contains a list of the points-of-contact and procedures for transferring the delivery of mail, express delivery, and courier services for both HQs and the regions. The mail manual is incorporated into this master COOP by reference.

2.7.2.2 Personnel

The HR Officer has developed a contingency/recovery plan for dealing with employee personnel folders (OPF) by use of electronic OPFs. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference.

The employee personnel folders are stored electronically with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in Minneapolis. But, at any time, there may be a small number of OPFs at Headquarters. The HQ Human Resources Officer and the APHIS staff will maintain a list of the location of all OPFs not in Minneapolis. The contingency/recovery plan provides the process in coordination with APHIS regarding the restoration of any OPFs that are lost or damaged at either site.

2.7.2.3 Payroll Operations

The Payroll Team and Human Resources has a contingency/recovery plan to ensure the timely processing of payroll during a COOP period. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by

reference. The T&A Specialist will ensure that she/he has the ability to access payroll records and WebTA via internet or phone remotely, as needed, to process T&As during a COOP period.

2.7.2.4 Vendor Payments

The Contracting Officer (CO) and Accounts Payable Team have a contingency plan for payments to vendors. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference. This plan includes a list of all outstanding vendor payments, including automatic payments for such things as rent, telephones, equipment maintenance, etc. The CO has the ability to obtain goods and services with the purchase card and is able to adjust card limits, as appropriate.

2.7.2.5 Access to Vital Records

The HR Officer will access vital records through APHIS and OPM. Vital records will be accessed in the case of injury or death. The payroll team will access vital records through NFC as necessary.

2.7.3 Other Contingency Recovery Plans

In addition to the contingency/recovery plans as outlined above, this COOP incorporates by reference contingency/recovery plans developed for the following areas:

2.7.3.1 Space/Facilities

The Facilities Officer has a contingency/recovery plan for space/facilities. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference. It contains a copy of the as-built basic floor plan for each MSPB location, as well as information on the GSA contact for GSA leased or government-owned locations and lessor information for MSPB-leased space. Should a building be destroyed, the Facilities Officer will work with GSA to obtain new temporary or permanent space.

2.7.3.2 Voice and Fax Telecommunications

IRM has a contingency/recovery plan for restoration of voice and fax communications. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference. This plan provides a list of current line inventories for all MSPB sites and contains point of contact information for rerouting of voice and fax lines, including any electronic processes for doing so. It also includes specifications for the repair/replacement of telephone systems and equipment.

2.7.3.3 Information Resources

IRM has a contingency/recovery plan for computer, data services, and communications. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference. This plan provides for identification of various types of emergencies and specifies the types of actions required to accomplish this task.

2.7.3.4 Public Information

In addition to the provisions of the records manual covering restoration of case files, the Clerk of the Board has a contingency plan that covers the recovery of additional functions including, but not limited to points of contact at the Federal Register; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the MSPB web-site press releases; and Freedom of Information requests. This plan is incorporated into this master COOP by reference.

2.8 TRAINING

As the major components of the COOP are put in place, the Facilities Officer will ensure regular (at least once a year) training opportunities for key COOP personnel.

2.9 TESTING AND EXERCISES

This COOP will serve the MSPB mission only to the extent that it is tested at least once a year at a minimum and refined on a regular basis. Each year the Facilities Officer will review the COOP and make any necessary changes/updates.

2.10 PLAN MAINTENANCE

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)

3 SHORT TERM RECOVERY PLANS

3.1 OVERVIEW

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)

3.2 EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE

3.2.1 Reporting to work

As a general rule, all employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to reach their regular duty station, regardless of whether the disruption is weather, transit, or other unforeseen circumstances. When appropriate, supervisors are encouraged to authorize telecommuting for employees that have approved/signed telework agreements in place.

Employees can obtain MSPB specific information at:

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F), (b) (7)(E)

MSPB Web-site: <u>www.mspb.gov</u>

(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F), (b) (7)(E)

To obtain OPM guidance on the status of Federal government (DC area only) operations in the event of an area-wide disruption, employees can access OPM's website at:

http://www.opm.gov/Operating Status Schedules or call 202-606-1900

If a disruption occurs, the governing policy will be executed by the regional/field offices, by OPM or the Federal Executive Board or other local authorities.



3.2.2 Employees with Disabilities

Employees with disabilities are encouraged to notify their Office Director/RD/CAJ in advance if they require assistance during an emergency. Additionally, managers and supervisors are encouraged to canvass their employees with disabilities to determine if they are required to report to an alternate location in the event of an emergency. Should such a provision become necessary, the responsible management official must notify the receiving office's designated official of any reasonable accommodations required for the disabled employee to perform the essential functions of their position. Moreover, Office Directors/RDs/CAJs should use discretion in granting leave if the employee is unable to report to an alternate location.

3.2.3 Hiring Flexibilities

Current law and regulations provide human resources flexibilities to assist MSPB in meeting its staffing and hiring needs during COOP or a pandemic health crisis. These flexibilities include hiring authorities to quickly staff mission essential and vital support functions for long or short-term responses, if needed. For COOP purposes, only those flexibilities that do not require OPM approval will be addressed. MSPB may use any of the following authorities during COOP, as outlined below:

3.2.4 Using Private Sector Temporary Firms

When contracting with private sector temporary firms for services to meet emergency needs, these contracts may be for 120 days and may be extended for an additional 120 days subject to displaced employee procedures. Human Resources (HR) will establish a list of potential private contractors who can provide additional support for mission essential and vital support functions during COOP or extended emergencies. (5 CFR 300, subpart E) HR will work with the Chairman or designee, Directors, and the Contracting Officer to identify resources needed to support MSPB mission essential and vital support functions that may not be otherwise available using current staff. HR will also work with these individuals and the Contracting Officer to develop statement(s) of work and other documents necessary in advance to address potential future demands that may prevent the organization from performing its mission essential functions.

3.2.5 30-Day Critical Need Appointment (Schedule A)

This authority may be used to immediately appoint individuals with specialized knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies to address immediate COOP or emergency needs while the agency determines whether longer-term staffing options will be needed. These appointments may be made for 30-days and may be extended for an additional 30 days. (5 CFR 213.3102(i)(2)).

3.2.6 Re-hiring Former Federal Employees

HR will use the flexibility to reappoint people previously employed under a career or career-conditional appointment by reinstatement to a competitive service position. (5 CFR 315 subpart D).

3.2.7 Re-hiring Retirees without Salary Offset

The MSPB may hire retirees back to work in emergency situations or to supplement their workforce during a COOP (5 CFR 553, subpart A) but must obtain a dual compensation wavier from OPM unless automatically available during an emergency situation.

3.2.8 Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP)

Vacancies may be advertised in the local commuting area using these hiring authorities to locate current well-qualified displaced (involuntarily separated) Federal employees for immediate temporary, term, or permanent employment. (5 CFR 330, subparts F and G).

3.2.9 Agency Reemployment Priority List (RPL)

Current and former employees on the agency RPL are another immediate source of qualified individuals available for temporary, term, or permanent competitive service

appointments. The RPL provides selection priority for agency employees who will be or were separated by reduction in force or who have recovered from a work-related injury after more than 1 year. (5 CFR 330). In the aftermath of an emergency, HR will contact OPM to inquire about other agency's RPLs.

3.2.10 120 Days or Less Appointment

The agency may appoint an employee with specialized skills or competencies from another agency for up to 120 days without regard to CTAP or ICTAP selection priority. (5 CFR 330, subparts F and G).

Advertising positions on USAJOBS is not required for 30 day appointments, 1-year (2,080 work hours), and temporary appointments not-to-exceed 1 year. MSPB would have to advertise a position before using direct hiring authority or re-hiring a former employee or an annuitant if the appointment would last longer than 120 days, including extensions.

The regulatory requirements for using these authorities may be suspended or revised during COOP if the President decides to suspend or waive them and all hires will need to be with the concurrence of the Budget Officer.

4 PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

4.1 DEFINITION

Pandemic influenza (flu) is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new influenza virus appears or "emerges" in the human population causing serious illness while it spreads easily from person to person worldwide. The *Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza* recommends that organizations plan for a 40 percent absenteeism rate for periods of about two weeks at the height of the pandemic wave with lower levels of staff absent for a few weeks on either side of the peak. A potential pandemic flu outbreak with significant workplace absence may compromise the ability of the MSPB to accomplish its mission, which could create a COOP event.

4.2 AUTHORITY

The National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan requires Federal departments and agencies to develop plans addressing maintenance of essential functions and services, and communication with stakeholders.

4.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Pandemic Influenza Plan is to provide guidance for achieving the two equally important goals:

• Protect the workforce; and,

Ensure the continuity of agency operations.

4.4 OBJECTIVE

We must plan to deal with the potential implications of a flu outbreak to reduce the impact on employee health and agency operations. While safety and security are normally synonymous with a personal threat on oneself, we must also consider safety and security as a health awareness issue.

4.5 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PANDEMIC FLU

4.5.1 Emergency Coordinator



4.5.2 Human Resources Officer

The Human Resources Officer will be available to answer questions regarding use of leave and other options, including telework and emergency telework plans that might be available to managers and employees as it pertains to absenteeism during a pandemic outbreak. The HR Officer will provide reports (as needed/requested) to OPM, HHS, DHS and FEMA regarding telework and absenteeism resulting from pandemic situations.

4.5.3 Director, Information Resources Management (IRM)



4.5.4 Office and Regional Directors

Office and Regional Directors will make every effort to provide work flexibility for employees who are affected by a pandemic outbreak depending on the needs of the office and the severity of the outbreak within an office. They are instructed to be as flexible as possible with leave, work schedules, telework, and short-term work-at-home assignments or projects while understanding that office needs may vary.

While the majority of the legal staff, specifically attorneys, telework one or more days per week or have the ability to do so, most of the support staff do not telework. Office and Regional Directors are responsible for developing, in advance, temporary Emergency Response Telework plans to accommodate as many of the support staff as possible if they are prevented from working on-site.

Office and Regional Directors are also responsible for promptly notifying the Executive Director, HR Officer and the Facilities Officer or Emergency Coordinator when absenteeism due to flu begins to affect office operations.

5 <u>ATTACHMENTS</u>

- 1. Continuation/Recovery Plans
- 2. Definitions
- 3. Changes History
- 4. Emergency Telework Agreement
- 5. Headquarters Evacuation Area Map
- 6. Shelter in Place
- 7. Contacts for Space
- 8. Time and Attendance
- 9. Payments
- 10. Procurement
- 11. Human Resources
- 12. Common Carrier
- 13. Employee Assistance Program
- 14. Senior Staff and COOP Phone List
- 15. MSPB Citibank Cardholders

Attachment 1

Continuation/Recovery Plans

The following Continuation of Service/Recovery plans have been developed. (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(E), (b) (c)

MSPB CONTINUATION/RECOVERY PLANS					
Function	Activity	Office			
Adjudication	Receipt of Cases	СВ			
	Reconstruction of Case Files	СВ			
Records	NARA, Web Site, etc.	СВ			
Public Notice	Notify Outside Entities	СВ			
Support Services	Mail Operations	FAM			
	Personnel	FAM			
	Payroll Operations	FAM			
	Vendor Payments	FAM			
v	Space/Facilities	FAM			
IRM	Voice and Fax Telecommunications	IRM			
	Information Resources and Data	IRM			

Definitions

The following definitions are used government-wide in COOP planning and may or may not apply to the MSPB COOP.

<u>After-Action Report (AAR)</u>. A narrative report that presents issues found during an incident and recommendations on how those issues can be resolved.

<u>Alternate Database/Records Access</u>. The safekeeping of vital resources, facilities, and records, and the ability to access such resources in the event that the COOP plan is put into effect.

<u>Alternate Facilities</u>. An alternate work site provides the capability to perform minimum essential department or agency functions until normal operations can be resumed.

<u>Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)</u>. An internal effort within individual components of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government to assure the capability exists to continue essential component functions across a wide range of potential emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological and/or attack-related emergencies.

<u>Designated Official</u>. The highest-ranking official of the primary occupant agency or a designee selected by mutual agreement of occupant agency officials.

<u>Emergency</u>. A sudden, usually unexpected event that does or could do harm to people, resources, property, or the environment. Emergencies can range from localized events that affect a single office in a building, to human, natural or technological events that damage, or threaten to damage, local operations. An emergency could cause the temporary evacuation of personnel or the permanent displacement of personnel and equipment from the site to a new operating location environment.

<u>Essential Operations</u>. Those operations stated or implied that are required to be performed by statute, or Executive Order, or other operations deemed essential by the heads of principal organizational elements.

<u>Essential Positions</u>. Those positions stated or implied that are required to be filled by statute, Executive Order or other positions deemed essential by the heads of principal organizational elements.

<u>Hot Site</u>. A relocation site available for immediate occupancy that is equipped to permit rapid resumption of essential functions.

<u>Hot Wash</u>. An information activity that takes place after disaster response or an exercise simulating a disaster. Its purpose is to identify problems and possible solutions for improving future responses. Observation and recommendations are used to develop "Lesson-Learned Report."

<u>Internet</u>. Worldwide interconnection of computers typically interconnected using the TCP/IP protocol. Access to the Internet is normally through service providers and available to the general public.

<u>Interoperable Communications</u>. Alternate communications that provide the capability to perform minimum essential department or agency functions in conjunction with other agencies until normal operations can be resumed.

<u>Intranet</u>. A privately operated internal computer network that is used to publish information, implement human resource or other business applications within a company or organization. The intranet normally provides service to employees and other individuals within a company or organization.

<u>Management Plan</u>. An operational guide that ensures the implementation, maintenance, and continued viability of the COOP.

Occupant Emergency Plan. A site-specific plan for emergency evacuation of buildings for threats that may include fire, snow/ice, storm, or bomb/HAZMAT threats.

<u>Pandemic Influenza.</u> (Flu) is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new influenza virus appears or "emerges" in the human population, causing serious illness, and spreads easily from person to person worldwide. The *Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza* recommends that organizations plan for a 40 percent absenteeism rate for periods of about two weeks at the height of the pandemic wave, with lower levels of staff absent for a few weeks on either side of the peak.

<u>Plan Maintenance</u>. Steps taken to ensure the plan is reviewed annually and updated whenever major changes occur.

<u>Primary Facility</u>. The site of normal day-to-day operations; the location where the employee usually goes to work.

<u>Relocation Site</u>. The site where all or designated employees will report for work if required to move from the primary facility.

<u>Situation Report (SITREP)</u>. A written formatted report that provides a picture of the response activities during a designated reporting period.

<u>Training and Exercise</u>. This activity includes: 1) efforts to educate/advise designated staff on COOP responsibilities and on the existing plans; and 2) tests to demonstrate the viability and interoperability of all plans supporting COOP requirement.

<u>Vital Records and Systems</u>. The necessary records to maintain the continuity of operations during an emergency, fully recover operations following an emergency, and protect the legal rights and interests of citizens and the government. The two basic categories of vital records are: emergency operating records and rights and interests records.

Changes History

Changes

1	Updated November 2008
2	Updated March 2012
3	Updated January 2014
4	Updated January 2016
5	Updated July 2016
6	Updated March 2017
7	Updated April 2018
8	Updated May 2018
9	Updated September 2018
10	Updated October 2018
11	Updated November 2018

Change Number	Section	Date of Change	Individual Making Change	Description of Change

Emergency Telework Agreement

OFFICE/DIVISION:
EMPLOYEE:
POSITION:
Your position has been designated as an Emergency Telecommuter by your Supervisor.
In an emergency while employed with the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), you may be asked to accomplish work away from your official duty station. Your alternate work site in such instances is identified below.
APPROVED ALTERNATE WORKSITE (HOUSE/APT#, STREET, CITY, STATE)
HOUSE/APT # & STREET
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

You are required to follow all applicable policies and procedures during the emergency.

You, your supervisor, and the Human Resources Office will each maintain a copy of the Agreement for reference.

Your pay and leave entitlements will be based on your official duty station regardless of where you perform telework duties during an emergency.

If you are in possession of Government property, you are responsible for its use, care, and safekeeping.

The U.S. Government will not be liable for damages to your personal or real property while you are working at an approved alternate work site, except to the extent the U.S. Government is held liable by the Federal Tort Claims Act or the Civilian Employees Claims Act.

You understand the U.S. Government will not be responsible for any operating costs that are associated with using your home as an alternate work site; for example, home maintenance, insurance,

additional phone lines, or utilities. Work-related long-distance (domestic and international) phone calls will be reimbursed by the agency in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and policies.

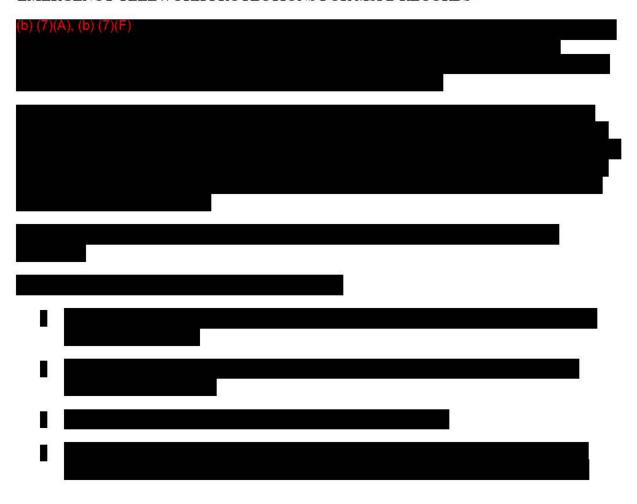
You are covered under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act if injured in the course of actually performing official duties at the regular office or the alternate work site. If possible, you must notify your supervisor immediately of any accident or injury that occurs at the alternate work site and eventually you will be required to complete the necessary forms.

You agree to complete all assigned work during the telework period as directed by your supervisor and provide status reports, if requested. If you are unable to provide assignment documentation to your supervisor during the emergency, you will provide it to your supervisor upon your return to the office (or to an interim location).

You agree to protect U.S. Government or agency records from unauthorized disclosure, disposal, or damage and will comply with requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a.

You agree to continue to be bound by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch while working at your alternate work site. Nothing in this agreement precludes the MSPB from taking any appropriate disciplinary action against you should you fail to comply with the provisions of this agreement or other federal regulations.

EMERGENCY TELEWORK PROTECTIONS FOR MSPB RECORDS



(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)		
•		<u>~</u>
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THI	E U.S. Merit Systems Protection Bo	pard
AND	(Employee)	
Employae's Cionatura/Data		
Employee's Signature/Date:		-

This agreement is automatically terminated at the conclusion of any such emergency unless otherwise extended by the Agency, your supervisor/manager or designee.

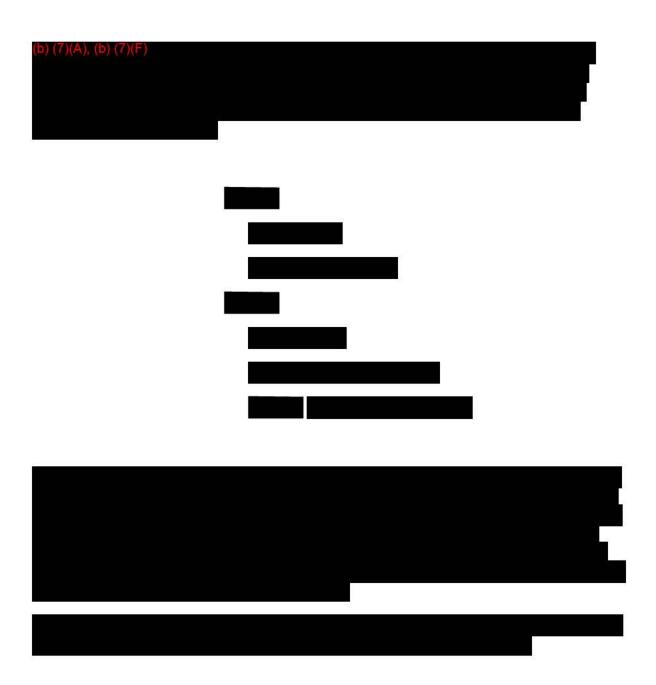
Supervisor's Signature/Date:

Human Resources Officer Signature/Date:

Headquarters Evacuation Area Map



Shelter in Place



Contacts for Space

In the event of an emergency situation, we may need to contact various entities to discuss or procure space for MSPB operations. The contacts for office space at Headquarters (HQ) and the Regional and Field Offices are:

HQ

Boston Properties



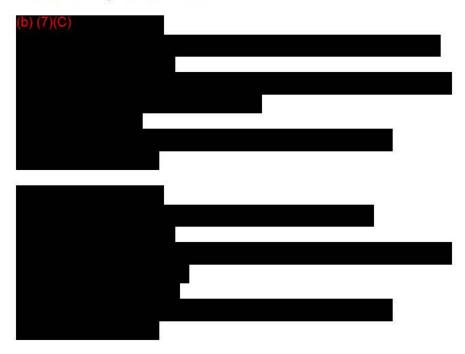
GSA



Contacts for Space (Continued)



Atlanta Regional Office



Chicago Regional Office

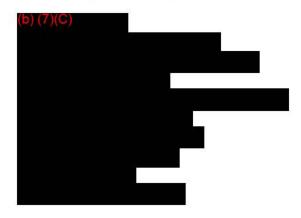


Contacts for Space (Continued)

Dallas Regional Office



Denver Field Office

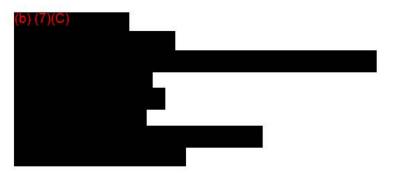


New York Field Office



Contacts for Space (Continued)

Oakland Regional Office



Philadelphia Regional Office



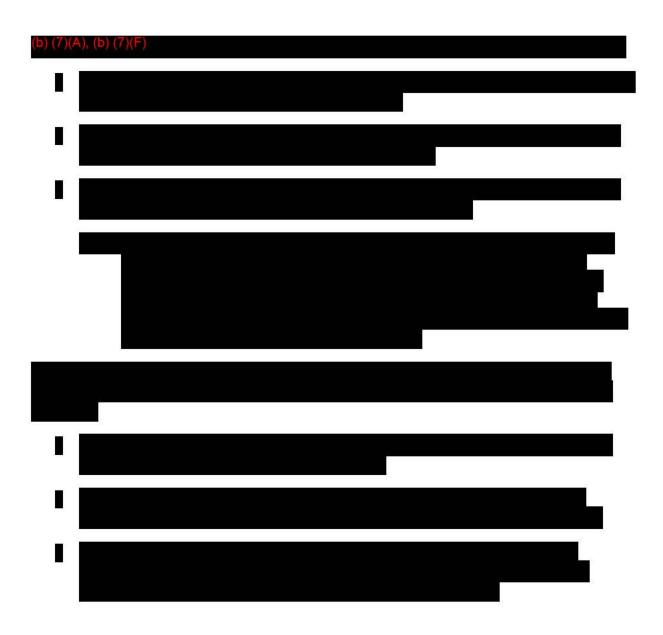
Washington Regional Office



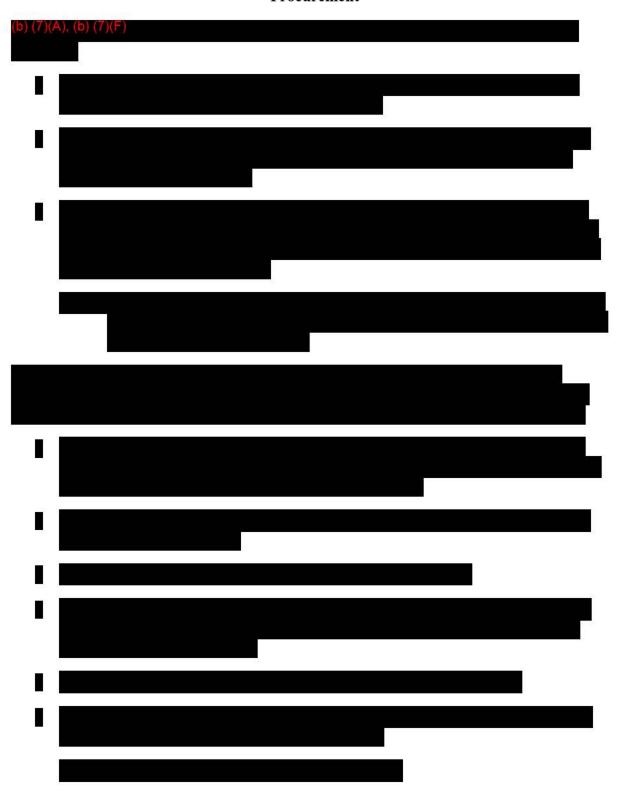
Time and Attendance



Payments



Procurement



Human Resources (HR)



Common Carrier

In the event of an emergency situation or COOP event, it may be necessary to contact National and Local Carriers for special mail handling instructions. The contact information is as follows:

National Accounts	POC/Position	Account #	Phone
U. S. Postal Service	Customer Service	(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)	
UPS	Customer Service	_	
1000		_	
FedEx	Customer Service		
	3rd Party Billing (Regions)		

Local Carriers		
Metropolitan Delivery Corporation	Customer Service	(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)
Washington Courier Express	Customer Service	
On Time Delivery (COB)	Customer Service	

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

1-800-222-0364

www.foh.dhhs.gov

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services' Federal Occupation Heath (FOH) Unit and is a comprehensive program that helps employees resolve personal problems that may adversely impact their work performance, conduct, health and well-being. FOH's EAP addresses problems in the quickest, least restrictive, and most convenient manner while minimizing cost and protecting client confidentiality. Some of the services include:

- Let's Talk Newsletter
- Advance Directives
- What to Expect When Contacting the Employee Assistance Program
- EAP Website
- Assessment, counseling and referral services
 - Family/relationship issues
 - Workplace concerns
 - Alcohol and drug problems
 - Personal and emotional difficulties
 - Health and behavioral issues
- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
- Employee risk management (supervisor and union consultation)
- Financial services
- Legal services
- Management reports (utilization and trend analyses)

Senior Staff and COOP (*) Phone List

Name	Office Ext.	Contact Number
(b) (7)(A) (b) (7)(E)		
(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)		

MSPB Citibank Cardholders

CARDHOLDER'S NAME	TITLE	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	
	НО			
(b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(F)				
	Regional/Field Offices			
(b) (7)(F), (b) (7)(A)				

Occupant Emergency Plan (COOP) Responsibilities

MSPB Office	Site Responsibility
Headquarters	Merit Systems Protection Board
Atlanta	General Services Administration
Chicago	General Services Administration
Dallas	General Services Administration
Dallas	General Services Administration
Denver	Merit Systems Protection Board
	•
New York	General Services Administration
Oakland	General Services Administration
Philadelphia	Internal Revenue Service
WRO	Merit Systems Protection Roard
WKO	Merit Systems Protection Board