**Definition of Mission Essential Functions (MEFs)**

**Mission Essential Functions (MEFs):** MEFs are essential functions that an organization must continue throughout, or resume rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities. MEFs are those functions that enable an organization to provide vital services, exercise civil authority, maintain the safety of the public, and/or sustain the industrial/economic base.

**MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

**MEFs** (including State, territorial, tribal, and local jurisdiction MEFs) are the limited set of an organization’s functions and activities that cannot be deferred. For NFGs (non-federal governments), MEFs are those organizational missions required to be performed during a disruption to provide vital services, exercise civil authority, maintain the safety and health of the public, and sustain the industrial and economic base. It is important to understand that these functions include those performed at all locations, not just at headquarters.

While many functions are important during a disruption, organizations must focus their efforts and limited resources on those functions that cannot be deferred. When identifying these functions, it is important to consider the following:

• If an organization identifies too many functions as essential, limited resources and/or staff availability during the emergency may not be sufficient to enable performance of all identified essential functions.

• If an organization fails to identify functions as essential and does not include them in continuity plans, these functions may not be performed during an emergency.

The key is to identify the highest priority functions and the required resources and capabilities to ensure that they can be performed. During less severe disruptions, it may be possible for organization personnel to accomplish many non-essential functions as well, and this is to be expected and encouraged, as long as this does not interfere with the performance of those most critical functions that the organization has identified as the essential functions.

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***Mission Essential Functions*** *— Agency functions that must be continued throughout, or resumed soon after, a disruption of normal activities.*

*The Mission Essential Functions you select reflect the business of your agency, rather than the activities necessary to relocate.*

*NOTE: This isn’t an evaluation of how “important” or “valued” a function is. Mission essential functions can be considered those “time sensitive” functions that must be continued shortly after an emergency and can’t be deferred. If an organization identifies too many functions as essential, including functions that could be deferred during an emergency, its resources may be challenged, and the truly essential functions may not be accomplished. Alternatively, if an organization fails to identify a mission essential function during the planning process, it may not be adequately prepared to perform that function during an emergency, and its partners and constituents may suffer as a result.*

*When listing your Mission Essential Functions, first decide the frequency of how often the function must be conducted (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.). Then, identify which/how many personnel it requires to complete the function, as well as any specialized resources it may require for completion (software, apps, systems, tools, etc.). Once you've added your Mission Essential Functions to the list, you can then prioritize the functions by TIER, based on the time sensitivity of their completion.*

*Also, consider whether the Mission Essential Function you are adding is a function and not a “list of tasks”. This can bog down your plan. For example, "Process bi-weekly agency payroll" is an essential function. "Confirm list of available employees", "enter remaining leave requests", or "double check spreadsheet errors" are all tasks associated with the MEF " Process bi-weekly agency payroll " and should not be entered as essential functions.Mission Essential Functions — Agency functions that must be continued throughout, or resumed soon after a disruption of normal activities.   
  
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When listing your Mission Essential Functions, first decide the frequency of how often the function must be conducted (Daily, weekly, quarterly, etc.). Then, identify how many personnel it requires to complete the function as well as any specialized resources it may require to complete (vehicles, tools, software, etc.). Once you've added your Mission Essential Functions to the list, you can then prioritize the functions based on their time sensitivity of being completed.  
  
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***Primary Mission Essential Functions - “PMEF” is the abbreviated term for "Primary Mission Essential Function".*** *This is any function performed by your organization that cannot be deferred and meets one or more of the following criteria:  
  
1. Legal: A function that is required to be completed by law / ordinance  
  
2. Commonwealth mandate: A function that is required to be completed by directive / executive order  
  
3. Health/life safety: Required to be completed based on critical health and/or life safety   
  
4. Maintain economic stability: Manage finances and ensure solvency for the Commonwealth  
  
These are the functions shared with your agency head and the Governor as the "important elements agencies are taking care of" within the first few days of an event.  
  
When entering a primary essential function, be sure to explain the justification for identifying the function as primary essential. The explanation should be documented in the Mission Essential Function field. (i.e. the law, ordinance, and/or directive by which this function is required. Or, how does the function impact critical health and/or life safety?)*