

# Commercial Risk Advisor

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Provided by:

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## Preparing a Business for Disaster

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Disasters can occur at any time and completely interrupt a business's progress, potentially causing significant setbacks that threaten the health of the organization. Although disasters are often unpredictable, it is possible for businesses to prepare themselves for disaster scenarios to minimize damage. By following these simple steps, businesses can improve their chances for a quick recovery after a disaster:

- **Identify the most likely disasters**—Although the word disaster may conjure up images of earthquakes or wildfires, disasters can also include much more common events such as employee errors, power outages or technological malfunctions. To effectively prepare your business, identify the disasters that are most likely to affect your business.
- **Identify the processes, people, equipment and materials most vital to your business's operations**—Each business is unique and relies heavily on certain resources to maintain effective daily operation. Identify these critical resources and develop a plan to recover them in the event of a disaster.
- **Develop a disaster recovery plan**—The most effective way to recover from a disaster is to have a plan in place for every likely scenario. Develop a plan to keep your business and its employees safe in the event of a disaster, including an evacuation route and meeting place. Consider what to do if your building is inaccessible after a disaster, employees cannot come back to work or property is damaged. Routinely review and practice the plan with employees.
- **Have the appropriate insurance coverage**—Make sure you're insured for potential risks, and never be afraid to ask your insurance agent questions if you're unsure about what your policy covers.



## Telecommuting as a Scheduling Option

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Many employers are offering telecommuting—the ability to work remotely from home or another location—as a way to reduce commuting costs, promote work-life balance and increase the pool of qualified job candidates. However, telecommuting offers employers benefits that go beyond the time, money and energy savings associated with reduced travel:

- The cost of energy, furniture and space in the workplace is greatly reduced.
- Productivity can increase, as employees can dress and work more comfortably in their own home than in an office and are away from the distractions of the workplace.
- Quality of work can improve as a result of employees' higher morale and the feeling that they have a greater ownership of their work.
- Employees are more accessible during the time that they would normally be driving to and from work.
- Telecommuting policies can significantly reduce absenteeism and tardiness amongst employees, especially due to weather, traffic and other conditions that deter employees from traveling to an office.
- The ability to work from home appeals to prospective and existing employees alike, as it offers flexibility for those who have a long commute and encourages employees who may have to relocate for a spouse or want a greater work-life balance not to leave the company, which can save money lost due to turnover.
- Employees feel trusted, which not only improves the working relationship between employees and their supervisors, but empowers employees to work hard to retain that sense of trust.

Telecommuting can be a great option for employers and employees alike. Consult legal experts when creating a telecommuting policy to discuss potential compliance issues. Contact Hodge, Hart & Schleifer for more information on determining whether this scheduling option suits your organization.

According to a survey by Owl Labs, companies that offer remote-friendly options see **25% less employee turnover** than companies that do not.