



## Risk Control

# Workforce Continuity

Workforce absentee rates may quickly rise to unacceptable levels during a public health outbreak, widespread flood, wildfire, labor dispute or other disruptive event. Business leaders are challenged to continue to develop and deliver their products and services when a large number of essential employees simply cannot come to work. Below are some considerations to help business leaders manage an impact to their most important asset.

### Prepare in advance when possible:

1. Identify vital people-driven functions and processes.
2. Identify critical skills and training requirements.
3. Develop strategies to provide for continuity of operations during periods of high absentee rates.
  - a. Establish job rotations/training programs and find contract/temporary workforce alternatives.
  - b. Transfer work or resources
    - i. Remote work or use resources from another location to support key activities at affected site.
    - ii. Insource the work to another location.
    - iii. Outsource work where possible.
  - c. Increase inventory of key production components.
  - d. Alternate suppliers: Consider expanding key suppliers of goods and services, including distributors.
4. Update your business strategies and continuity plans to include continuity of workforce considerations.

### Respond effectively during periods of high absenteeism:

1. Develop a mechanism to capture employee/contractor absence rates in real-time (daily).
2. Establish cross-functional response team to:
  - a. Monitor and manage key processes on a daily basis.
  - b. Develop company-wide strategies to support local service/production staff shortages, such as:
    - i. HR solutions to maximize use of available employees (e.g., increased wages/time off for overtime)
    - ii. Use of recent transfer and retired staff with required skills where possible
    - iii. Arranging safe transportation for essential staff
    - iv. Prioritization and adjustments for service/production activities to maximize use of available staff
    - v. Expanding the resource pool for critical operations
  - vi. Transferring work or resources to meet the need

When production/service delays or cancellations cannot be avoided, it is vital to clearly communicate any changes in your ability to deliver products and services. Refer to CNA's [Leadership Guidance for Response Team Decisions](#) to establish a team to manage your company-wide response and communicate with customers and stakeholders.

To learn more about how to help your clients manage risks and increase efficiencies, please contact CNA Risk Control at [RiskControl@cna.com](mailto:RiskControl@cna.com) or visit [cna.com/riskcontrol](https://cna.com/riskcontrol).