

National Essential Functions – with illustrative examples

Those Government Functions that are necessary to lead and sustain the country during an emergency and, therefore, that must be supported through continuity capabilities. The NEFs will be the primary focus of the President and the national leadership during and following an emergency. These are categories of functions performed by one or more departments and agencies. They are not new authorities, requirements, or functions.

The illustrative examples are suggested PMEFs to support the NEFs. PMEFs should be regarded as the “end” – not the “means” to the end. The “means” will be reflected as Supporting Activities or Capabilities in department or agency continuity plans.

1. **Preserve our Constitutional form of government.** This NEF includes department and agency functions that respect and implement the check and balance relationship among the three branches of the Federal government.
 - Illustrative example:
 - Preserve essential communications between the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches.
2. **Provide leadership visible to the Nation and the world; maintain the trust and confidence of the American people.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to demonstrate that the Federal government is viable, functioning, and effectively addressing the emergency.
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Communicate with the American people and foreign leaders
 - Coordinate with and provide information to state and local governments
3. **Defend the country against all enemies, foreign or domestic, and prevent or interdict future attacks.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to protect and defend the worldwide interests of the United States against foreign or domestic enemies, to honor security agreements and treaties with allies, and to maintain military readiness and preparedness in furtherance of national interests and objectives
 - Illustrative example:
 - Maintain the security of the United States through timely and effective deployment of the Armed Forces.
4. **Maintain and foster effective relationships with foreign nations.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to maintain and strengthen American foreign policy.
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Ensure the ability to communicate and interact with Foreign governments to coordinate responses to the emergency and build international support for U.S. actions
 - Cooperate with foreign governments to share intelligence and identify threats

5. **Protect against threats to the homeland and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the nation, its citizens or interests.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to protect against, prevent, or interdict attacks on the people or interests of the nation and to identify, incarcerate, and punish those who have committed violations of the law.
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Maintain the security of the nation’s borders against unlawful or hostile entry
 - Ensure the safety of commercial transportation
 - Conduct law enforcement investigations of Federal crimes

6. **Provide rapid and effective response to and recovery from the domestic consequences of an attack or other incident.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to implement response and recovery plans, including, but not limited to, the National Response Plan.
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Collect and disseminate incident and threat related information
 - Provide medical care to the population affected by the attack or incident.

7. **Protect and stabilize the nation’s economy; ensure confidence in financial systems.** This NEF includes department and agency functions to minimize the economic consequences of an attack or other major impact on national or international economic functions or activities.
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Coordinate re-opening of financial markets
 - Facilitate movement of goods and services across borders to support economic activity.

8. **Provide for critical Federal government services that address the national health, safety, and welfare needs of the Nation.** This NEF includes department and agency functions that ensure that the critical national level needs of the nation are met during an emergency. [Note: this NEF is strictly limited to *critical* functions of the Federal government with a national level consequence; it *not* does apply to general well-being and welfare of the nation.]
 - Illustrative examples:
 - Ensure and maintain the safety and efficiency of the nation’s air traffic
 - Protect the nation’s food supply
 - Provide timely and accurate severe storm warning information to the public.