



Executive Summary

The Southwest Regional Planning Council has served the Southwest Florida region for many years. This past year, and through the CARES Act as signed by the United States Congress, we have been asked to help with the devastating consequences of the COVID Pandemic. One of the tools developed for this task has been the Recovery and Resiliency Guide for SW Florida businesses of all size.

I have researched, written, edited and compiled data from sources throughout the country including the Colorado Small Business Development Council, (CSBDC), Small Business Administration, (SBA), research from experts, local anecdotal evidence and my personal experiences of owning and operating a small business for many years.

The result is this guide which is intended to prepare, plan and respond to risk, mitigate those risks and assess losses that may occur during, or as a result of, catastrophic events. We know that all aspects of business come from three categories- “people, places and things”. This guide identifies as many of those components and mitigates losses associated with all of them. This is a comprehensive attempt to secure the success of your business and I would suggest that time spent with this guide, its steps to resilience and the value of recovery, is worth the time spent working with the steps in the guide. Many of the tasks within this guide have already been performed. They can be assigned here, as part of this step-by-step process, and will strengthen the outcome of your resilience and recovery in an organized manner.

It is important for any business to have the information that will help identify its financial structure, liability issues, insurance coverages, contact lists of officials at key agencies, (from local, state and federal levels), and the ability to communicate with them to implement the steps that are necessary for recovery.

The ability of a business to access its own records and prepare for the unknown is essential to recovery and resilience. This Recovery Guide offers suggestions as to steps in that direction. It is important to me to know where I stand economically, where I can get help if I need it and how to maintain communication with my clients in times that may be difficult to do so. The steps discussed in the guide will give a business owner or manager a much clearer vision of the strengths and weaknesses of the business and help prepare that business for the ups and downs that inevitably occur during business. It is vital to have a plan, prepare for disaster and respond to that disaster. This guide will help you do that.