

Introduction

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Kirsten: You're listening to the NCDPS Safety Scoop, a podcast that dives into the stories of the people, programs and resources within the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. Each episode, we'll give you the scoop from department personnel on how NCDPS enhances the safety of the people of North Carolina.

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Season 2 Episode 4

Kirsten: Welcome to the Safety Scoop. I'm excited to introduce you to this episode's guest, Persia Payne-Hurley. Persia is the Private Sector Manager and Business Emergency Operations Center Coordinator. It's a long title, but there isn't a short way to lay out everything that Persia does in her role in North Carolina Emergency Management. She's a relationship builder, problem solver, resource manager and many other roles all roped into one. She joined Emergency Management in 2014 from the private sector, knowing that she had a lot in front of her in this newly created role. Her first challenge came five weeks after she started her job when Hurricane Arthur made landfall off the coast of our state in July, making it the earliest known hurricane to make landfall in North Carolina during the calendar year. From her start date, Persia has been committed to forming a Business Emergency Operations Center, or BEOC, which existed in very few other states at that time. Working under the leadership of then North Carolina Emergency Management Director Michael Sprayberry, Persia learned everything she needed to know about emergency management operations, telling me she started her day at 8:00 a.m. in his office every day for months to ensure she was on the right path.

The BEOC that she would create would make the division better and fill in the response and recovery gaps that existed at the time. Her work eventually opened the door to bring private sector partners into the state's Emergency Operations Center during times of disaster, what she will refer to as an activation, and essentially help with providing impacted communities with commodities and resources that are so desperately needed in times of crisis. You can tell she loves her job and is passionate about her work. During our discussions, she repeatedly admitted that she's excited, and I encouraged her to speak on every facet of her role. When you hear someone with as much knowledge and professional accolades as Persia get enthusiastic about something, how can you not feel that excitement, too?

Enough from me, I'll turn it over to Persia. What is a Business Emergency Operations Center?

Persia Payne-Hurley: Yeah, well, we call it the BEOC. The BEOC in North Carolina, first of all, it's very unique. It is a physical and a virtual communications and operational hub for all of the companies and—and industry leaders that do business in North Carolina. And particularly, we focus on what they're doing before, during and after disasters. What we can do to help keep them operational, what we can do to support their continued work serving the communities where they live.

I like to—I like to explain the BEOC as a response beast, and that's what it is. It's a response beast that has arms and legs, any other—in the other elements of emergency management in response and recovery and mitigation and preparedness and because that's happened, it's sort of pushed its way into those areas. So, it creates a place where the private sector can meet the public sector and help to solve solutions, help to fill gaps, help us to expand our capabilities to help people in North Carolina.

Kirsten: What is the BEOC's role in emergency response and incident management?

Persia: In—in emergency response and incident management, what the BEOC does is it—it's created a way for the private sector to be incorporated in the state Emergency Operations Center. So, what does that mean? The way North Carolina responds is unique in the country because we follow ICS. A lot of other groups are organized by ESF, meaning Emergency Support Function. Because we use incident management, the private sector has a—a way to be a resource not only for just commodities and supplies and—and that kind of thing, but also for service, heavy equipment, things on loans, offering things at cost, for rent and for donation. And that service, not to mention service but their expertise, is something that the State Emergency Response Team (we call it the SERT) uses, can use and has access to every single activation. If they need something immediate, something that the state doesn't have on hand, something that is more of a service rather than a supply, like internet. That's a good example. They have access to that immediately, and that means the counties and the communities also have access. So, this incorporation of private into response means that we can do a number of things.

One of the things we do, we call it “speed to the need,” meaning a community needs something in big quantities right now, maybe not the kind of thing that the state has in their warehouses. Like we, for instance, we don't keep diapers and formula in the warehouses, but if we needed it in large quantities, we would be able to get it right now, transport it to the need right now. And when I say, “right now,” I'm talking about a matter of hours. And we call that “speed to the need.” And usually, not only that those—does that help communities bounce back faster, but people are getting the help they need right now rather than waiting till tomorrow or waiting until a shipment comes in or, you know. So, we have found a way—it's like walking through a keyhole—to get from zero to support instantly, and that's something that the BEOC specializes in.

Kirsten: Wow! That's really cool. So, what led you to this career path in North Carolina Emergency Management?

Persia: I—I always say that God reinvented me. I'm a retired army officer. I also spent 14 years in corporate America, and I never thought that emergency management... It never crossed my mind. It was never on my radar. I wanted to be a ballerina but not an emergency manager. So, this opportunity came totally on a fluke. I heard that there was a someone that North Carolina Emergency Management was looking for who could build relationships. And although very vague, I thought, in that description, I thought, "Hey, I can do that." And as I just retired from the army, I thought it would be a good way to start a new career. And no emergency management background, but heavy on operations and command. You know, the folks at NCEM gave me a chance, and it's been fun, huge, ever since.

Kirsten: And you have a team behind you doing this work. And so, what kind of professional skills do individuals on a team like this need?

Persia: Well, I—I think it's a—it's a great question. It's kind of funny because for... I've been doing this for coming up on, oh, about eight and a half years now, and for about six of those I was a army of one. So, and when I say that, I mean inside the agency, but as far as private sector support we are now at about 1,300 private sector company members. So, in terms of the team, I now, though, have a wonderful person working for me named James Wong who is a fantastic Private Sector Manager. And regarding the skill... And we're building, I think. We're going to build a bigger team because we're growing so quickly.

In terms of the skills, everyone talks about oral and written communication skills being important, and they are certainly important here, but more than that, people that can read other people and build teams; people that have a strength in understanding people's strengths and putting those strengths with other people with like strengths; and also folks that are problem solvers; people that are results oriented. What is going to get you to the answer? So, it's a lot more active, I would say, rather than a passive role in terms of it being operational. I think the theory is great, but the action and the results, especially when we're in disasters, are going to mean a lot more and make a bigger difference. So, people that are able to connect the dots, see the big picture, that's going to be helpful, as well as a mind for organizing a lot of moving pieces.

Kirsten: I was astounded that for six years, Persia had been building relationships, coordinating and problem solving with private sector partners on her own, a shop of one. And now that shop has grown to be two strong, working during what is referred to as blue sky days to generate more partnerships and ensure everything is aligned and organized so that swift action can be taken to fulfill a need once the Emergency Operations Center is activated. I asked Persia how she went about organizing this program from scratch with no formula to go off of and very few real-world examples to emulate.

Persia: The first eight months was really about starting a program and inviting the private sector to come in and really get involved in what North Carolina Emergency Management does. So, the first thing we did was give them something that we like to call NCEM 101 on what it is what we're doing and let them help us brainstorm on how they can help North Carolina stabilize after a disaster, prepare for a disaster, support communities. And a lot of ideas came from private sector. And when they realized how much we wanted to work with them and not just hold them at arm's length but invite them to be *in* with us, really partnering with us, the more they came and the more from different various aspects of business and industry, places that we didn't expect to help.

Kirsten: And like you said, there have been other states that had set up theirs, but you didn't really have much to go off of. Any other kind of stories or anecdotes about getting the North Carolina BEOC up and running?

Persia: No, I didn't have a, well, I had, um, some theories. There were a lot of white papers that had been written, particularly by—from Louisiana BEOC. I like to call them the queen of the BEOCs because based on what they started and what a few other states were thinking about, talking about, doing, it seemed to me that—not—I was already sold that this was something that was necessary, that private and public need to be working before, during, after disasters for the—the best health of the people, to protect business and, I'd like to say, to protect North Carolina's economic strength which also means protecting jobs, which also means protecting families. And so, you know, we are, in fact, in this symbiotic relationship with business. And so, acknowledging that and really pushing the envelope on how far business would go to help us. I needed to ask them. So, to start this off, welcoming into the EOC. We had a great meeting here with about 70 or 75 corporate business partners when they learned that we were very serious about doing something that maybe no one else had done before. Fortunately, I didn't know no one had done it before. I just thought, "This is a great idea. Let's try this." And thankfully, my director at the time, Mike Sprayberry, supported that idea.

So, in eight months we had roughly 200 partners, and we came out of Hurricane Arthur having been the first state to participate in the National BEOC call that FEMA does. And we had the hurricane. It was just timing. And I was able to present what I thought the private sector wanted to know in a disaster. And this was really based on what I like to call a God idea. In the heat of battle with the hurricane churning up the coast, what do I think, what do businesses want to know? And sort of based the format off of that and brought in my partner agency partners, like people from operations and logistics, NCDOT and others to help form this picture for private sector on what was happening here and how we viewed this progression of the storm. And, um, about 48 hours later, we had about 60 partners who heard that, had good information. Information sharing situational awareness, that's a primary core capability that we have here, and they felt like they were in tune. That was the beginning of what we could build.

So, filling gaps, having a way to solve problems has then become our mainstay. So, seeing a need, for instance, in—in the urban search and rescue teams. Urban search and rescue teams in North Carolina are one—some of the best in the country, and there's no doubt. They are amazing. They risk their lives every day. One thing that they didn't have, and that is a collapse expert on their team. Well, I sat down with the North Carolina civil engineers, structural engineers and the North Carolina architects, and I asked them if they would think about lending their professional expertise to North Carolina during disasters and after disasters and what that would mean to communities and counties here. What that would mean to people who were evacuated out of their homes and couldn't return and didn't know if their homes were safe to return due to flooding or wind or whatever, and how they could lend that expertise to making sure those homes were safe, dams were safe, rail, bridges.

And they were thrilled to become volunteers to the state, so we now have an MOU, a Memorandum of Understanding, with those three groups. We call those groups the DPO, design professional organization volunteers. And those groups trained. We laid out some training for them. They took training, and many of them are dual license. And now those guys, not only did he help North Carolina, like in Hurricane Matthew they inspected about 454 homes in about four days, so the people can return home, declaring those were safe, or declaring that they couldn't return home because those were unsafe, but they've also now been EMAC'ed, and that's a mutual aid agreement between states. They've been EMAC'ed to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. They were also EMAC'ed to Alaska for the Alaskan earthquakes. So, that is just one example of a way to solve problems that the private sector brought their muscle to bear in a partnership with North Carolina Emergency Management. And it is a free service to the people of North Carolina.

Kirsten: It sounds like what you said, it's not only benefiting North Carolinians but members—residents in other states as well.

Persia: It's true. So, that example of that agreement has been something that, you know, I had the honor to present at the—the National Emergency Management Association meeting to let other states know what we were doing here. But that is an example of the kinds of things that we do here. So, now we have about 260, roughly, engineers, architects, and they are across areas of expertise. And this is something that they feel that they can do to get back to communities, and some of them are dual licenses. So, some of them do dams, bridges, roads. And some of them do historical landmarks. So, it's a very specialized area, but that expertise is now, you know, fitting in the form of these volunteers to our agency.

Kirsten: It took Persia 18 months to get the Business Emergency Operations Center operational, starting with what she calls a virtual warehouse, and it was running right before Hurricane Matthew hit the state in 2016.

Persia:

I created a, um, virtual warehouse. It seemed to me personally that having a warehouse, a physical warehouse where people and volunteers would have to go there and inventory and control that stuff, and it seemed like a lot of labor and manpower at a time that we really need the volunteers to perhaps be doing other things. But if we had a virtual warehouse (and with all this technology, why not, right?) where our partners could post the things that they were willing to offer, that things could be a lot more efficient. So, we created a virtual warehouse. We call it a BEOC Assets Board. Our partners have trained them on this. They can go in, and they can post items for on loan, at cost, for rental or for—for donation, and those things can be anything.

So, we have deployable force packages. Some groups that have a actual item with crew. It could be a piece of equipment, it could be supplies, it could be food, whatever that is. Or it can be things that are being donated, even if they are across the country, but our private partners have already agreed that the donor pays the cost of transport. So, they are transporting it. So, that is not taking any manpower from North Carolina Emergency Management or our state to transport that or to distribute that. That part's taken care of. We know the private sector is fantastic at logistical operations. They do it all the time. They are fast. We're able to get things quickly out to the counties. That's what I meant when I say we call it speed to the need. They need it; we speed it there. And that is what made us operational. So, a resource request can be taken from a county or from any of the State Emergency Response Teams, and that request can come through our crisis management platform to the BEOC, and we assign it to a company that fills that request. And that is what made us operational.

Kirsten:

Are there any regular requests that come in during these emergencies or anything that, um, that there is, like, a dire need for that people wouldn't really think about?

Persia:

We certainly have a lot of repeat requests. Water is a common one. Usually, if we get into sheltering, and—and this happened during Hurricane Florence. When we get into sheltering, there is always a need for particular things, and the thing that people don't think about is in shelters, there's always a need for kid's books and kid's games, board games, things to keep the—the kids occupied or things to, uh, to ease their stress levels because it's very stressful to evacuate to a shelter. We supply food, obviously, bedding and pillows and the rest. And we help groups like Red Cross and other voluntary organizations to fill those needs. So, in a state shelter that we did during Hurricane Florence, we had a Sears building about 287,000 square feet, and our great partners at Charter put high speed internet in that building for us, for our survivors that took shelter there. And that meant that they were getting high speed, and that was free of charge, too.

And also other groups, like, um, I mentioned Target with Xboxes and so forth for kids and books and toys and an area for them to safely play away from all of the activity. So, those are the kind of things that I don't think people think about. Also, babies are always born during hurricanes. So, we have many partners that

help us with mobile clinics, mobile surgery units, mobile hospitals that can be deployed wherever we need them in the state. And those show up on the BEOC Assets Board. We have had prop planes show up on that assets board. We have had everything from dog food to heavy equipment that companies are saying, "Hey, we are happy to loan this to the state, or donate it to the state, depending on what it is, in case they need it."

Kirsten: So, going back to kind of setting up the BEOC and once you had that operational, other states still did not have theirs set up. Did you have any states who reached out to you for assistance or wanted some guidance as they set up this operation for their constituents?

Persia: Well, you know, that was a big surprise for me. And I, um, I mentor about 20 states right now. Those states, many of them had programs that were more of a plan, but they hadn't really maybe gotten it stood up yet. But different states in different stages of planning their—their private sector program certainly came to me, and I was honored to help them. Once I think it was clear that it could be done in a way that the private sector could really be actively involved and really take a role in real partnership to a state, I think that's when people got interested. Not to mention our role as a BEOC, the information sharing and situational awareness that we do, the updates and reports that we provide, our road closures, declarations, waivers, restrictions, curfews, the information that we put out that keeps our—our partners aware, helps them make safe, strong operational decisions. And it helps to keep them in business. It helps them avoid business interruption, and that keeps communities going.

I'm not sure if I answered your question as much as, you know, I'm just so proud of this team and what the private sector has brought to bear that I don't think was expected. And that's what the other states, I think, were su—may have been surprised by. What we did, bring them in in a way that they were actively involved not only in solutions but problem solving, making suggestions, telling us that they had uncovered capabilities from private sector that we didn't know it was there. We didn't know it. It's—it's uncovering capabilities like that that we didn't know were out there that could help North Carolinians that are having a bad day get past that one bad day.

Kirsten: I know we're going to be biased here 'cause this is, you know, this is your—your thing, and this is our state, and so we're proud of the North Carolina Emergency Management and everything within it. But can you speak to how the North Carolina BEOC Compares on the national stage?

Persia: Right now, we are, in these last few years, it's certainly been my honor for us to be recognized by FEMA as a national model. We are the first operational BEOC, and there's others that I know will follow us. We are also the first to have a statewide re-entry certification program which allows businesses and business owners to enter restricted and curfewed areas to get their businesses back going and to mitigate damages and to start helping in the community.

We've also been able to do some unique things, like we did the very first airdrop of supplies to a shelter during Hurricane Florence. And it's the first time that we—there was—we're talking about a true cross sector operation. It was the International Guard, it was North Carolina Emergency Management and it was three private sector companies that put together all of these supplies that this White Flag shelter needed. They were completely cut off by water during Florence, and that helicopter rope drop allowed them to get the supplies they needed. That was very unique for us.

But in terms of a national stage, I have been able to represent us, as I taught a course that was this year, actually, at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. That was an international course, actually, so that gave us an opportunity to expose this program to about 16 countries, and that was pretty amazing for us. And we've been asked back there now. Everyone is looking for a better way, better opportunities to use the—the whole community, government, private, non-governmental volunteer organizations. And this is a great example of that.

Kirsten:

Processes and success stories of the North Carolina BEOC are used as a guide in the FEMA's July 2021 publication Building Private-Public Partnerships to showcase what has worked well in the disaster response and recovery space. According to Persia, it is also the most-downloaded FEMA publication right now. During her career in emergency management, Persia has presented at several conferences on best practices for cultivating relationships with private sector businesses. She has also been recognized by several business alliances for her dedication and hard work during several large-scale incidents. One example is the Healthcare Distribution Alliance awarded her for her work during and after Hurricane Florence. With her wealth of experience, I was curious as to how the BEOC actually solidifies these partnerships.

How does the BEOC make connections with private sector partners?

Persia:

We do a couple of—a couple of different things. When I was starting, it was—I think that was the biggest challenge because no one knew us. No one knew what we were doing. No one knew me. What I mean when I say no one knew us, I mean no one knew we had a program because it was brand spanking new. They knew North Carolina Emergency Management, but businesses didn't understand what we were doing. In those days, I—I mentioned we started out by inviting them all here, explaining to them what we were offering and explaining how North Carolina responded just to give them a taste of what was possible.

What we do now, though, is I try to go to them. I go and meet them. Sometimes we host meetings here because a state Emergency Operations Center belongs to the people. And so, if companies are doing business here or associations are having meetings, there is nothing stopping them from having those meetings in the state Emergency Operations Center. It does, though, provide an opportunity for me to explain to them what it is we do, you know, what their state is doing for them during these times of emergencies and also give them a tour of the

state EOC so that they can understand better what it is that we're doing in this thing called emergency management.

So, reaching out to them in that way, I've noticed that it is giving us some good press. And I'm saying press, but I really mean word of mouth. More people have talked about visiting here, being here and then spread that out to their colleagues. And right now, we have 11 sectors of business and industry involved. Connecting with associations, the Retail Association, the Long-Term Care Association, which is our newest, most unique, I think, group because they—you don't immediately think of them when you think business, long-term care, but they are a business. They're very involved, those groups, or like the General Contractors Association. Spread out to their members what it is they're doing. They help to educate their members on things like, "Hey, there's going to be a declaration. This is how you get this information. This is how you find out road closures." And those groups have then circled back to us.

So, the word of mouth has been good for us. And I think that inviting them to more than just, hey, there's a hurricane, come to the state EOC, but we also invite them to training exercises and that expands their resiliency and their capacity to be better, to be faster. Our mission is to support our communities and also to support the continuation of business, to continue or resume as quickly as possible following a disaster. And we believe that that is the best way that we can help to protect North Carolina's economic strength and thereby their communities. So, we are a friend of business, and we think business is a friend to us.

Kirsten: Why are these partnerships between the state of North Carolina and the private sector so important?

Persia: There's a number of reasons, but I think the—the most important reason is because when we build resiliency, in—in other words the ability to bounce back after a disaster, how well we do that and how will we recover, it has to do with us being aware and having the knowledge of and the practice of doing that. And when private is working with public together, we, especially over time, we've learned how to work together. We have learned to really play to our strengths. We have learned how to call on private sector for certain things because we understand their capabilities more, and we respond faster. We respond better, and that means that instead of this slow drag of the response into the recovery, we slingshot into the recovery. And once we get on the recovery side, we build momentum. I think that survivability and resiliency through these disasters because we keep having disasters every year. There seems to be more, they seem to be various types, but these partnerships have helped us survive them and to build and get—get better faster.

I mean, the pandemic was a surprise to everyone. No one could have anticipated what we all experienced. During that time, we had 14 offers for refrigerator trailers that our partners offered to North Carolina food banks all across the state. And those refrigerator trailers which normally go for about

\$40,000 a trailer, they offered them free for six months, nine months, a year. They maintained them. They fueled them, so that those food banks could have extended storage, cold storage, for those communities for the duration of the pandemic. I mean, even with these companies that were trying to shift their operations, stay in business and do things, they still, you know, remembered their partnership to us, and they still wanted to help North Carolina communities, especially local food banks that were pushing out more food than they historically ever had in the history of their existence.

I—I talk a lot about what businesses do and what, uh, what government does and what we do together, but I think that we can do so much more. I think there's more to do, and they surprise me. The private sector is innovative and creative. They come up with solutions and things that we didn't think of. And that is because they are interested in continuing to be in business, and I love that symbiotic relationship that as long as they're in business, that means that there's North Carolina jobs. And as long as there's North Carolina jobs, that means that our families are going to prosper, and so protecting North Carolina's economic strength is so vital to me, and I think that's so vital to our families here. That, uh, that's—that's the kind of thing that keeps me going every single day. I'm trying not to get too excited, but I do. So, I think that this is important because for future, we are looking at strong relationships between private and public working together using this collective strength together.

Kirsten: It—it's understandable that why you get so excited. I mean, it's important work. It's great work that, you know, these businesses are stepping up and really providing for either their local communities or people across North Carolina.

Persia: And at the same time, they're keeping their employees safe. Because they know, because they're connected to us, they know when we're going to activate for a disaster. They understand when that declaration of emergency is coming. They understand when there's mandatory or voluntary evacuations, they could move their employees or reposition their employees so that they can still support the communities and get other folks out of the way. I mean, there's—there's such a huge need for that communication to happen. And every disaster we get better. Every one.

Kirsten: As Persia said, the symbiotic relationship is critical to response and recovery efforts.

What does the future look like for the North Carolina BEOC?

Persia: I—I certainly think that we'll grow bigger. So, I expect that their engagement is going to get higher. I expect more of them involved in our statewide exercise. I expect more of them involved in our quarterly exercises. I expect more of them interested in hearing about what it is that we do. But I also think that we're going to see ways to push the envelope. There's something that when I go out and speak, and a number of my colleagues now recognize it as, you know, something that I call my side hustles. I have a number of side hustles, and I'll

give you an example of some of them that I'm working on. For instance, I'm interested in working with Caterpillar, for instance, on a—a force package, which would be heavy equipment and crew, that would be able to be deployed an—and as a volunteer, but if not, deployable on our assets board at the county level or municipality level or DOT or whomever needs it for what we would call a clear and shove mission to move debris out of the way or off highways so that power restoration crews and communication crews can get through faster. And so, that kind of agreement, I expect that there'll be more of that.

I am looking at people like Facebook and what they can do with all the social media technology to help us, for instance, to track evacuation patterns. Not personal information, but just general information so that counties and other people can be prepared to receive populations moving into their county. So, there's a number of ideas that I've had. And I think that our direction overall, though, is going to be, you know, it'll be more innovative. We'll continue to innovate and find ways to solve problems. We're going to continue to mentor other states, our sister states that are looking to expand their programs. But also, I think that we're going to find more ways to get the private sector involved in mitigation, how they can help communities prepare before a disaster or to mitigate the—the potential impacts of a disaster whether that be in disaster communications or power restoration or building levees or whatever it is that we need. I think that there is a lot more room for private sector involvement in that, as well as private sector support to our voluntary organizations. And a lot of them are excited about opportunities to do that, but they don't know how.

So, this next year or so, I'm hoping that we can find good, strong roles, maybe a little bit more permanent, for a number of our partners that are still looking for a role. So, I used to tell my boss that we're the girl that everybody wants to take to prom, and I said that because with so many companies coming to us and saying, "We want to be involved. We see what you guys are trying to do. We want a role. Tell us what we can do." Finding them a role is a good problem to have, and I think that finding that and uncovering those, that's going to be part of our future.

Kirsten: And preparedness is kind of like a primary pillar of emergency management, so are there any preparedness tips that you want to share with business owners...

[Persia clears throat]

...who are listening?

Persia: No, there is. Particularly for medium and small businesses, one of the biggest assets, resources that you can have if you're in North Carolina is to align yourself, get involved with a group called the SBTDC. That would be the Small Business and Technology Development Centers. There are 11 of them regionally in the state. They are part of the SBA. This group is so amazing: business counseling, that includes financial counseling, marketing analysis, and business

analysis for small business, helping businesses stand on their feet. And then not just before or during, after disasters, but in blue skies. Business health, you know, they specialize in this, and a lot of their services are free. So, that's definitely one that I would ping. They're good partners to us. If you go to www.sbtcd.org (small business technology development center) dot org, you can find out all about them. But I think that that is a great step one.

Other preparedness tips, there are many, but I think that, you know, considering business interruption insurance is one that um, people, you know, tend to ignore. But at the time of interruption, power interruption or communications interruption or whatever that is, interruption for weeks, and your business can be saved. You can really, really float that business if you have that insurance in place, very much like homeowner's insurance. Having a COOP plan, in other words, an alternate place to do your business. If something happens here, can I still conduct business somewhere else? You know, being mobile, that's, uh, those are some critical tips, and there's many more. You know, it's not only going to make you healthy today but healthy tomorrow. So, blue cry-blue skies and gray sky advice on preparedness.

Kirsten: If you are a business interested in connecting with the BEOC, you can reach out via email to beoc@ncdps.gov.

Conclusion

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Kirsten: This is the Safety Scoop, a podcast written, produced and edited by the NCDPS communications team. The mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety is to safeguard and preserve the lives and property of the people of North Carolina through prevention, protection and preparation. Follow the department on social media for a closer look at ongoing initiatives and resources. We're on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at NC Public Safety. If you enjoyed today's episode, be sure to subscribe to the Safety Scoop on your favorite podcast app. I'm your host, Kirsten Barber. Thanks for listening.

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