

How to get back to work safely and manage claims after a flood



After a flood event, businesses may be eager to get back to work. However, companies must approach the return to work with safety procedures in place and with a mind towards reporting any claims. Doing so will promote the wellbeing of workers and enhance recovery effectiveness.

It is also critical for organizations to know the claims process, understand policy conditions, and have a plan for preparing a claim with key stakeholders aware of their responsibilities.

Use the checklist below as a jumping off point for a safe return to work and efficient claims process post-flood. Please note that the following checklist is not all-inclusive and that following this checklist does not guarantee any result, including the outcome of any potential claim.

Task	Not started	In progress	Complete
Getting back to work			
Clean up and recovery			
If floodwaters are inside the building, perform a high-level assessment of whether the water is contaminated with biohazards or hazardous materials and if there are potential physical hazards, including submerged structural hazards or electrified submerged appliances/outlets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the water is potentially hazardous, rely on in-house maintenance teams, if available, or coordinate with professional remediation service providers for all water removal and cleanup with appropriate disinfectant cleaning supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the water is determined to be nonhazardous, remove it from the building. Obtain sump pumps as needed; consult your contractor or local suppliers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rely on in-house maintenance teams, if available, or coordinate with flood remediation service providers to remove any damaged or affected materials throughout the facility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thoroughly clean equipment of water, dirt, and other debris/contaminants and lubricate. Remove rust-proofing compounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove all accumulated combustible debris before it can dry out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide dumpsters for debris.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dehumidify the building as quickly as possible. Large fans may be needed; consult with your contractor or local suppliers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not started In progress Complete

Confirm the operability of all building systems — including fire detection and fire suppression, elevator, ventilation, air conditioning, and heat — and identify and repair any damaged systems.

Perform hot work only if necessary and ensure proper precautions are taken.

Verify that the affected areas have been restored and are safe to reoccupy by employees and/or tenants.

Review, train, and update the flood emergency response plan

At a minimum, flood emergency response plans should be reviewed annually and especially following a flood incident to incorporate any lessons learned. This should include:

Training of all employees identified in the plan.

“Dry” running of the plan, including participation of all referenced staff and alternates, and equipment.

Establishing an inventory of all flood protection supplies and equipment. Is it in good condition following the latest incident?

Ensuring all contracts with emergency response contractors are in place and still valid.

Reviewing underlying flood hazard rating.

Learning from the previous event. For example, record areas that were affected by floods in the past, what worked, and what failed.

Manage your claims

Track claims costs

Review applicable insurance policies — including property, business interruption, and contingent business interruption coverage — to determine what is and is not covered.

Set up special work orders, job numbers, and other accounting procedures to identify and capture all claim costs.

Describe the tasks assigned to job numbers, and make sure to separate overtime pay because you will need this breakdown later.

Attempt to secure the adjuster’s agreement to compensate for salaried repair labor — if possible, before a loss occurs.

Review all components of overhead charges with the adjuster and try to get agreement on mark-ups and corresponding amounts to be allowed in this adjustment.

Keep records of overhead applied to labor, materials, and other repair-related costs.

Arrange permanent repairs or replacement

Before authorizing permanent repairs, attempt to obtain your adjuster’s agreement on the scope of repairs.

Secure contractors to bid on the job, including, if necessary, a meeting with the adjuster to establish details and itemization.

If your people and the adjuster disagree on the extent of damage to buildings, you may need an expert opinion from a contractor, architect, or licensed structural or civil engineer.

For the same situation regarding machinery and equipment, you may need documents from the equipment manufacturer or machinery repair experts.

Inspect

Inspect the property as soon after the loss as possible.

Make notes and gather general impressions, which will be vital to you later in adjusting the loss.

	Not started	In progress	Complete
Have photographs or videos taken to help refresh your memory later.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicate			
Establish a smooth flow of information from the affected location to your office and clarify which decisions local management can make.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appoint one person to oversee the entire claim preparation process — from setting up specific work orders or similar accounting mechanisms to final preparation of claim figures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decide who will be responsible for dealing with the loss at local levels and see that the adjuster is instructed to work only through this individual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Control			
Advise your accounting department to set up special work order accounts to accumulate all related expenses as soon as possible after the loss.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
See that your supervisors are notified so they can charge all clean-up, salvage, and repair labor to the proper account, and keep track of the overtime separately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange for purchase orders, invoices, and checks to reflect the special account numbers, then to be copied and set aside to substantiate your claim.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear all formal claim information through your insurance staff — local employees may not be aware of many administrative and overhead items that could count toward the claim.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinate			
Work with people and departments across the organization to produce a result acceptable to your business and the insurer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure everyone involved understands, at least in general, what you are trying to accomplish and why.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinate through the risk manager the gathering and sharing of complete, accurate, and timely information to the insurer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resume operations			
Consider whether it is practical to set up temporary facilities in your location or another while repairs are being made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be careful to keep your adjuster fully informed of your actions, and always try to secure prior approval of extraordinary expenses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Meeting your flood preparation and response needs

For more help with flood planning, response, and recovery issues, engage your Marsh Client Executive, who will connect you to the appropriate consulting and claims resources. You can also visit the Flood Resource Center for additional information.

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