
The latest from the government and leadership office of the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce

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Resilient Business Initiative
Week 3

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about local preparedness
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We presented a short poll to attempt to get a gauge on what our status was and how to respond to our concerns about threats or events that might impact the business community of The Venice Area Chamber of Commerce. The response sample size was not huge, but it is sufficient to give us an idea of where we are; here is what we got:

Disruption concerns were mostly evenly split between severe weather (dreaded hurricane type stuff), power outages/ utility disruption, and supply chain or vendor interruption. The concern of cyber intrusion was acknowledged but minimal. Preparedness by the respondents was rated at “moderately prepared” overall. In line with last weeks “ten minute task” of “communication framework” - most of you have an emergency communication contact list (77%) , some of you have a communication plan for emergencies (38%), a third of you have a business continuity plan, and half of you have your insurance documentation and inventory records in a “good place” for a crisis. Confidence to be up and running again after an event in 72 hours was good, with most everyone somewhat confident or very confident, and lastly, the support from the Chamber was determined to be best if we promoted templates and checklists for preparedness, and we help with the coordination with local emergency partners.

The good news is that we have that help in these areas already started with these weekly initiative tasks, some containing checklists and planning tools, and the April 17th Hurricane Preparedness for Business meeting that will be at the Venice Police Department. See the link if you have not already signed up for that.

Now, let us talk about Week 3 and our Resilient Business Initiative

Identifying Critical Operations: What Must Stay Running—No Matter What

This week focuses on identifying the essential business functions that must continue during any disruption, including severe weather, power outages, cyber incidents, and supply chain interruptions. The goal is clarity under pressure, knowing what truly matters when resources, time, and information are limited.

Why This Week Matters

Recent Chamber survey responses show businesses feel moderately confident in their ability to respond to disruptions. In real incidents, that confidence often erodes when everything suddenly feels critical. This exercise prevents decision paralysis by defining priorities in advance.

The Core Question

Ask the following and answer it honestly:

“If we could only keep a handful of things operating during a disruption, what must they be for the business to survive?”

Not every important function is critical. Critical means the business cannot survive—or cannot recover—without it.

Understanding Critical Operations (Incident Command Perspective)

Critical operations are those that:

- Protect life, safety, or staff accountability
- Maintain legal, regulatory, or contractual standing
- Preserve core revenue or cash flow
- Prevent irreversible damage to the business

The 72-Hour Survival Test

For each operation, ask:

“If this operation stopped for 72 hours, would the business still exist in a recoverable form?”

If the answer is no, the operation is considered critical.

Classifying Each Critical Operation

For each critical operation, define:

- Minimum Acceptable Level (bare survival, not full performance)
- Time Sensitivity: Immediate (0-24 hrs), Short-Term (24-72 hrs), Medium-Term (3-7 days)
- Single Points of Failure (one person, system, vendor, location, or credential)

Incident Command Alignment (Business-Friendly)

During a disruption:

- One person is designated as Incident Lead
- Decisions are driven by protecting critical operations first
- Non-critical activities are paused or deferred

10-Minute Weekly Task: Critical Operations Snapshot

Complete this exercise in one sitting:

1. List 5-10 critical operations using plain language
2. Label each as People-, Technology-, Facility-, or Vendor-dependent
3. Star (*) any operation with a single point of failure

Readiness Outcome for Week 3

By completing this week, participants should be able to say:

- We know what must stay running during a crisis
- We know what we can afford to pause
- We can clearly state priorities to staff or emergency partners
- We understand where our biggest operational risks exist

Coordination with Local Emergency Partners

Businesses that can clearly define critical operations are easier for emergency managers, utilities, and response partners to support. This work directly prepares participants for effective coordination with local and regional partners.

Next Week

Week 4 - Dependencies & Failure Mapping: Understanding what supports critical operations and what could cause them to fail.

Leadership 2026



The Leadership Venice class of 2026 has completed orientation and the SIMSOC exercise so far. Later this week we will have our Health and Human Services Day.

We are so very grateful to our alumni volunteers that help us run the program. A list of prospects for the next class (2027) has already started. If you are interested in joining the list or just have questions, please reach out, cthorpe@venicechamber.com. We would be glad to see you next year. The program is one Friday a month from March to October.

The Briefing

Legislative Update - Venice Area Chamber of Commerce

April 2026

Why This Matters

Decisions at the state, county, and city level continue to shape the operating environment for Venice area businesses, impacting costs, growth opportunities, workforce availability, infrastructure reliability, and long-term competitiveness.

Key Themes

- Growth is accelerating faster than infrastructure
- Local governments face increasing budget pressures
- Revenue strategies may shift from taxes to fees
- Preparedness and clarity are increasingly valuable for businesses

State of Florida

The 2026 Legislative Session reinforced state-level influence over growth and housing policy. Local governments retain less flexibility, while housing supply initiatives may support workforce availability. Ongoing property tax discussions signal future shifts in how local services may be funded.

Sarasota County

The County continues to address budget challenges and infrastructure capacity concerns, particularly related to growth in South County. Transportation, water, and evacuation routes remain central to decisions affecting workforce mobility and business operations.

City of Venice

The City remains actively engaged in land-use decisions, resiliency investments, and public safety improvements. Business Impact Estimates enhance transparency as the City balances growth, service levels, and fiscal sustainability.

Bottom Line

Businesses should anticipate continued growth, evolving cost structures, and increased focus on resilience and infrastructure readiness. Proactive engagement remains essential.