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

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Resilient Business Initiative - Week 10

Financial Resilience & Cash Flow Continuity

Purpose

Strengthen your ability to maintain payroll, pay essential bills, preserve cash, and make sound spending decisions before, during, and after a disruption. From an Incident Command System perspective, financial continuity is more than an accounting issue. It is an operational capability that supports preparedness, stabilizes response, and enables recovery. Businesses that understand their cash position and decision points can act faster, protect critical functions, and reduce long-term disruption.

Why This Matters to Venice-Area Businesses

For many small and mid-sized businesses, the first financial shock of an incident is not a total loss of revenue. It is the gap between incoming cash and immediate obligations. Sales may slow, customers may pay late, supply costs may rise, and emergency expenses may appear at the same time. Leaders who think in ICS terms prepare for this pressure by identifying which costs are essential, which obligations can be delayed, and which financial triggers should prompt a change in strategy as the business moves from response to recovery.

Key Concept

The key concept is a financial operating picture. Just as ICS uses a common operating picture to track incident status, businesses need a shared view of cash on hand, receivables, payables, payroll timing, credit availability, and daily burn rate. Leaders should know what must be paid right away to protect people and core operations, what can be renegotiated, and what financial thresholds would trigger changes in staffing, purchasing, or service delivery.

Business-Friendly Incident Command Insight

In ICS, finance and administration support the incident by tracking costs, documenting obligations, and helping leadership make timely decisions. In a business setting, that means one person should monitor cash position daily, another should track urgent financial commitments, and leadership should review spending priorities against operational goals. The goal is to prepare with clear thresholds, respond with disciplined cash preservation, and recover with documented losses, informed reimbursement decisions, and a realistic plan to restore normal business activity.

10-Minute Weekly Task

- List your fixed and variable expenses, then mark which ones are essential to life safety, payroll, customer operations, compliance, and business continuity.
- Estimate your short-term cash burn rate for 7, 14, and 30 days under disrupted operating conditions.
- Identify when key receivables are expected and where payment delays would create operational risk.
- Confirm available credit lines, banking contacts, payroll deadlines, and any emergency authority needed for rapid financial decisions.
- Define the trigger points that would require cost controls, vendor renegotiation, reduced hours, or another change in operating posture.

Deliverable

The deliverable is a financial continuity worksheet that shows available cash, incoming receivables, essential payment obligations, discretionary costs, decision triggers, and responsible owners. It gives leadership a practical preparedness reference, a decision aid during response, and a recovery tool for tracking losses, obligations, and stabilization priorities.

Financial Item	Amount Timing	/ Operational Impact if Delayed	Action Option	Owner	Priority
Payroll, rent, utilities, loan payment, vendor invoice, receivable	Dollar amount and due date	Life safety, staffing, service delivery, compliance, or low impact	Pay now, renegotiate, defer, draw credit, or monitor	Name or role	High / Medium / Low

Readiness Outcome

- We understand our short-term cash needs and the obligations that protect core operations.
- We can make faster, better-informed financial decisions during an incident.
- We know which expenses can be delayed and which must be preserved to support continuity and recovery.
- We can brief leadership using a clear financial operating picture tied to incident priorities.

Connection to Local Emergency Partners

Financial resilience also improves coordination with local emergency partners. Businesses that can quickly estimate losses, document unusual costs, and identify resource shortfalls are better prepared to communicate with lenders, insurers, nonprofit partners, local response organizations, and recovery stakeholders. That clarity supports better coordination during response and a more organized path to recovery.

Next Week - Coordination with Emergency Partners

More on the Economic Outlook - Real Estate Focus

Despite global economic uncertainty, the Venice area's real estate market has remained steady. Many people continue moving to southwest Florida for its coastal lifestyle and favorable state income tax policies.

Local real estate data shows modest gains. A closer look at home sales also offers insight into who is buying and what that may mean for the market's overall health.

On May 15, the REALTOR Association of Sarasota and Manatee released its monthly local real estate report. The data suggests that cash buying is becoming more common. Cash purchases rose 24% from a year earlier, while total sales rose 18%. This may indicate that higher-income or cash-capable buyers are playing a larger role in the market, while lower-income buyers make up a smaller share.

These figures align with broader economic trends. Some economists describe this pattern as a K-shaped economy, in which higher-income households fare better than lower-income households. If that trend continues, widening wealth gaps could keep shaping the real estate market.

April's national inflation rate reached 3.8%. As a result, interest rates may stay higher for longer. That keeps borrowing costs elevated for homebuyers who need financing. Cash buyers are less affected because they do not rely on loans.

According to the Mortgage Bankers Association, mortgage applications in April 2026 fell 2.4% from April 2025 and 10% from March 2026. Some economists see this as another sign that younger and moderate-income buyers are being priced out, since these groups are more likely to rely on mortgages.

For the Venice area, these trends may mean that higher-income buyers will remain active, while buyers who need financing—including many low-income, middle-income, and younger buyers—may find it harder to enter the market.

Did You Know?

The U.S. Department of Labor has launched a free public training initiative to build basic awareness of artificial intelligence (AI).

See the DOL news release regarding this here: [US Department of Labor releases AI literacy framework providing foundational content areas, delivery principles to guide nationwide efforts | U.S. Department of Labor](#)

The initiative starts with an introductory course called AI 101. It offers a basic overview of what AI is and what it can and cannot do today. The course takes about 10 minutes a day for seven days and can be completed on your phone. You choose when you want to receive the daily training messages.

If you need a basic introduction or a refresher before we explore AI in more depth in the coming months, this course is a good place to start.

I reviewed the training and found it basic but worthwhile.

You can join the AI 101 course here: [AI Ready | U.S. Department of Labor](#)