

Emergency Closure Policy

Purpose

- As a general practice, the library makes every effort to maintain normal operations. However, there may be occasions where normal operations would pose a danger to patrons, staff, volunteers, and other members of the community and a decision to close the library must be made. A closure of the library, in whole or in part, may be prompted by inclement weather, severe staffing shortage from outbreak, or other emergency situations that place members of the community at significant risk.
- The purpose of the Emergency Closure Policy is to set the principles by which a decision to suspend library's activity is made and to ensure decisions are made in a clear, orderly and coordinated manner.

General

- Library will close when normal operations would pose a danger to patrons, staff, volunteers, and other members of the community.
- In the absence of a communicated decision to close, the library will remain open and all services will continue as planned.
- The library may close for the morning, afternoon, evening, or for the entire day. In each instance, the announcement will include the time of closing and, where possible, the duration of closing.

Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- A decision to close the library will be made by the Library Board except where evacuation is essential for staff and public safety or by order of police, fire officials or the Town of St. Paul.
- In the event that the board cannot be reached, and continued operations would pose a significant danger to patrons, staff, volunteers, and other members of the community, then manager may call for temporary closure until a) board returns decision or b) situation resolves itself.
- The manager will be responsible for communicating all closures according to the established procedures. The full Library Board will be promptly informed of any closures via email.

Conditions Warranting Closure

- **Non-emergency closing:** Failure of heating/cooling equipment during periods of extreme weather, lack of electrical power, lack of computers available at staff service points for an extended period of time, or inadequate staffing levels.
- **Emergency evacuation:** Building problems resulting in clear and present danger to employees and/or patrons (e.g. gas leak, noxious/toxic fumes, or fire) or any event such as a criminal investigation, severe accident involving injury, severe building damage.
- **Non-openings, delayed openings or early closings:** Severely inclement weather. In such cases the decision to close will be based upon general conditions of roads, condition of

parking lots and walkways, availability of staff to open and operate the library, requests for closure by local or provincial agencies, severe Weather Warning as issued by Environment Canada

Personal Safety

At all times staff should assess their own personal safety in deciding whether or not to come to work. When library does not close in inclement weather, staff are expected to make reasonable efforts to report to work. An individual who decides for their own safety not to report to work must contact their immediate supervisor.

Employee Remuneration

If the library closes prior to the scheduled closing time, all full-time employees and any part-time employees already present at work shall be paid for the remainder of their shift. Library operations will be resumed when feasible.

All employees will be deemed to be “on call” for what would otherwise be a regular work day and available to return to work upon notification by library management. Employees who are able to perform their regular duties from home, may be required to work remotely until such time that they are recalled.

Communication of Closure

- In cases where library closure is determined prior to regular hours of operation, the manager will initiate communication of the closure to library staff and members of the Library Board via email or phone. Public notice of the closure will also be posted on the Library’s website (if operational), social media channels as well as applicable media outlets. In the absence of any communication by phone or on the library’s website or via email, normal operations are presumed.
- In cases where the library closes after some period of operation, in addition to the above, signage will be posted on the door and a message will be added to library phone line. Staff will inform the visiting public of the closure and ensure that they exit the library safely and have time to arrange for transportation if necessary. Efforts will be made to inform any impacted program registrants or volunteers if possible.
- In all cases, no overdue charges will be levied for items due on a closed day.