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EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY

1. Purpose

The Newark Public Library has adopted this Emergency Closing Policy to ensure a cautionary response to an emergency threatening to impact the library's staff, community members, facilities, or materials.

The primary goals of Newark Public Library's Emergency Closing Policy are to establish:

- the types of emergencies which may cause the library to close or suspend services
- the power of the Director to close the library due to an imminent or immediate emergency
- if the library's Emergency & Disaster Plan needs to be implemented

The library will make every effort to maintain regular library operating hours in accordance with Minimum Standards for New York's Public and Association Libraries. However, at times, the library may have to close, shorten hours, or cancel programs due to emergency conditions.

2. Administration

The Director is empowered by the Board of Trustees to address emergency conditions and may close the Newark Public Library for up to 72 hours. For closures lasting beyond 72 hours, the Director will consult with the Board President to determine the library's course of action including the implementation of the library's Emergency & Disaster Plan.

If the Director is not in the building when an emergency or disaster occurs, the staff should immediately contact the appropriate emergency agencies and then contact the Director. If, for any reason, the Director is unable or unavailable, administrative authority shall be passed to the Assistant Director and if not available, then the Head of Youth Services

3. Types of Emergencies

The decision to close the library will be made with the health and safety of the library staff and community as the top priority. The following are examples of situations that may call for closure of the library:

- severe weather events
- local or regional declaration of a State of Emergency
- pests, bugs, or infestation

- loss of critical utilities
- gas leak or suspected gas leak
- water damage or flood
- fire
- hazardous spill
- bomb threat
- active shooter
- lockdown/Shelter In Place
- onsite behavioral altercation
- pandemic, serious illness, staffing shortage, or public health crisis

Other emergencies may occur that cannot be planned for. The Director will handle such situations in accordance with this policy and the library's Emergency & Disaster Plan and in the best interests of the library facility, staff, and community.

4. Communication

All library closures will be communicated to the public via local news stations and on the library's website, social media accounts, and outgoing voicemail. The staff will be notified of library closures by the Director or designee of the Director. The Board of Trustees members will also be notified.

5. Personnel

If the library is closed due to emergency conditions, staff will be paid for shifts/hours scheduled to work.

An interim work or telecommuting schedule may be developed and job descriptions or duties may be temporarily altered or reassigned based on the needs of the library. A reasonable effort will be made to maintain a useful work schedule and provide continuous employment opportunities.

6. Ongoing Use Evaluation

The Emergency Closing Policy will be evaluated on a regular schedule and updated as needed.

Questions or concerns regarding Newark Public Library's Emergency Closing Policy should be brought to the Director.

ADOPTED by the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees May 21, 2020

Amended 1/11/2024

Reviewed by Policy Committee: 12/20/2023