

North Chicago Public Library
2100 Argonne Drive
North Chicago, Illinois 60064

Board of Trustees

Policy # 013

Emergency Closing Policy

Adopted March 18th, 2014

Approved April 15th, 2014

Purpose:

In extreme case event of hazardous weather, a power outage, a water outage, or other emergencies which present threats to the safety and health of the library staff and/or patrons that can disrupt Library operations, the Director or (See Emergency Succession Policy #9) is authorized to close the Library.

A decision to close the library because of the weather may be made due to the following conditions and factors:

- Local or State Authorities (including local police, state police, or IDOT) have advised that the public stay off the roads.
- Ice, snow, or storms have caused power outages or extremely hazardous road conditions (trees down, power lines down, etc.).
- Flooding in the streets to the extent where it is likely to cause vehicular damage.

A closure may also be made if, in the best judgment of the Director, it is necessary to do so. However, the Library staff is mindful that the Library is a public space, depended upon by the public. A decision to close for the entire day will be made prior to 7 am. See post on website <http://www.emergencyclosings.com>

- The closing of North Chicago Unit School District No. 187.
- The condition of our library parking lot, sidewalks and our ability (or inability) to keep them safe for our library patrons.
- Closings of neighboring libraries (if lots are closed, I have to justify remaining open).

Library Building Procedures:

In the event of a power or HVAC failure, the decision to close will be made upon the following factors:

- In the Summer, if the inside temperature reaches 85 degrees, the staff will be retained for an hour, and all computer equipment will be shut off to avoid damage due to over-heating. A staff manager will be retained for a second half-hour, in case the building is able to be re-opened. After the full hour, the building will be closed for the day. One staff member will remain at the library with unattended children and until all patrons have left the building. Signage will be posted, and the City and the police will be notified of the closing. Additionally, the library staff will notify local radio and TV stations of the closing. Messages will be posted on the library's webpage, and on our Facebook wall. An E-mail blast message will be sent to all area libraries to notify them of our library's closing.
- In the Winter, if the inside temperature drops to 60 degrees, the same procedure will be followed.
- In the event of a power outage on or after 5 pm (Winter) or 5 pm (Summer), the building will immediately be closed for the day.

In the event of a water outage, the building will be closed after a half-hour without water, due to sanitary conditions. A staff manager will remain for another half-hour. After the full hour, the building will be close.

Library Patrons Procedures

The Library Director will determine to make a decision to close early or open late is possible if the snow is still falling heavily. The library clerk will make an announcement of the early closing at 2 pm so that people will have plenty time of warning. Staff is instructed to look around for patrons that might need to call for a ride and we will make several announcements to give people ample time to make other plans. If someone was left at closing we would follow our usual procedures, wait 15 minutes, and then call the police.

The Director will e-mail the Library Board President and the Board members of the time of the decision are made. The library will alert the public with a change in our public phone message, WGN, our web site, the City web site, and other social networking sites. See post on website <http://www.emergencyclosings.com>

Staff Work Procedures

In the event of hazardous weather, a power outage, a water outage, or other emergencies which present threats to the safety and health of the library staff and/or patrons can disrupt Library operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of North Chicago Public Library.

When the decision to close is made after workday has begun, employees will receive official notification from a designate staff manager. In these situations, time off from scheduled work will be paid. When the decision to close made before the workday has begun, time off from scheduled work will be unpaid. If staff has not yet reported to work, they will be notified by an automatic phone tree or designate staff manager of the library's closing. Any full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work on that day will be paid for their scheduled hours. Part-time employees who have been scheduled to work on an emergency closure day **and** are present to work **or** on their way to work, will be paid the wages they would have been paid if the Library had not been closed. Employees contacted and instructed not to report due to an emergency closing will have the option to make up the hours on a later date. However, with the Director approval, employees may use available paid leave time, such as unused vacation benefits. If the hours are not made up, part-time employees will receive no pay for the time in which the library was closed.

Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work will receive regular pay.

Our staff has been instructed that unless they receive a call/text message or **(ECC) Emergency Closing Center** says we're going to be closed, we're going to be open and they should plan accordingly.