



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY

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Emergency Preparedness Policy

Purpose of Policy

- A. The purpose of the Bentonville Public Library's Emergency Preparedness Policy is to provide a general outline of administrative goals and actions addressed by the library's emergency procedures.
- B. The Library's Emergency Procedure Manual provides a detailed course of action for all staff to follow should a fire, other disasters, or various emergency situations occur that would disrupt the ordinary operations of the facility.

Objectives of Policy

The objectives of the library's policy and Emergency Procedure Manual are to provide and establish:

1. Routine assessment of policies and procedures.
2. Safety for our staff and patrons during emergency and disaster situations.
3. General security measures for Library patrons, staff, and facility/materials.
4. Safety and security planning and prevention measures.
5. Damage assessment and recovery procedures.

Policy Review

- A. Any changes made to this policy will be forwarded to the Bentonville City Fire Department within fourteen (14) days after such changes have been made.
- B. The Library's Emergency Procedure Manual will be reviewed annually by Library staff and other appropriate authorities.
- C. The Library Director and designated staff incorporate safety training and preparedness into new employee orientation, staff meetings, and in-service training to regularly communicate emergency procedures to all Library staff.

Responsibility

- A. The Library Director is responsible for informing staff and appropriate City authorities of the Emergency Procedure Manual.
- B. Copies of this plan have been provided to the Bentonville City Fire Department as part of the City's Emergency Operating Plan (EOP).
- C. Chain of Command: Library Director, Librarians, safety member, senior staff. The person in charge when an emergency or disaster occurs will remain the responsible party until someone with more authority relieves them of command duties.
- D. Emergency contact information is provided to all Library staff and prominently displayed in the staff work areas.
- E. All information should be regarded as confidential and only released to authorized personnel. Authorized personnel may include, but are not limited to: Library staff, immediate family members of Library staff, law enforcement, medical and support personnel, and City or State officials, including agencies such as the health department.

- F. The Library Director shall be the only party with authorization to release information.
- G. In staff areas of the facility, the library maintains a public display of all required safety messages, workers' compensation, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) chemical information, and other Federal, State, and City documentation.

City of Bentonville Emergency Operations Plan Compatibility

The Library's Emergency Procedure Manual and Procedures should always adhere to the City of Bentonville's Emergency Operations Plan. While the purpose and atmosphere of the library are not such that Library staff will be expected to fulfill emergency response responsibilities, staff will assist, in any way possible, with the City's emergency response efforts.

Accidents and Emergencies

General Accidents

In most general accident situations, the main concern of Library staff should be to manage the situation safely and efficiently. In many cases, for documentation purposes, Library staff should complete an incident report.

Minor Accidents

- A. If a patron has a minor accident, staff should report the situation to the Library Director or Librarian in charge immediately.
- B. Staff may distribute bandages, topical treatments (ointments), or ice packs to the patron from the First Aid kit. Medications will not be distributed to the patron.
- C. Depending on the severity of the situation, 911 may be called.

Medical Emergencies

- A. When a person requires medical attention due to a health condition or accident onsite, 911 should be called immediately.
- B. Library staff should not administer aid unless they are certified to do so.

Endangerment of Staff or Patrons

- A. Staff are instructed to contact the Bentonville Police Department to address disruptive or dangerous situations that may occur at the library.
- B. If staff feel that anyone may be in immediate, life-threatening danger, additional response procedures including evacuation may be implemented to ensure public safety.
- C. Training and guidance from the Bentonville Police Department determine emergency protocols in the event of an active shooter situation.

Emergency Evacuation

- A. In all emergency situations, 911 should be called immediately. City Hall will also be notified of major emergencies such as fire, tornado, or bomb threats. The main concern of Library

staff should be to evacuate or protect the public, and themselves, in a safe, efficient, and calm manner.

- B. Proper authorities, the Library Director, or the staff member with immediate authority will determine when it is safe to return to the library.
- C. For documentation purposes, staff should complete an incident report.
- D. Damage assessment and recovery procedures may need to be implemented when safety is restored.
- E. Library emergency routes are prominently displayed throughout the library. Each floor plan also shows locations for fire extinguishers, fire pull alarms, and storm shelters.

Floods, Spills & Hazardous Materials

- A. Areas with spills, floods, bodily fluids, and other chemical contaminants need to be contained, as much as possible, quickly.
- B. The space should be cordoned off by Library staff with cones, stanchions, or furnishings; a drop cloth or tarp may be used to protect the area.
- C. Staff will wear personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect themselves and should only address what they are certified to clean.
- D. Library staff should contact specific the City of Bentonville teams for help, as follows:
 - 1. Minor chemical (cleaning supplies) spills custodial team.
 - 2. Minor flooding from the restroom or other plumbing: custodial and public works.
 - 3. Bodily fluids (vomit, urine, feces): custodial team.
 - 4. Hazardous materials: call 911 immediately and evacuate patrons and staff.
 - 5. Recovery procedures may need to be followed.

Planning and Prevention

All staff are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings, understand the library's policies and procedures, and pay attention to the library's public use and the facility's conditions. Everyone is authorized to contact local authorities if a situation warrants emergency help. All Library staff is empowered to remove themselves from an unsafe situation, particularly related to inappropriate interactions with members of the public.

Safety Measures

- A. Floor plans to show emergency exit routes and fire extinguisher locations are posted in public and staff areas of the library.
- B. Fire extinguishers, emergency pull-down fire alarms, emergency call buttons, and security cameras are located throughout the library.
- C. First Aid kits are in the staff workroom and at the front service desk.
- D. Flashlights are located at each public service desk.
- E. Emergency drills are performed annually by Library staff.
- F. Emergency supplies (gloves, tarp, face masks, eye protection) are available for use.
- G. Several procedural "codes" are established that guide the library's response to many emergencies. The Library's Emergency Procedure Manual covers each code in detail.

City Training and Support

- A. The library coordinates training and support with the Fire Department, Police Department, and others for fire, health, and safety issues when necessary (fire extinguisher training, Red Cross certification, or active shooter training).
- B. When BPL hosts large events, the presence of medical staff and police officers provides proactive emergency and public safety support.
- C. The Bentonville Public Library is monitored by a security system that detects fire and security breaches 24 hours per day, seven days per week (included in General Policy).

Safety Inspections

- A. Various inspections have been established and are performed to keep Library procedures and systems in compliance with National Fire Protection Code guidelines.
- B. The library hires licensed professionals to annually test and inspect all fire alarms and sprinkler systems, as well as fire extinguishers.
- C. The library "Safety Team" Member is responsible for the monthly safety inspections. These inspections are preventative checks regarding fire protection, upkeep of walkways and emergency exits, electrical reviews, and housekeeping management.
- D. City administration provides documentation, training, and support for the library pertaining to safety.
- E. Annual Safety Inspections are performed by the City of Bentonville Safety Coordinator and the Fire Marshal Division.

Additional Considerations**Power Outage**

- A. Staff and public access computers will need to be shut down for the duration of the power outage and rebooted when power is restored.
- B. In the case of a lengthy power outage, the decision to close the library facility will be made by the Library Director and communicated to the mayor and the public.

Infestation

- A. Mold, insects, and rodents can seriously damage Library materials.
- B. Materials containing the infestation need to be immediately isolated from non-affected materials.
- C. Extreme cases of infestation may require Library closure for treatment.

Structural Damage

- A. In the event of structural damage to the facility or furnishings, the Library Director, or immediate staff person in charge, will determine a specific course of action.
- B. If medical attention is required, staff will follow medical emergency procedures.
- C. Structural damage will need to be assessed by the Fire Department or other building inspection authorities.

- D. In the event of bookshelves collapsing, due to earthquake, explosion, or natural deterioration, the same policy applies.

Computer Systems

- A. The City's Information Technology (IT) System Administrator shall be responsible for securing Library information and other technical assets during emergency situations.
- B. City network data is securely stored and can be restored by the City IT department.
- C. The library's automated system database is backed-up daily. These back-ups can be used to restore patron and collection databases and are securely hosted by the database provider on cloud-based servers.
- D. Additional product vendors host specific databases and will be contacted for restoration of services, as necessary.

Damage Assessment and Recovery

- A. The recovery process will not begin until then the emergency situation is controlled, and the facility has been deemed safe by authorities.
- B. Photographic and written records will be used to document the damage to the library facility and collections.
- C. Structural damage will need to be assessed by the Fire Department or other building inspection authorities.
- D. Library materials or equipment that are damaged will need to be assessed for replacement or repair.
- E. Salvage and recovery methods are included in the Emergency Procedure Manual.
- F. Disaster recovery specialists may be contacted for assistance with recovery efforts.
- G. The library will notify the Arkansas State Library of situations that impact public service.

Pandemic Response Policy

Bentonville Public Library's response to a global pandemic is determined by governmental directives, health / medical information, and industry standards related to public service and libraries. A "Pandemic Procedure Manual" specific to the situation serves as the library's overarching plan for operations and services (COVID-19 Pandemic Procedure Manual, 2020).

- A. The pandemic response manual is developed by Librarians based on research and consultation with City medical experts. Special consideration for the health and safety of staff and patrons is the primary focus.
- B. The plan is shared with City staff, reviewed, and endorsed by the Library Advisory Board, and filed with appropriate agencies, as required. The Library Director may be required to make judgment calls for effective responses in some instances.
- C. The manual is considered a best practice for the local situation at any given time and may include levels or phases consisting of public closure, limited services, or other adjustments.

- D. Conditions and governmental directives determine the duration of each level. Adjusted services and pandemic procedures are considered temporary measures that may last several weeks, months, or years until pandemic conditions improve.
- E. A plan for phased reinstatement to full Library services should be included in the procedure manual.