

Safety and Emergencies Policy

1. Introduction – Safe and Secure Library

The Library is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for staff, volunteers and the public. This Policy recognizes that the Board, CEO, staff, volunteers and users share this responsibility.

1.1. Definitions

“Library” shall mean The St. Marys Public Library

“Board” shall mean the Library Board of the St. Marys Public Library

“CEO” shall mean the Chief Executive Officer of the St. Marys Public Library

“Designate” shall mean the staff member who is acting as designate in the absence of the CEO. A posted schedule or a prior notice will indicate how the role is assigned.

2. Duty to Protect

The CEO, or Designate, is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to:

- Ensure the physical protection of Library staff, volunteers and users.
- Protect the building, its contents, and its immediate surroundings.
- Ensure that Library staff are informed of and instructed in their obligations in safety and security matters, for example, the obligation to protect lives and to provide aid to disaster victims.
- Minimize loss and damage to the building, the collections, furniture, and equipment.
- This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the development and integration of protection programs for fires, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters.

3. Preparation of the Plan

The CEO, or Designate, is responsible for:

- Preparing and keeping current a Library fire evacuation plan and an emergency disaster plan for the Library with specific staff instructions and directions, including emergency closing and evacuating, staff notification, provision of first aid as required, maintenance of building integrity and utilities, and emergency conservation and recovery.

- Preparing security operations procedures for routine, operational and emergency situations, with particular emphasis on situations occurring in the absence of the CEO and/or after normal business working hours.

4. Conduct on Library Premises

No person shall engage in inappropriate conduct on the premises of the Library or when participating in Library programs.

Library users are required to observe the Rules of Conduct Policy, setting out unacceptable conduct in the Library.

Any person violating the Rules of Conduct Policy will be asked to comply and if that person fails to comply, may be asked to leave the Library, see Section 6 below.

5. Loss Prevention

Reasonable security measures will be taken to protect the Library against loss of property. In the event that the theft of Library materials is witnessed or suspected, staff may take the following measures:

- Request a person to step into the office.
- Query a person about missing items and ask for their return.
- Request a person show the contents of their knapsack, tote bag, purse, pockets etc.
- Call the police.

6. Compliance and Appeals

The Library has the right to deny use of the Library to those violating Library rules and to ask a user violating the Rules of Conduct Policy or other Library Policies to leave the Library. If a person is asked to leave the Library, an incident report is filled out and submitted to the CEO for review. Repeated reports of violation of the Rules of Conduct Policy or other Library Policies against an individual may result in loss of Library privileges.

If staff believes that anyone in the Library is in danger of physical harm, or if a user has been asked to leave and that user has not complied, staff will call the police immediately. If staff witness or suspect serious unlawful activity they may notify appropriate authorities.

A person who has been denied Library privileges may appeal to the CEO. If the appeal is denied, the person may then appeal to the Board. The decision of the Board will be final.

7. Accidents/Incidents

Accidents/incidents are defined and reported according to the Town's incident investigation and reporting policy. Procedures take into account the requirements of Ontario Ministry of Labour in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations.

8. Emergency Closing

Emergencies or catastrophes, including, but not limited to, extreme weather, utility failure, demonstration, bomb threat, fire, explosion, or terrorism may require closing the Library. The primary consideration in any emergency or catastrophe is the safety of all persons in the building and on the property. The Library cooperates fully with public safety departments and emergency service providers.

The CEO determines when to close the Library during an emergency or catastrophe. If the CEO is not available the Designate, consults with the Library Board chair, failing that the Designate contacts appropriate Town staff to assist with the decision to close.

All reasonable efforts are made to notify the Board Chair and the public in the event of an emergency closure of the library.

9. Training and Drills

All staff are trained and advised of the procedures in the event of an emergency in the Library. The plan is tested, at least in simulation, at least once per year.

Drills may be practiced in conjunction with appropriate Town departments and/or emergency service providers.

History

Date of Latest Board Approval: April 2016

Date(s) of Revision(s): June 2012*, 2008

Date of next scheduled review: April 2019

* This policy was passed at the December 2012 Board meeting to ratify the change in format. The next scheduled review date was not altered.

Related Documents

Circulation and Services Policy

Rules of Conduct Policy

Town of St. Marys Emergency Response Plan

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Town of St. Marys Incident Investigation and Reporting Policy