
Safety Policy and Emergency Procedures

1. Purpose

The Durham Public Library is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons, staff, and visitors. This policy outlines safety guidelines, emergency procedures, and staff responsibilities to ensure the protection of individuals and library property.

2. General Safety Guidelines

- All patrons and staff must conduct themselves in a manner that promotes safety and respect for others.
- The library reserves the right to remove individuals who pose a safety risk or violate library policies.
- Children under age 10 must always be supervised by a parent, guardian, or older sibling aged 12 or older.
- Patrons should report any suspicious activity, safety concerns, or hazards to library staff immediately.

3. Staff Responsibilities

- Library staff will be trained in basic emergency response procedures, including fire safety, medical emergencies, and evacuation protocols.
- Staff should be familiar with all exits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and emergency contact numbers.
- Staff should report safety and maintenance issues to library administration promptly.

4. Emergency Procedures

4.1 Fire Safety

- In case of fire, staff must initiate the fire alarm system.
- Staff who are leading groups must guide patrons to designated exits.
- Library management and senior staff will ensure the building is cleared in a fire event.
- Do not use elevators during an evacuation.
- Call 911 immediately and wait for emergency personnel outside of the building at the designated meeting area.

4.2 Medical Emergencies

- Staff should assess the situation and call 911 for serious injuries or medical conditions.
- First aid supplies are available in the staff area behind the circulation desk and staff may assist within their level of training.
- An incident report must be completed after any medical emergency.
- The Library Director must be notified, as soon as possible, of any medical emergency.

4.3 Severe Weather and Natural Disasters

- The library will follow local emergency management recommendations and internal procedures for severe weather (for example, snow, tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes).
- In case of a tornado or similar emergency, patrons will be directed to designated shelter areas within the building.
- Staff will communicate closures or emergency instructions via the library's website and social media.

4.4 Active Threat Situations

- In the event of an active shooter or violent situation, staff should follow the "Run, Hide, Fight" guidelines:
 - **Run** – If there is a safe escape route, evacuate immediately.
 - **Hide** – If evacuation is not possible, seek shelter, silence phones, and lock doors.
 - **Fight** – As a last resort, attempt to disable the attacker if in immediate personal danger.
- Staff will activate the emergency alert system as soon as possible by triggering one of the two building panic buttons and call 911 as soon as it is safe to do so.

4.5 Lost Children or Vulnerable Adults

- If a child or vulnerable adult is found unattended, staff will attempt to locate their guardian.
- If no guardian is found, staff will contact local authorities for assistance.
- If a child or vulnerable adult is reported missing by a caregiver, after a cursory search, staff will:
 - Activate a panic button immediately.
 - Issue an all-call Code Purple.
 - Stop what they are doing immediately and cover all exits to the building.
 - Select one staff member to remain at the circulation desk while all other staff members who are not covering exits or the desk search the building.

5. Facility and Technology Security

5.1 Building Security

- Security cameras are installed in key areas for patron and staff safety.
- Doors, emergency exits, and restricted areas must remain secure and free from obstructions.
- After-hours access is restricted to authorized personnel only.

5.2 Internet and Cybersecurity

- Patrons must follow the library's acceptable use policy when using public computers and Wi-Fi.
- Staff should report any suspicious activity, including phishing attempts or cyber threats, to the Library Director.
- Personal information shared on public computers should be cleared after each session.

6. Incident Reporting and Documentation

- All safety incidents, injuries, and emergencies must be documented in an **Incident Report Form** and submitted to library administration for review and action as warranted. Reports should include:
 - Date
 - Time
 - Location
 - Persons involved
 - A description of the incident
- All safety incidents will be reviewed immediately by the Library Director or their designee. Law enforcement and/or emergency personnel will be immediately notified as required. The Chair of the Library Board of Trustees will be notified of all safety issues and hazardous situations occurring in the library.
- All library personnel who are injured at work must follow these procedures:
 - RSA 281-A:19 requires that employees report promptly to their employer an occupational injury or disease, even if they deem it to be minor. Immediately report any injury to your direct supervisor or the Library Director.
 - Enter injury into the First Aid Log.
 - If an injury requires medical attention, supervisors must follow the Primex injury reporting procedure as required.
- Copies of reports pertaining to medical incidents and injuries should be kept on file for at least five years after the incident per OSHA and library policy.