

# **SH 611 Unexpected Closure**

## **SH 611.1 Unexpected Closure Procedures**

*Adopted: 01/18*

### **Procedures**

Each location will print a copy of these procedures and ensure that they are easily accessible in the event of a power or network outage.

#### **System-wide Closure:**

##### Communication:

1. The executive director, or their designee, will make the decision regarding any closure of libraries during inclement weather.
2. If the library is open at the time of the closure decision, the executive director's office will send an email notification to all correspondents. The automated notification system is not used when the library is open.
3. If the library is closed at the time of a decision, the deputy executive director/technology, or their designee, will initiate the automated emergency notification system to alert staff of the closure via their choice of communication: text, phone, email.
4. The director of marketing & communications, or their designee, will immediately notify Oklahoma metropolitan area media outlets.
5. The CIS manager, or their designee, will immediately post an announcement on the Library System's webpage and on Library social media sites stating that all library facilities and offices will be closed due to inclement weather and/or hazardous roads. Notification will include information that library programs and Outreach events are cancelled.
6. Library staff will cancel any planned programs online and email registered customers.
7. CIS or their designated library staff will email customers with meeting room bookings to notify them of the closure and the option to reschedule or receive a refund.
8. Outreach will email vendors or community partners regarding any Outreach events that are being cancelled due to the closure.
9. The network systems coordinator in IT will update the telephone automated attendant for all libraries to indicate closure due to inclement weather and will remove the message when the libraries reopen.
10. If the decision is made when the library is open, staff will post "Closed Due to Inclement Weather" signs at their library entrance before departing the premises. Signs can be downloaded from the Intranet under Marketing / Downloads/Printables.

For the communications plan to be effective, employees must adhere to the following:

- The employee must keep contact information current using the Metropolitan Library System Contact Info portal. (Visit the intranet page for instructions and links: <http://my.metrolibrary.info/drupal/inclement-weather>)
- Managers will keep an up-to-date listing of their staff members' telephone numbers, along with a copy of this procedure, at home and work in case additional communication is required.

# SH 611 Unexpected Closure

## SH 611.1 Unexpected Closure Procedures

*Adopted: 01/18*

- Outreach staff will keep contact information for scheduled community events, along with a copy of this procedure, at home and work in case communication about a closure is required. Employees should not call their supervisor.
- Employees may also visit <http://www.metrolibrary.org> or monitor local radio and television broadcasts for closing announcements on possible inclement weather days. If the closing is shown on the library's website, employees may consider it official, even if they have not received a call; there is always a chance that the notification system was unable to reach them.
- For a delayed opening, employees are to arrive at work one hour before scheduled time to open to the public.
- All Day Closure: All exempt level staff will receive Unexpected Closure leave and their regular pay for a day of closure in which they were scheduled to work. Non-exempt employees will receive an amount equal to their scheduled hours for the day.
- Partial Day Closure: In the event of a partial day closure, all exempt level and non-exempt employees scheduled to work will be paid for the closure time that occurred during their scheduled hours.
- Hourly employees cancelling programs, communicating with customers or doing work tasks during a system closure will adjust their timecard to indicate regular pay for hours worked.
- If an employee chooses not to travel to work, he/she must follow their normal call-in procedures and he/she will not be eligible for closure pay. Employees can use available paid leave or an authorized workweek schedule adjustment for the missed time, subject to the business needs of the Library.
- If a decision is made for the Library to be unexpectedly closed and an employee is already scheduled to be off work, has already requested leave, or has already called in a notification that they will be absent, the employee is not eligible for the Unexpected Closure leave and any scheduled leave will be charged to the employee.
- In the absence of any official closing announcement or telephone call, staff is expected to attempt to report for work at their scheduled time.

### **Facility Closure:**

To provide favorable working conditions for staff and a comfortable environment for customers, individual library locations may be closed temporarily due to facility concerns, operational issues, or utility outages.

Note: Evacuations due to emergency concerns such as threats of fire, tornado, bomb, environmental hazard, etc. will follow authorities' instructions and/or emergency evacuation protocols.

The executive director delegates responsibility for the decision for an individual location to close or remain open to the library manager who will consult with their regional director and/or deputy executive director/public services regarding the decision.

A decision to close a library is made after reviewing information from the on-site local library management team member, seeking information from departments to assist with the decision and considering all known factors, including:

# **SH 611 Unexpected Closure**

## **SH 611.1 Unexpected Closure Procedures**

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- input from Maintenance and/or IT
- the exact nature of the operational or facility failure
- the time of day (daylight or after sundown)
- outside temperature
- the number of operating hours remaining that day
- any information from utility provider on expected timeframe for restoration
- proximity of nearby restroom facilities

Utility outages can affect electricity, water, air conditioning, heat, sewage, and data circuits/computers. The following conditions are intended to serve as a guide in decision making, not a prompt for an automatic response.

- Extreme temperatures in the library: Temperatures of less than 58 degrees or greater than 86 degrees sustained for one hour regardless of daylight may justify closing the library. These temperatures are 10 degrees above/below the OSHA recommended thermal comfort range of 68-76. (Source: [OSHA Policy on Indoor Air Quality](#)). The manager or his /her designee will assess the temperature within the public area using a thermometer supplied by Maintenance.
- Loss of electricity occurring during daylight hours which impacts operations: The library may close after one hour of loss if warranted.
- Loss of electricity occurring when it is dark which impacts operations: The library may close after the process for closing announcements is complete if warranted.
- Loss of water and/or sewage which impacts operations: The library may close after approximately 30 minutes of loss as warranted, regardless of time of day.

### Communication:

1. After the decision to close has been made, the closing library's contact person (local library management team member or regional director) will communicate the impending closure to Maintenance, IT, and CIS. The contact person must confirm these departments have received the message by either an email reply or phone conversation.
2. Staff will post a "Closed due to power outage, utility outage etc." sign at their library entrance before departing the premises.
3. After the library closes, all staff will leave the building if the situation has not been corrected within 30 minutes (utility restored, sufficient staff arrive to work, systems begin to work and improve the temperature inside, etc.). If the reason for closing is no longer valid prior to staff leaving, the library will reopen, and the departments listed above must be notified.
4. The contact person will text or call the designated Marketing, IT, and CIS contacts and alert them to notify the public through the web and social media.
5. The contact person will ensure that an email is sent to all correspondents saying that the library is closed and at what time it closed.
6. Library staff will cancel any planned programs that are anticipated to be affected by the closure and email registered customers.

# **SH 611 Unexpected Closure**

## **SH 611.1 Unexpected Closure Procedures**

***Adopted: 01/18***

7. Library staff will email customers with meeting room bookings that are anticipated to be affected by the closure to notify them of the closure and offer an option to reschedule or receive a refund.
8. The regional director will keep the deputy executive director/public services and the executive director aware of the situation via text or call.
9. Maintenance and/or IT will assist in monitoring the status of the outage and notifying the contact person when the utility is restored. When power is known to be restored, the contact person will be notified, and they in turn will notify the Library Management Team group and provide instructions as to whether reassigned staff are to return to their library and reopen.
10. When staff return and a library is reopened, the contact person will ensure that an email is sent to all correspondents saying that the library is open and at what time it opened. The contact person will call the designated Marketing, IT and CIS contacts so that they can notify the public through the web and social media.

### **Reassignment of Staff:**

1. After the decision to close has been made, the closing library's contact person (local library management team member or regional director) will send an email to the Library Management Team group indicating the need to reassign staff and request a quick reply to work out the details.
2. After the library closes, all staff will leave the building if the situation has not been corrected within 30 minutes (utility restored, sufficient staff arrive to work, systems begin to work and improve the temperature inside, etc.).
3. Staff will be reassigned to other locations for the remainder of their scheduled time. First priority should be given to other locations with staffing shortages, secondly to nearby locations including the Service Center.
4. All staff must be ready to report back to their home location should the utility be restored in which case they will be notified by Maintenance or IT. If the utility returns or other operational issue is resolved with three hours of normal operating time left, staff will return and reopen the library.
5. If the utility goes out within three hours of closing, staff will be allowed to leave for the day after the designated waiting period instead of being reassigned. Employees electing to leave for the day will either: 1) use leave to cover the remainder of their scheduled shift or 2) obtain supervisor approval for a workweek schedule adjustment to make-up the missed time, subject to the business needs of the Library.

Any variation or questions related to these procedures can be discussed with the deputy executive director/public services or executive director.