

TOWN OF CHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY LIBRARY EMERGENCY CLOSURE/REOPENING POLICY

Policy Statement

The Town of Chester Public Library (hereafter known as The Library) will close when emergencies dictate it necessary. Reopening will be determined when conditions permit.

Closing Procedures

In the event the Town of Chester Municipal Center must close due to an emergency situation, the Library will automatically close. In general, if the Municipal Center is open during the Library's regularly scheduled hours, the Library will be open.

In cases involving a short-term, immediate emergency situation, the Library Director will confer with the Board of Trustees President to determine if/when the Library will close. Such an emergency would create conditions that put Library patrons and employees at risk if the Library (remained) open(ed). In the event that the Board of Trustees President is not available, the Library Director will confer with any available Board officer.

Should an emergency situation arise that presents a longer-term closure, for an extended period of time, the Library Director will contact the Board of Trustees President. In turn the whole Board of Trustees will work together with the Library Director to make the closure decision. This particular procedure assumes time permits such involvement. If it does not, the procedure outlined immediately above will be followed.

When an emergency arises for which it has been determined the Library must close, the Library Director will:

- notify the staff;
- notify the President of the Trustees (if he/she was not involved in the decision);
- communicate the information to be posted on the Library's social media and website;
- post a library closure notification on the library door, if possible.

Should the Library Director not be available to execute the above emergency closing procedures, a designated staff member will serve in place of the Director and follow the same procedures outlined above.

Re-Opening Procedures

In general, the Library Director will recommend when the Library will re-open. The Board will consider that recommendation and approve a mutually agreed upon opening date. The Library Director will develop situation-specific precautions and procedures necessary to re-open and present them to the Board. Board approval of the re-opening procedures and phases or timeline is required.

In the specific case of the Library closing due to an emergency closing of the Town of Chester Municipal Center, the Library staff will resume their regular hours when the Municipal Center re-

opens. At that time, the Library Director and the Board of Trustees will determine when the Library will re-open to the public, if an immediate re-opening is not deemed possible.

If the Library closure was due to a longer-term emergency, such as an Executive Order, the Library Director will begin planning for the Library's re-opening as soon as possible after the announcement of the Order, drafting plans and procedures as detailed as possible based on the current "knowns" but recognizing the fluidity of the situation. The goal is to have plans and supplies in place so there is as little delay as possible when the time comes to re-open.

When the Executive Order has been lifted, the Library Director will finalize plans for the Library's re-opening and submit them to the Board of Trustees for approval. Such plans may consist of a gradual, phased re-opening beginning with limited services and the development of appropriate guidelines to protect staff and patrons. Again, plans and procedures will be revised in response to ongoing assessment of new information with updates and revisions submitted to the Board for approval.

Approved by the Town of Chester Library Board of Trustees June 17, 2020.