Disaster Planning Toolkit

Libraries plays a vital role in the community, significantly involved in disaster preparedness and recovery. Focusing on urgency, libraries are recognized as key climate resiliency partners. The first victim, often, in any crisis is accurate information. Librarians, as trusted information experts, a.k.a., Information First Responders—are "ports in a storm" and critical in the recovery process. A toolkit designed to address the immediate and ongoing needs of the community is one way to increase your crisis coping capacity and help to build a resilient library.

Common Seasonal Disasters

- Floods
- Tornadoes
- High Winds/Straight-line Winds
- Severe Thunderstorms
- Wildfires
- Severe Winter Storms
- Drought

Additional Hazards and Threats

- Pandemics
- Active Shooter
- Cyber Attacks (Ransomware)

What Makes the Library a Reasonable Accommodation in Disaster Situations

1. Library as a safe shelter
2. A climate-controlled space: air conditioning in the summer, warmth during the winter
3. Basic amenities: restrooms, running water, flashlights
4. Sources of power to charge your essential devices, including phones or medical equipment; charging station
5. A safe and calm space for you and the members of the community
6. Internet and computer access
7. Information central
8. Meeting space
9. Normalcy and distraction (versus the mental toll and compassion fatigue)
10. Fill out FEMA forms for assistance
11. Center of communication for the community
12. Social Security and FEMA Apps
13. Offer technology assistance
14. Translate or interpret the language barrier
15. Put together a severe weather kit*

38

16. Legal information
17. Aid distribution
18. Pet preparedness
19. Weather radio
20. First aid kits
21. AED
22. Provide news feeds

Lists of Local Opportunities

- Check on housing arrangements
- Skype options for virtual conversations with family members
- Provide donated materials—water, clothes, food
- Help organize pick-up and drop off points for essentials
- Assistance to households and individuals can be used for temporary housing assistance, home repair, unemployment assistance, debris removal, emergency food supplies, legal aid and crisis counseling
- Nixle - text and email emergency alerts
- Emergency contacts (staff) and (public)*

Red Cross, etc.
American Heart Association, etc.
*Locations to find: pharmaceuticals, debris removal equipment, food, gasoline
Nonperishable food
Moist Towelettes
Tools
Garbage bags
Masks
Can Opener
Plastic Sheeting and Duct Tape
Wheelchair
Comfort Kits

Preparedness Planning Team
1. Director
2. Circulation Services Supervisor
3. Adult Services and Outreach Librarian
4. Youth Services Librarian and Technology Coordinator

Not all incidents are catastrophic. Some events are very localized with little long-term consequences and require less action on the part of the library. The Portage Public Library should match the response to the level of complexity and seriousness of the event.

Portage Public Library
EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

I	Closing of Library Building
II	Cancellation of Library Programs & Reservations
III	Staffing Expectations
IV	Library Reopening

I   Closing of Library Building

The Library is a public service institution, and every effort is made to maintain regular hours for the public and staff, safety permitting. The Library will be closed when weather conditions deteriorate to the point where emergency situations prevail, when vital equipment in the building fails (e.g., furnace malfunction, no water in the building, no electricity, etc.) or if otherwise deemed necessary to ensure safety of either library staff or the public, such as a pandemic, epidemic or outbreak.

In the instance of adverse weather, the decision to close the Library will be based upon:
- General conditions of roads in the Portage area.
- Condition of the Library's parking lot, walkways, and emergency exits.
- Availability of sufficient staff to open and operate the Library. (A minimum of three staff is required to remain open.)
- Requests for closure by local, county or state law enforcement or public health agencies.

The decision to close will be made by the Library Director, in consultation with the Library Board. In the absence of the Director, the Library Board President and a member of the Library Leadership Team will make the decision to close the library. The Library Director must be notified of such action.

The Portage City Clerk will be notified of any closures.

II   Cancellation of Library Programs & Reservations
- Children's and Teen programs will be cancelled if the schools are closed.
- All scheduled library programs will be cancelled in the event of a library building closure.
- All meeting room and study room reservations will be cancelled in the event of a library building closure. Library staff will attempt to notify reservation holders of the closing.

III   Staffing Expectations

The Portage Public Library wants its staff members to feel safe. However, staff members who prefer not to travel to work or chose to leave work before their shift is over must get supervisory approval to do so. In these situations, they will not be paid for any missed work time, unless their supervisor approves an alternative option to make up their lost time. ·

In the event the library is closed:

1. Those individuals who did not report to work or left before the decision to close was made will use vacation or floating holiday or in the case of part-time employees, will not be paid for an uncompleted shift, unless they make up their lost time.
2. Those employees who report to work but who are sent home early will be paid to the end of their regular work shift.

3. If an employee is advised to not report to work because of a weather emergency or library equipment failure, they will be paid for their full shift.
4. During a declared public health or safety emergency, such as a pandemic, epidemic or outbreak that may impact work for extended periods of time; require a phased reopening of the library building; or limit computer and room usage, payment of staff hours missed may be handled differently. After consideration, final approval by the Library Board, and based in no small part on discussions with the Library Director and the City will be required to determine appropriate payment of staff for hours missed.

IV   Library Reopening

During a declared public health or safety emergency, a phased reopening of the library building may be required. In the event of such an emergency other policies may be impacted with respect to hours of operation, availability of equipment, limited computer or room usage, extended loan periods, restricted areas or services to preserve the safety of staff and patrons. Furthermore any actions taken need to be publicized on the library or City of Portage website, library Facebook page or signage posted on the outside library doors.

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Approved by the Portage Public Library Board of Trustees
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April 12, 2022

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Portage Public Library
ACTIVE ATTACK POLICY

I   Purpose
II   Definitions
III   Procedures
IV   Response Guidelines Follow Up

I   Purpose

To assist staff at the Portage Public Library to respond to an active attack event. To preserve life and address the reality of an active attack event, these guidelines have been established to guide the response to this event and to maximize survivability. It is very important to quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life and to assist others as appropriate.

This plan cannot address all possible scenarios, but outlines a general planned response.

II   Definitions

    A. ACTIVE ATTACK- Dynamic, quickly evolving situation involving an individual(s) presenting an immediate threat or danger of death to others using such items as firearms, bladed weapons, or vehicles.

    B. ACTIVE SHOOTER – An active shooter is defined as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area." In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

    C. RUN, HIDE, FIGHT – Recommend course of action to help keep yourself or others safe during an active attack.

III   Procedures

If possible, the first employee(s) to identify an active attack situation will:

RUN

This is your first option. If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:

- Run away from the threat
- As soon as practical, call 911
- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Help others escape, if possible
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
- Get as far away as possible from the building or area where the threat is located and have a predetermined reunification location(s)
  West: St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception campus
  East: Craig's Popcorn Corner
- Leave your belongings behind
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter might be
- Keep your hands visible and up in the air, so it is clear you have no weapon
- Follow the instruction of responding police officers

42

HIDE

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide and barricade where the active shooter is less likely to find you or reach you. The hiding place should:

- Be inconspicuous
- Be out of the active shooter's view
- Provide physical protection if shots are fired in your direction
- Provide a barrier between you and the attacker
- Employees should remember to:
  o Lock the door
  o Silence cell phones
  o Barricade the door or area you are in, with any items you can locate that will prevent or deter the active shooter from entering your space
  o Close blinds or curtains and cover windows
  o Hide behind large items, like cabinets or desks
  o Turn off radios or anything making noise
  o Remain quiet

FIGHT

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Working as a team with other staff to overtake the active shooter
- Committing yourself to defensive physical actions

IV   Response Guidelines Follow Up
The police will arrive to respond to the emergency.

1. Comply with police instructions. The first responding officers need to focus on stopping the active threat and creating a safe environment for medical assistance to be brought in to aid the injured.

2. When police arrive at your location:
   - Remain calm
   - Follow instructions
   - Put down any items in your hands
   - Immediately raise your hands and spread your fingers
   - Keep your hands visible at all times
   - Avoid making quick movements towards officers
   - Avoid pointing, screaming and yelling
   - Do not ask officers for help or direction, just proceed in the direction they provide

3. When police arrive, be prepared to share the following information, if known:
   - Number of attackers
   - Number of individual victims and any hostages
   - Any events that may have provoked the shooter
   - Type and number of weapons possibly in the possession of the shooter
   - Identify library staff
   - Share library keys, if requested

4. Media Coverage
   - Law enforcement will respond to any media requests for information. Law enforcement will carefully consider the nature of any requests, in order to avoid disclosing information about any person that is confidential and protected by Federal and State privacy and medical laws and regulations.

5. Employee Assistance
   - All employees involved in an incident will be identified, and appropriate mental health resources will be offered. The Director (or Leadership Team) will work with the City Administrator and Human Resources for the aftercare of employees.

6. Employee Training
   - This Policy will be reviewed once per year with all staff members.
   - Training will be provided by the Portage Police Department.
   - Staff training, such as Run, Hide, Fight videos will be made available for viewing.
   - This policy will be reviewed with all new employees during orientation.

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Approved by the Portage Public Library Board of Trustees
June 13, 2023

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