

Hanson Public Library

Emergency Closing Policy

The Hanson Public Library is a public service organization and every effort is made to maintain normal operating hours. Inclement weather, power outages, or other emergency situations may require the Library to close, delay opening, or close early. The primary factor in a decision to close will be the safety of Library patrons and staff.

The Library will inform the public of an emergency closing, and reasonable efforts will be made to notify individuals or groups scheduled to attend a program or use a meeting room. Methods of communication may include a sign on the lobby door, a message on the website or social media sites, or a recording on the automated phone system.

If an emergency closing occurs, staff will be paid for their regularly scheduled hours. A scheduled staff member who chooses to leave early or not report to work when the Library reopens must use leave time for any hours missed.

The Town Administrator may decide to close all Town offices due to an emergency situation, and in that case, the Library will be closed.

Inclement Weather

For Library hours of operation that overlap with those of Town Hall, the Library will follow the Town Administrator's decision regarding the closure of Town offices for inclement weather. For all other Library hours of operation, the decision to close for inclement weather shall rest with the Library Director. In the Director's absence, the Assistant Director or the Board of Trustees Chair may make the decision to close.

Power Outages

In the event of a power outage, staff should lock the lobby door to prevent individuals from entering and should ask any individuals already in the building to exit.

Staff should remain in the building, and if power is not restored within sixty minutes or before the normal closing time (whichever comes first), the building should be closed and staff should depart. If a power outage causes an unsafe condition or occurs when it is dark outside, the building should be cleared and closed as described above, and staff should depart as soon as possible.

The Library Director may choose to reopen the Library if it can be done safely and if power is restored at least four hours before the normal closing time.

Other Emergencies

Other types of emergencies may include fire; mechanical failure or loss of critical utilities (e.g. no heat, no water); gas leak; water damage or flood; hazardous spill; bomb threat; violent individual, active shooter, or lockdown; pests, bugs, or infestation; medical emergency; staff illness that prevents minimum staffing requirements from being maintained; pandemic or public health crisis; or declaration of a State of Emergency.

For other types of emergencies, staff may deem it necessary to evacuate the building and/or contact emergency personnel. The Library Director may also choose to close the Library. In the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director or Board of Trustees Chair may make the decision to close. If any of these individuals are unavailable and emergency personnel believe that remaining open would risk personal safety, another staff member or Board member may make the decision to close and should notify the Library Director or Board of Trustees Chair of the closure as soon as possible.

Adopted by the Board of Library Trustees
October 27, 2022