

Severe Weather and Emergency Closing Policy

It is the policy of the Waterford Public Library (the “Library”) to ensure the safety of all its patrons and Library staff. Library administration will make every effort to maintain regular Library operating hours. However, severe weather conditions may require the Library to open late, close early, or close for the entire day or extended days. The decision to close or adjust the opening or closing times of the Library will be made by the Library Director. If the Library Director is unavailable or can’t be reached, the decision will be made by the President of the Board of Library Trustees.

The Library will not automatically close or adjust the opening or closing times based on the actions of other institutions. The decision to close entirely, open late, or close early will take the following factors into consideration:

- General conditions of roads in the Waterford area.
- Condition of the Library’s parking lot, walkways, and emergency exits.
- Availability of sufficient staff to open and operate the Library.
- The presence of heat, electricity, and/or running water in the Library.
- Requests for closure by local, county, or state law enforcement agencies.

Equipment Failure/Other Emergencies

There may be occasions when equipment failures (e.g. furnace failure, power outage, etc.) or other area emergencies will require the Library to open late, close early, or close for the entire day or extended days. The decision to close will be made by the Library Director. If the Library Director is unavailable or can’t be reached, the decision will be made by the President of the Board of Library Trustees.

Staffing level due to illness

Temporary closure may result due to minimal staffing due to illness. The Library Director at the direction of the Library Board, may temporarily close the library building due to lack of availability of staff to operate the library. Minimal staffing level is two staff members in the building.

Public Health Response

Temporary closure may result due to pandemic. The Library Director at the direction of the Library Board, may temporarily close the library building under one of more of the following conditions:

- Public health authorities advise, request or order such a closure.
- Waterford Halfmoon Public School District closes.
- Staffing levels are too low to operate the library.

Notification to the Public

The following forms of notification should be provided for library patrons in the event of severe weather conditions, an equipment failure or other emergency closing situation:

- Announcements on local radio and television stations through the School Closings Network, when possible.
- A notice on the front doors of the Library, when possible.
- A recorded notice on the Library answering machine, when possible.
- Notices on social media avenues such as Facebook and Instagram, when possible.
- Notice on the Library website, when possible.

Patron Considerations

Fines for late library materials will be waived for two working days after the unscheduled closing has ended. When possible, pick-up dates for reserve items will be extended and items may be renewed over the phone.

Staff Considerations

(a) When the Library is closed because of severe weather conditions, equipment failure or other emergency situations, all employees will receive compensation for the time they would normally have been scheduled to work. Employees will not receive compensation for emergency closings if the closings occur on their normally scheduled day off, during vacation or illness.

Approved 5/13/25