HYDE PARK LIBRARY

2 Main Street
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DISASTER RESPONSE POLICY

Purpose

This manual describes staff operations during an emergency where immediate action is required. Actions may include calling the police, fire department, an ambulance, searching for a missing child, evacuating the building, or other. Staff are expected to familiarize themselves with this policy and, during their normal work day, become familiar with the library, paying attention to the general layout and location of emergency equipment such as fire alarms and panic buttons.

In an emergency, staff are expected to assist patrons as best they can without undue risk to themselves. Staff should not put themselves in harm's way while addressing any emergency, and should rely on the expertise of professional first responders in any situation requiring such assistance.

Emergency Contacts

Panic buttons are located at the circulation desk on the main floor and at the staff desk in the children's room downstairs. Pressing the button on either of these devices sends out a call to the police. There is also a list of emergency contacts (and non-emergency numbers) posted at the circulation desk on the main floor and at the staff desk in the children's room. In an emergency requiring:

- Police – Press the panic button or call 911
- Fire department – Pull a fire alarm or call 911
- Ambulance – Call 911.

Fires

Fire alarms are located at:

- The north exit in the vestibule
- The east exit to the right of the door
- The top of the south stairwell

Fire extinguishers are located throughout the library. Only use a fire extinguisher if you are trained and are comfortable using one.

Evacuation

In the event the library building or annex needs to be evacuated, staff and patrons should take the safest exits out of each building and assemble across Main Street on the sidewalk in front of Town Hall, near Route 9. Both the annex and library have exits on the north, east, and south sides of the buildings.

The building(s) should be evacuated when:
- The fire alarm goes off
- Heavy smoke or flames are visible
- A threat is received
- Other types of potential emergencies present themselves (gas odor, suspicious object left behind by patron, etc.). Use your judgment.

Evacuation Procedures

Staff at the circulation desk should:
- Notify the children's library staff
- Quickly check the back room and bathrooms for patrons and instruct them to exit the library
- Make sure staff downstairs and users in the collaborator are alerted

Staff in the children's room should:
- Notify the circulation desk (if the threat has originated in the children's area)
- Tell patrons to go upstairs and exit the library
- Quickly check the restrooms for patrons
- Check the cameras for any patrons in the biography room and instruct them to quickly go up the stairs and exit the library

Staff in the annex should:
- Tell patrons to quickly exit the building

Once the building(s) is evacuated and staff are gathered at the assembly point in front of Town Hall, those present should:
- Report any patrons/staff still in the library
- Provide whatever information is useful to first responders

Hostile Patrons
- Patrons must abide by the Code of Conduct posted in the vestibule at the library's entrance.
- Unruly patrons are typically given a warning and, if poor conduct continues, they may be asked to leave.
- Before asking a patron to leave the library/annex, it is advisable to confer with senior staff. Asking a patron to leave the library/annex is an extreme measure.
- If the patron is out of view of other staff, bring the panic button with you before speaking to them. It is advisable to approach unruly patrons with another staff member.
- If a patron seems unreasonable, agitated, and/or possibly dangerous, staff should contact the police and request assistance before interacting with them.
- If the patron asks, the staff may let the patron know that the police have been called. This may encourage the patron to leave on their own.

Code Adam
- If a patron reports a child missing, a description of the child and what the child is wearing should be obtained. Building exits should immediately be monitored by staff and any patrons looking to enter should be turned away.

- All staff should be notified of the Code Adam and provided a description of the child's physical features and clothing. Staff not monitoring exits should perform a quick search of the area, paying particular attention to good hiding places that might appeal to a child.
- If the child is not found within five minutes, call the police.
- If the child is found unharmed and appears to have been lost or hiding, the child should be reunited with the searching caretaker.
- If the child is found accompanied by someone other than a parent, legal guardian, or caretaker, reasonable efforts to delay their departure should be used without putting the child, staff, or patrons at risk. The police should be notified and given details about the person who left with the child.

Active Shooter

If at all possible, move away from the threat as quickly as you can.

- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree.
- Leave your belongings behind.

If evacuation is not possible, find a secure place in which to hide and barricade the area.

- Lock and secure doors.
- Create barriers to prevent or slow down the shooter from getting to you.
- Remain out of sight and quiet. Silence your phone.

As a last resort – and only when your life is in imminent danger – attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the shooter.

- Incorporate a distraction – throw things and yell.
- Commit to your actions – be aggressive and use improvised weapons.
- Disarm the shooter – solicit help, if possible.

Medical Emergencies

If a patron or staff member appears to be in medical distress, offer to call an ambulance. If they refuse help, use your discretion to either wait or call 911.

Threats in General

Any and all threats, regardless of how they're received (verbally, by phone, online, or by letter) must be reported to the director so appropriate action can be taken.

Approved 4.15.2024