

Emergency Procedures Policy

Purpose

The Sturgis Public Library promotes the safety of all patrons and staff. In case of disaster, the following policy will be followed:

For Emergency Situations:

In case of a fire:

Call 911 and clear the building. Library staff should evacuate the patrons and, after ensuring that everyone has safely left the building, meet in the First Interstate Bank parking lot. If the fire is small, in a contained area, and of no danger to staff, trained staff may attempt to put out the fire with the extinguishers.

In case of a tornado:

If the town alarm sounds, take shelter under heavy furniture or counters. Stay away from windows and bookshelves. Patrons and staff should move to the hallways that are by the Rally Office or to the library back rooms. In the event of an earthquake, patrons should be evacuated out of the building and staff should meet in the First Interstate Bank parking lot.

In case of a health emergency:

Staff members and volunteers should not administer first aid of even a minor nature. The sick or injured patron should be made comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. 911 should be called immediately in the event of a head injury or other serious problems. No medication—including aspirin—should ever be dispensed to the public.

In case of a severe snowstorm:

In the event the public schools close or the weather is of a nature that is dangerous to the staff members, the library may close. Changes in hours should be posted on all library doors. The Library Director will also try to have the closing announced on the local radio station and city web site. Whenever possible, known cancellations or closings should be posted in public places ahead of time.

In case of power outage:

All patrons must leave the library in the event of a power outage. Staff should assist patrons in evacuating the building. The library will not open in the morning if there is no power, but will make every effort to open when power is restored. If someone is trapped in the elevator, notify the Library Director immediately and call the Fire Department 605-347-5801. If not available, then call Public Works at 605-347-3916 or 605-347-1832 (Director of Public Works).

For dangerous or problem behaviors by individuals:

In case of a threatening phone call: Press record (bottom right-hand corner of phone screen) and try to keep the caller on the line as long as possible.

1. Ask the caller to repeat the message and, if you can, write down every word spoken by the person.
2. Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other noises, which may indicate from where the call is originating. Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.
3. Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police (605-347-5070 if a non-emergency, or 911 if an immediate threat is perceived).

In case of intoxicated, abusive or irate patrons:

Abusive behavior does not have to be tolerated. Your personal safety is always a priority! At all times during an incident with an angry customer, establish the level of risk to yourself, other patrons and even to the hostile customer themselves. The following is a guideline to help you evaluate your level of risk:

Level One: Customer is showing signs of irritation, frustration or dislike. There is no threatening behavior at level one. Level one behavior is usually handled by a single employee unless it is clear that the customer is escalating to level two.

Level Two: Customer may be loud, aggressive or angry. Their behavior becomes very defensive in nature. This level is handled by at least two employees. The supervisor should be called.

Level Three: This customer is physically or verbally abusive or is menacing by word or action. Any person who is armed, intoxicated, or extremely mentally unstable should be considered in the level three category regardless of their behavior. This is because of the unpredictability in these situations. Call 911 immediately and plan to evacuate or shelter in place if needed. After calling 911, staff should use the building intercom phone system to warn other offices of a potential situation. Staff and patrons should then proceed to evacuate the building or shelter in place. The staff will meet in the First Interstate parking lot once an all clear is in place.

If a library patron becomes abusive:

1. Remain calm and keep your voice low and firm. Such behavior is usually in response to library policy, not your policy. Ask another staff person to assist you.
2. Ask the offender to leave the library. If you observe another colleague in this situation, ask if you can be of help.

3. If the patron does not cease the abusive behavior, summon your supervisor. With your colleague and/or supervisor, advise the patron that the police will be called if the behavior does not cease. Do not hesitate to call police when the patron has reached level three risk. After calling 911, staff should use the phone system to warn other offices of a potential situation. If needed, staff and patrons should evacuate the building or shelter in place. The staff will meet in the First Interstate parking lot once an all clear is in place.

An Incident Report form should be filled out for all of the above behaviors.

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