

**Title** Inclement Weather and  
Unscheduled Closure Policy  
**Policy Number** CPL-15-03  
**Approval Date** December 14, 2015  
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**Notes**

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline roles and responsibilities in situations where the Caledon Public Library temporarily suspends or curtails operations due to an emergency situation, such as severe weather, as well as in cases when the Library remains in operation but some staff may experience difficulty reporting to work due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions. The extent of any suspension or curtailment will differ depending on the particular circumstances and the nature and location of the affected operations. The suspension of Library Service may also result from community wide emergencies and recommendations prompted by the Town of Caledon Community Emergency Response Plan.

## Guidelines

The Library has a responsibility for maintaining services and therefore the application of this policy must consider both the operational obligations and requirements of the Library as well as the safety of Library staff and patrons. The Library will make every effort to maintain services despite inclement weather or other circumstances that could disrupt the normal operations of the Library.

The determination to close any or all branches of the Caledon Public Library shall be made by the CEO or designate, except where evacuation is essential for staff and public safety or by order of police, fire officials or the Town of Caledon Emergency Control Group. As all Library service points are located within shared facilities, any determination made by the hosting or partner organization to close a facility will influence the Library CEO's evaluation. Consultation with the Town of Caledon's Director of Parks and Recreation and/or the Emergency Control Group Planning Section Chief will be initiated where appropriate.

## Conditions Warranting Closure

Non-emergency closing: Failure of heating/cooling equipment during periods of extreme weather, lack of electrical power, lack of computers available at staff service points for an extended period of time, or inadequate staffing levels.

*Emergency evacuation:* Building problems resulting in clear and present danger to employees and/or patrons (e.g. gas leak, noxious/toxic fumes, or fire) or any event such as a criminal investigation, severe accident involving injury, severe building damage.

*Non-openings, delayed openings or early closings:* Severely inclement weather. In such cases the decision to close will be based upon:

- General conditions of roads
- Condition of parking lots and walkways
- Availability of staff to open and operate the Library
- Requests for closure by local or provincial agencies
- Severe Weather Warning as issued by Environment Canada
- Closure of host schools or municipal facilities

If the Library closes prior to the scheduled closing time, all full-time employees and any part-time employees already present at work shall be paid for the remainder of their shift. Library operations will be resumed when feasible. All employees will be deemed to be “on call” for what would otherwise be a regular work day and available to return to work upon notification by Library management or other library communication channels.

As stated in the Caledon Public Library Personnel Policy, “employees shall be paid for scheduled hours not worked when the Library was closed due to inclement weather”. If the Library is not to be opened to the public at all, every effort shall be made to make this determination at least two hours before the scheduled opening time and to alert all scheduled staff. Employees instructed by the employer not to report for their scheduled shift or to leave work due to an emergency will be compensated at their normal hourly rate for the balance of their shift. This compensation is on the basis that, during the emergency, they are to remain available for a call-in to work to complete the balance of their shift as deemed necessary by the CEO or designate. Compensation for missed time for extended closures may be referred to the Library Board.

If a closure continues beyond one day, staff shall be responsible for remotely accessing their work email accounts or the Library website (if operational) each day for instructions as to whether the Library is open or closed. In some cases, such as temporary power outages, the Library may be closed temporarily to the public, however staff will be required to stay on site until the situation is resolved or more information is available regarding the timeline of an expected resolution. If the outage is expected to continue past 5:00 PM, or if no information is available regarding an expected return of service as of 4:30 PM, the affected Library branches will be closed for the remaining regular hours of operation. Failure of electricity for more than 45 minutes in the evening will also prompt closure of the impacted service point(s).

## **Staff Responsibilities**

During periods of poor weather, employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to report for work as scheduled. It is recognized, however, that inclement weather may cause significant transportation problems or locally hazardous conditions. Employees are expected to give first consideration to their personal safety in evaluating their ability to commute to work. In such cases, the following protocol shall be observed:

1. An employee may decide not to come to work or leave early at such time as information is broadcast that:
  - A public road is closed by the police (due to weather) that is a main arterial route to the facility from that employee's residence.
  - School Buses are not operating.
  - A major storm is imminent which, for purposes of clarity, is a Severe Weather Warning as issued by Environment Canada that directly affects the Town of Caledon or the employee's place of residence.
2. In all of the situations found in Number 1., the employee is expected to contact his or her direct supervisor as soon as practicable and advise the reason(s) that he/she will not be coming into work or will be leaving work early. Such day, or portion of a day, will be taken as earned vacation or as time in lieu of overtime. If there is a loss of pay, an employee may request an opportunity to make-up the time if organizational needs and timing permit. Scheduling of this shift shall be at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.
3. The employee and supervisor shall mutually ensure that there is minimum negative impact on operations when making such a decision.

## **Communication of Closure**

In cases where Library closure is determined prior to regular hours of operation, the CEO or designate will initiate communication of the closure to Library staff, members of the Library Board and the Town of Caledon CAO and Manager of Communications via email or phone. A Library Staff Phone Tree has been created, and will continue to be maintained, for this purpose. Public notice of the closure will also be posted on the Library's website (if operational), Twitter feed and Facebook page as well as applicable media outlets. Outgoing messages for phone lines with remote access will also be updated. Employees who are scheduled to work and need to determine the Library's operational status in an emergency are encouraged to consult the above noted information sources to receive instructions concerning their work assignment and status. In the absence of any communication by phone or on the Library's web-site or via email, normal operations are presumed.

In cases where the Library closes after some period of operation, in addition to the above, signage will be posted on the door and a message will be added to all phone Library phone lines. Staff will inform the visiting public of the closure and ensure that they exit the Library safely and have time to arrange for transportation if necessary. Efforts will be made to inform any impacted program registrants or volunteers if possible.

In all cases, no overdue charges will be levied for items due on a closed day.

**Related Documents:**

- Caledon Public Library Personnel Policy