

Disaster Response Policy for Elizabeth B Pert Library-- Hector, NY

Policy Statement

The Elizabeth B Pert Library is dedicated to ensuring the safety of its patrons, staff, and collections in the event of a disaster. In order to minimize damage to the library's physical space, materials, and operations, the library will maintain a comprehensive disaster response plan, including clear procedures for responding to emergencies such as fires, floods, severe weather, or other unexpected events.

Regulation

1. **Safety of Personnel and Patrons:**

The library will ensure that all staff members are trained in basic emergency response procedures, including evacuation protocols and first aid procedures, to ensure the safety of patrons and staff during an emergency.

2. **Communication of Emergency Procedures:**

Emergency procedures, including evacuation routes and emergency contact information, will be posted prominently in public areas and communicated to all staff during onboarding.

3. **Response to Disasters:**

In the event of a disaster, the library will follow its established disaster response plan, ensuring that staff respond promptly and appropriately, with a primary focus on safeguarding human life. The library will then assess and address damage to the building and materials as soon as it is safe to do so.

4. **Damage and Recovery:**

After a disaster, the library will prioritize efforts to assess and document damage to physical materials, electronics, and library infrastructure. The library will begin recovery and salvage efforts as soon as possible, including reaching out to professional services if necessary.

5. **Continuity of Services:**

The library will make every effort to resume regular operations quickly after a disaster, including providing temporary services or locations if the main building is unavailable.

Procedure

1. **Before a Disaster:**

(1) The library director, in coordination with library trustees, will develop and update a disaster response plan that includes emergency contact information, evacuation routes, and designated roles for staff during emergencies.

(2) Emergency supplies (such as first aid kits, flashlights, fire extinguishers, and

protective gear) will be maintained by the Valois Logan Hector Volunteer Fire Company and checked regularly to ensure they are in working condition.

(4) The library will identify and prepare an offsite location for essential records, and ensure backup systems are in place for digital materials.

2. **During a Disaster:**

(1) Upon notification of an emergency, staff will immediately activate the library's disaster response plan.

(2) The primary responsibility of staff is to evacuate patrons and personnel safely, following established evacuation routes. If evacuation is not possible, staff will provide appropriate shelter and await further instructions.

(3) The library director or designated emergency response coordinator will serve as the point of contact for coordinating with emergency services and overseeing the safety of all personnel.

(4) If necessary, emergency services will be contacted for immediate response.

3. **After a Disaster:**

(1) Once it is safe to enter the building, staff will assess the situation and determine the extent of the damage to both physical and digital materials.

(2) Library staff will prioritize recovering and protecting vital materials, such as historical documents and high-use items, and begin contacting disaster recovery specialists as needed.

(3) The library director will inform the governing board, relevant stakeholders, and the community about the situation, recovery efforts, and the estimated timeline for reopening.

(4) If the library building is temporarily closed, staff will coordinate efforts to provide library services at alternative locations or through online platforms until the main library can reopen.

4. **Post-Disaster Review:**

(1) After the library has returned to normal operations, staff will conduct a review of the disaster response process to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

(2) Any changes or updates to the disaster response plan will be made, and staff will be retrained if necessary.

Guideline

1. Library staff should maintain a calm and helpful demeanor during any disaster or emergency situation, ensuring patrons feel safe and supported.
 2. Staff should be proactive in preparing for disasters by familiarizing themselves with evacuation procedures and emergency supplies and remaining informed about potential hazards in the area.
 3. It is recommended that the library maintain relationships with local emergency services, contractors for disaster recovery, and other organizations that could aid during a disaster.
 4. The library should also have a communication plan in place to quickly notify patrons of closures, service interruptions, or changes to operating hours after a disaster.
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This policy ensures that Elizabeth B Pert Library is prepared to protect its people, materials, and infrastructure in the event of a disaster, while providing for continuity of service whenever possible.

Availability to the public in the event of a local disaster such as flooding, tornado, etc.

- The Elizabeth B Pert Library in cooperation with Valois Logan Hector Volunteer Fire Company will provide emergency space, bath facilities, meals, and a warm safe place to temporarily stay.
- The Library will offer use of the facility to federal and local emergency organizations, such as FEMA, DEC, ambulatory services, NYS Police, etc.
- The Library will serve as the communication center for the community.