



Policy Name	Library Closure		
Section & Number	Board – G-06	Effective Date	1993-12-16
Motion Number	2026-71	Last Review	2026-06-18
Author	Business Administrator	Next Review	2030
Policy Maintenance	Reviewed by Management		

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for timely and appropriate decision-making regarding the temporary closures of St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) facilities in order to protect the health and safety of SCPL staff, customers, and the general public.

Scope

This policy applies to all physical SCPL locations.

Definitions

Emergency means a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise.

Inclement Weather means weather conditions of sufficient severity to create unsafe conditions for travel, occupancy, or the continued operation of SCPL facilities.

Major Facility Issue means conditions affecting a SCPL facility that substantially disrupt operations or create unsafe conditions.

Security Incident means an event that poses a risk to personal safety or facility security, including but not limited to violence or threats of violence,

unauthorized access, suspicious behaviour or objects, or situations requiring lockdown or shelter-in-place measures.

Regulations

The CEO or designate is authorized to close SCPL facilities in the event of an emergency or other circumstances requiring closure, including but not limited to the following:

- Inclement weather
- Major facilities issues
- Security Incidents

Operational Guidelines

SCPL Standard Service Hours

The standard service hours by location are posted on the SCPL website. Planned closures that are discretionary in nature require prior board approval.

Temporary System-Wide Closure

1. Emergencies may arise in which a rapid system-wide closure is necessary to protect the health and safety of SCPL staff, customers, or the general public. Such emergencies may or may not coincide with a government declaration of a state of emergency.
2. Decisions regarding which locations, if any, will remain open will take into account community impacts, usage patterns, accessibility, geographical distribution, and the ability of the facility to offer a broad range of services.
3. During an emergency, the Board delegates to the CEO the authority to determine whether a temporary system-wide closure is required and to implement this decision. Before exercising this authority, the CEO will consult with the City of St. Catharines as appropriate and will make reasonable efforts to consult with the Board Chair.
4. If a system-wide closure is required as a result of a government order or other legal requirements, the CEO will implement the closure for the duration mandated and will inform the Board as soon as possible. The consultation requirements do not apply to closure required by law or government order.
5. The implementation of closures due to inclement weather shall be conducted in accordance with the inclement weather procedure.

Temporary Closures of Individual Locations

The CEO has the authority to temporarily close individual locations as required for location-specific emergencies, and for operational reasons, including major

facilities issues, security incidents, or inadequate staffing. The CEO will promptly inform the Board of any such closures.

Procedures and Communication

The CEO or designate will establish and maintain procedures for closing SCPL facilities in response to likely events. The procedures will include protocol for notifications and communication, including with the Board of Directors and the City of St. Catharines.