

Section I. Purpose

In order to fulfill its mission of public service, the Nobles County Library will make every reasonable effort to be open to the public as scheduled. However, inclement weather and other conditions may require that the library be closed during regularly scheduled hours. The purpose of this policy is to identify the primary factors of any decision regarding library closures and to recognize that the safety of staff and library patrons is of utmost importance.

Section II. Library Closures

1. The Library will be closed only when weather conditions deteriorate to the point where traveling is hazardous, when vital equipment in the building fails (e.g. furnace malfunction, no electricity, etc.) or when there is a general emergency in the town where the library is located.
2. Closure of each library, including the Worthington Main Library and the Adrian Branch Library, will be considered on an individual basis and closure of one library will not necessarily require closure of both libraries.
3. The decision to close the Library will be based upon the following criteria:
 - i. During the normal Nobles County business hours of 8 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Library closure in Worthington will be based on the closure status of the Government Center as determined by the County Administrator. Library closure in Adrian will be made by the Library Director.
 - ii. During hours the library is open but the Government Center is closed, the decision will be made by the Library Director. If the Library Director is unavailable, the decision will be made by the senior staff member in consultation with the Library Board Chair, if available.
 - iii. Current weather conditions and forecasts,
 - iv. Availability of staff to open and operate the Library,
 - v. Conditions of the parking lots and sidewalks,
 - vi. Conditions of the building's equipment, and/or
 - vii. Requests for closure by local or state agencies.
4. If a decision is made to close, local radio stations shall be notified and appropriate signs indicating the library is closed will be displayed. Radio Works of Worthington, MN is the designated local radio station.
5. If the library is not able to open or opens late, the Library Director, or designee, will notify the local radio station. (Radio Works)
6. The Library Director, or designee, will determine when to cancel library programs due to inclement weather or other emergencies. If school is released early due to inclement weather, all library programs will be canceled.

Section III. Temporary Library Closures

On occasion, the Library may need to close temporarily due to a weather-related event or other emergency. The Library Director, or designee, will make that determination, using the following guidelines:

1. Tornado Warning: In Worthington, the Library has an identified Storm Shelter in the basement. Library staff will notify patrons of the Tornado Warning and that the library will be closing temporarily. All patrons will be required to either go to the Storm Shelter or leave the building.

- i. Those physically unable to shelter in the basement will shelter in the upstairs restrooms.
 - ii. The main library door will not be locked in case those nearby need to take shelter.
 - iii. Once the danger has passed, Library Staff will assess damage and/or injuries and determine whether the building can be reopened.
2. Tornado Warning: In Adrian, Library Staff and Patrons must leave the library space for their own safety and take shelter in the basement of the Slade Hotel. The Slade Hotel basement is accessible through the lower level fire escape door on the South Side of the Building.
 - i. The person in charge will lock the library building and proceed with patrons to the Slade Hotel.
 - ii. All patrons will be required to either go to the Slade Hotel or leave the building.
 - iii. Once the danger has passed, the person in charge will assess any damage and/or injuries and determine whether the building can be reopened. Before reopening, the person in charge will call the Library Director, or designee, to share information and make a decision about reopening.
3. Building Equipment Failures: The Library Director, or designee, will determine the nature of the failure and the length of time it will take to be repaired. Upon review of all available information, the Library Director, or designee, will determine if the building should be closed, either temporarily or for the remainder of the day's open hours.
 - i. Any determination of closure for equipment failure will be made with input from county maintenance personnel and the County Administrator.
 - ii. The Library Director, or designee, will determine if staff will remain in the building working while the facility is closed or to release staff.

Section IV. Staff Compensation

If the library is not able to open, opens late or is closed after opening due to inclement weather or any other emergency, scheduled employees will follow the compensation guidelines set forth in Nobles County Policy P-214B: Emergency Closing of County Departments.

LP-106 Policy History:

Initially adopted: 12/11/2017

Current version adopted: 12/11/2017

Reviewed: 03/13/2023

Next Review: 3/2024