

# **NEUSE REGIONAL LIBRARIES**

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY**

### **POLICY #2018-04**

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# **NEUSE REGIONAL LIBRARIES**

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY**

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#### **I. Introduction**

The Neuse Regional Library Board has adopted the following Emergency Procedures Policy to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and patrons. In any emergency, life is more important than property. In any serious or life-threatening situation, staff should call 911 or other emergency services contacts.

These guidelines outline what to do in the event of some specific emergencies. Not all situations can be anticipated. In the event of an unforeseen emergency situation, staff members are instructed to use their best judgment as to the proper action.

Under no circumstances should a staff member attempt to force a patron to comply with safety precautions. Staff members are not responsible for patrons who have been warned of dangers and decline to act appropriately.

It is important that employees develop safety awareness and periodically check work areas for potential hazards and that they correct unsafe work practices. Report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately.

The departmental supervisor or branch manager in charge is responsible for sending a detailed report (Appendix B - Code of Conduct Violation Report Form or Appendix C - Accident Report Form) to the Director of Libraries regarding any emergency situation. If in doubt, staff should always report an incident rather than fail to do so.

#### **II. Accidents and Injuries**

In the event of an accident or injury to any staff member or patron of the Neuse Regional Libraries, all staff members witnessing the accident must submit a signed "Accident Report Form" (Appendix C) to their supervisor, who will then forward it to the Director of Libraries.

#### **III. Active Shooter**

- A. If gunshots are heard, remember that patrons are likely to follow the lead of staff during an active shooter situation. If you are not sheltered in a secure space (a closed room that you can lock and make dark), run in the opposite direction of the gunshots.
- B. Evacuate the building if possible. Staff should be aware of where all possible building exits are located.
  - Leave your belongings behind. Do not carry anything in your hands as that could be mistaken for weapons. Keep your hands elevated with open palms visible.
  - Supervisory staff should help those with disabilities by escorting them to the nearest exit or safe area.
  - Call 911 (If you cannot speak, leave the line open so the 911 operator can hear what is going on in the room.) Provide the following information:
    - Your name
    - Location of the shooting
    - Number of shooters and any other information you may have
    - Description of shooter(s) (clothing, race, gender)
    - Injuries, numbers and types of injuries
    - What types of weapons you saw or heard
    - If the assailant has a backpack
    - Your current location
- C. If you cannot exit the building:
  - Go to the nearest safe space (a room you can secure)
  - Close, lock, and barricade door (using file cabinets, desks, other furniture)
  - Close shades, curtains, or blinds, and turn off lights
  - Cover any glass in the door, if possible
  - Keep quiet
  - Do not answer the door
  - If time and the situation allow, one person in the room/space should call 911, advising of your location and the number of people in the room/space. Provide any information you have on the shooter(s)
  - Mute your cell phone, turn off radios, and computer monitors
  - If there is more than one person, spread out (no easy targets and more opportunity for escape or for overpowering the shooter)
  - Get on the floor and behind heavy furniture
  - Remember, the shooter generally will not stop until stopped. Do not exit your safe space until you are positive the police are in control of the situation.
- D. When the police come:
  - Remain calm, keep hands visible with your palms open and facing up
  - Do not move until “all clear” command is given
  - You are now in a crime scene; follow all instructions given to you by the officers
  - Notify your supervisor/Director of Libraries as soon as it is safe to do so

#### **IV. Bomb Threats**

- A. Keep the caller on the telephone as long as possible. Immediately, while the caller is kept on the line, another staff member should call 911.

- B. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word that the person says, as well as the time of the call.
- C. If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, ask for this information.
- D. Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music, and any other sounds that may indicate from which location the call is coming.
- E. Listen closely to the voice for gender, voice quality (calm or excited), accents, and speech impediments.
- F. Evacuate the building following the “Rules Governing Evacuating the Building.” The police will handle the actual bomb search.

#### **V. Threatening Behavior**

- A. If a staff member or patron is verbally or physically threatened by an individual and feels that assistance is needed to secure a safe environment, local law enforcement should be notified by calling 911.
- B. After authorities have been alerted, staff members should distance themselves from the disruptive persons until they arrive. Staff members should not approach them and should also keep others away.
- C. The staff member being threatened or witnessing the threat is responsible for completing and sending a “Code of Conduct Violation Form” to the Director of Libraries regarding the situation immediately.

#### **VI. Earthquake**

- A. If inside, stay inside and watch for falling objects. If possible, crawl under a table or desk and hold on, otherwise get against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Do not go into a doorway. Stay clear of any windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases, and electrical equipment.
- B. If outside, move to an open area away from buildings, trees, and power lines. If forced to stand near a building, watch for falling objects.
- C. Be prepared for aftershocks.

#### **VII. Fire**

- A. If the alarm does not sound, announce over the intercom: “There is a fire (or smoke) in the building. Please exit the building immediately and go to *[your library’s designated location as listed under Rules Governing Evacuating the Building].*”
- B. Evacuate the building following the “Rules Governing Evacuating the Building.”

- C. Notify the Fire Department by calling 911 from a safe location.
- D. Never allow the fire to get between you and the nearest exit. Stay low to the ground to avoid smoke. Do not break windows. Do not lock any doors.
- E. For smaller, isolated fires, there are fire extinguishers located in the following locations:

**Headquarters:**

Back door, server room, attic entry, computer lab, Young Adult emergency exit, Washington Street emergency exit, Queen Street entrance, between sliding glass doors, auditorium, Children’s Room emergency exit, Children’s Room desk, Auditorium mechanical room, outside electrical room

**Greene County:**

Front lobby, exterior emergency exit

**La Grange:**

Circulation Desk, conference room, back emergency exit door by alleyway

**Pink Hill:**

Front circulation area under Etta Jones Turner portrait and back side door across from office

**Trenton:**

Beside bathroom closet

**Pollocksville:**

Beside staff closet

**Maysville:**

Beside staff closet

**Comfort:**

Back door

Staff should prioritize notifying all building occupants of evacuation, then attempting use of the fire extinguisher. Do not put yourself in physical danger in attempting to extinguish the fire.

**VIII. Flood**

- A. Evacuate the building following the “Rules Governing Evacuating the Building”.
- B. If you are caught in your building by rapidly rising waters, call 911 for help. Then move to a higher floor or to the roof.

**IX. Weather-Related Library Closings or Emergency Conditions**

- A. In the event of severe weather or emergency conditions, the Director of Libraries will decide whether or not to close the library.

- B. If the decision to close the Library is made, staff should follow the “Rules Governing Closing the Library.”

#### **X. Medical Emergencies**

- A. Call 911 as soon as possible and follow all instructions provided by the operator.
- B. All injuries, whether to staff or patrons, should be immediately reported, first verbally and then in a detailed accident report to the Director of Libraries and the appropriate department head.

#### **XI. Power Failure**

- A. If the power goes off, staff should wait at least 15 minutes to see if the power comes back on. If the loss of power is not associated with severe weather, the local utilities provider should be contacted to determine the reason for the loss of power and the expected time of its return. Branch managers and supervisors have the authority to ask patrons to leave the building if visibility issues create safety concerns.
- B. If the power does not come back on, staff should follow the instructions of the Director of Libraries who will decide whether or not to close the library. In the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director will decide how to proceed. If the decision to close the Library is made, staff should follow the “Rules Governing Closing the Library.”

#### **XII. Rules Governing Closing the Library**

- A. In cases of severe weather and other emergencies, the Director of Libraries will decide whether or not to close the library based on each County’s recommendation.
- B. The Director of Libraries will post an announcement on the staff intranet.
- C. If the library is being closed during normal operating hours, the staff will notify patrons who are present.

#### **XIII. Rules Governing Evacuating the Building**

- A. In the event of emergencies, it may be necessary to evacuate the Library. The decision to evacuate the Library will be made by the Director of Libraries, the Assistant Director, departmental supervisor, or the branch manager.
- B. The Director of Libraries, Assistant Director, departmental supervisor, or the branch manager will ensure that the following actions are taken:
  - Calling 911 as early as possible to report an emergency
  - Warning all building occupants of the emergency

- Leading staff and patrons to an alternate exit if the main exit is blocked
- Ensuring that the building is completely evacuated
- Working with fire extinguishers for minor fires after calling 911 and ordering building evacuation
- Instructing all staff and patrons to assemble at their Library's designated evacuation location at least 100 feet from the building:

<b>Headquarters</b>	Lawn adjoining Herritage Street parking lot
<b>Greene County</b>	Flagpole in adjacent parking lot
<b>La Grange</b>	Washington Street parking lot
<b>Pink Hill</b>	Corner of Central and Broadway
<b>Comfort</b>	Front lawn
<b>Trenton</b>	Front lawn
<b>Pollocksville</b>	Front lawn
<b>Maysville</b>	Front lawn

- C. The first priority is to get everyone out of the building. A clear and calm announcement should be made over the intercom that the building is to be evacuated immediately, indicating where staff and patrons are to gather. If an intercom is not available, activate a fire alarm if possible. As long as it seems safe, staff members should walk through the building to check stacks, restrooms, and offices for patrons and staff and direct them to the exits. Staff members should conduct this "walk through" quickly, without putting themselves in danger.
- D. Special assistance should be given to physically challenged patrons during evacuation.
- E. The departmental supervisor or branch manager should try to determine who was working at the time and account for all staff members, if possible. If someone is not accounted for, the departmental supervisor should inform the emergency services personnel.
- F. Once the building has been evacuated, only emergency services personnel should enter.
- G. Staff and patrons should follow the instructions of the Director of Libraries or the emergency services personnel.

#### **XIV. Tornado**

- A. If a tornado warning is in effect and a tornado has been sighted near the Library, staff should alert patrons by intercom or other means to relocate to the following areas:

<b>Headquarters</b>	Auditorium
<b>Greene County</b>	Study Rooms
<b>La Grange</b>	Meeting Room
<b>Pink Hill</b>	Video Room
<b>Trenton</b>	Closet
<b>Pollocksville</b>	Closet
<b>Maysville</b>	Closet
<b>Comfort</b>	Closet

- B. All doors to rooms with windows should be closed if possible.

## **XV. Water Leaks**

- A. Stay away from all electrical equipment that may have become wet.
- B. Notify the Facilities Manager and Director of Libraries or Assistant Director of the leak immediately.

Adopted by the Neuse Regional Library Board  
June 23, 2009

Revised and adopted by the Neuse Regional Library Board  
July 24, 2018

Revised and adopted by the Neuse Regional Library Board  
November 15, 2022

Revised and adopted by the Neuse Regional Library Board  
July 22, 2025

# Appendix A

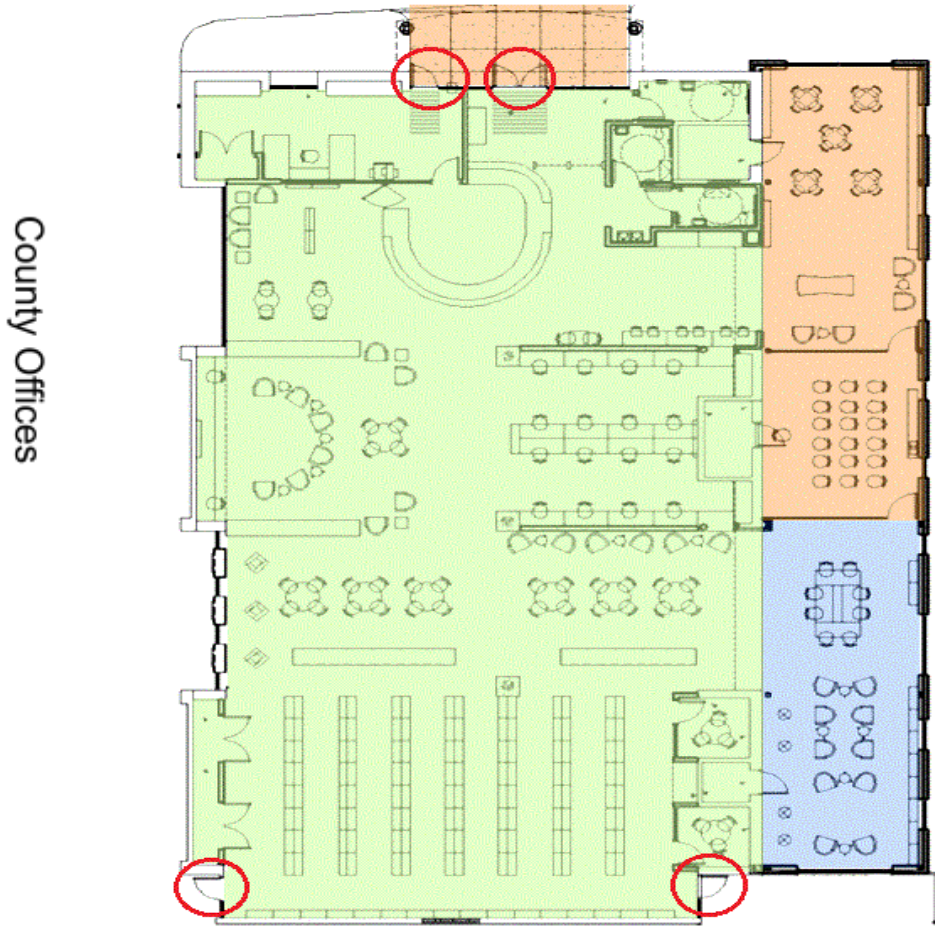
## Emergency Exits

Kinston-Lenoir County Public Library

Washington Ave.



Greene County Public Library



Kingold Blvd.

## La Grange Public Library

Exit through the front entrance or through the left side exit.

## Pink Hill Public Library

Exit through the front door, side exit, or the back door in Youth Services.

## All Jones County Public Libraries

Exit through the front door or back door.



**Appendix C**

**ACCIDENT REPORT FORM**

**Date and Time:**

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**Staff Member Reporting Problem:**

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**Description of Accident**

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**Parties Involved:**

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**Witnesses (Include phone number):**

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**Staff Signature:**

**Director of Libraries' Signature:**

**ALL ACCIDENT REPORTS SHOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE ACCIDENT**

**Appendix D**

**SAFETY ISSUE FORM**

**Date and Time:**

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**Staff Member Reporting Problem:**

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**Description of Safety Issue or Hazard**

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**Proposed Resolution**

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**Action Recommended by Supervisor/Director**

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**Staff Signature:**

**Director of Libraries' Signature:**