



Toronto Public Library

Emergency Plan

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TPL Emergency Plan

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that Toronto Public Library (TPL) is able to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The scope of the TPL Emergency Plan covers Toronto Public Library preparations and practices for TPL specific plans and TPL participation in City wide plans.

The provincial Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act requires municipalities to have an Emergency Management Program consisting of an emergency plan, training and exercises and public education. The Act authorizes the head of council of a municipality to declare that an emergency exists in the municipality and to take such action as considered necessary to implement the emergency plan of the municipality. In the City of Toronto, the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee provides the executive leadership and support for actions required to develop and implement the municipal requirements of the Act. During an emergency, this Committee is collectively responsible for the direction and coordination of emergency response operations within the City of Toronto.

This TPL Emergency Plan provides a framework for TPL's emergency plans including: an Incident Management System, department specific plans and operational support plans, continuity of operations plans and topic specific plans such as a Pandemic Influenza Response Plan.

As well, the Library assists in the City's Emergency Plan by supporting the mass care operational support function under the leadership of Shelter, Support and Housing Administration. TPL also participates in City-wide planning such as the Downtown Evacuation Plan and the Toronto Nuclear Emergency Response Plan.

The TPL Emergency Plan facilitates the earliest possible coordinated response to an emergency, an understanding of the personnel and resources available to the Library and recognition that additional expertise and resources can be called upon if required. The Plan outlines how the Library will respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impact of a disaster. The Plan contains sections that describe the legal authorities for emergency response, planning assumptions, concept of emergency operations, emergency operational life cycle, responsibilities and the preparedness cycle.

1.1 Emergency Planning Process

The TPL Emergency Planning Committee is responsible for ensuring that system wide emergency plans, service continuity plans and related policies and procedures are maintained and are consistent with emergency requirements and relevant legislation. The Committee includes representatives from public service and support departments and reports to the Director IT and Facilities.

The TPL Emergency Procedures Workgroup is responsible for ensuring that site specific emergency procedures are developed, disseminated and maintained. Each location has a tailored Emergency Procedures Quick Reference Guide to guide front line staff on initial emergency responses. Building specific evacuation plans are part of the Fire Plans in each location.

2.0 Scope

An emergency may result from an existing danger or it may be a threat of an impending situation abnormally affecting Library property or the health, safety and welfare of the library users and staff. A major emergency requires a controlled and coordinated response by the Library in coordination with the City and other agencies. If the emergency affects more than the Library, the response may be coordinated by the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee.

There are three major categories of hazards that may pose a threat to the Toronto Public Library:

- Natural Events – including severe weather, floods, blizzards, tornadoes, food or human health emergencies.
- Human-caused Events and Accidental Hazards – incidents intended to do harm to public safety and security, civil disorder, war, bomb threats, improvised explosive devices and improvised dispersal devices. Chemical, biological, radiological and/or nuclear agents may be used on their own or in combination with these devices.
- Technological and Infrastructure Disruptions – incidents involving hazardous materials, utility and power failures, transportation accidents, aircraft crashes, water supply failures, building or structural collapse, critical resource shortages, or computer-related incidents.

3.0 Planning Assumptions

- During normal operations, minor emergencies are within the response capabilities of the Library with assistance from emergency services such as police, fire and ambulance. A major emergency will likely strain the Library's capacity or requires a broad range of assistance. A disaster will require massive City, regional and federal assistance.
- The City Librarian remains in command of the overall operation of the Toronto Public Library in a Library or City emergency.
- An emergency in the Library may occur with little or no warning, and may escalate more rapidly than response organizations can manage.

- The Library will use available resources before requesting City, provincial or federal assistance. Assistance from neighbouring municipalities and their libraries may be available through City mutual support agreements.
- When the Incident Management System is put in place, a Control Room will be established and staffed.
- Staff assigned to the Incident Management System will be required to respond on short notice to provide timely and effective assistance.
- The Library will document and seek reimbursement, as appropriate, for expenses incurred during emergency operations.
- The Library will participate in the development of operations support function plans and procedures, training opportunities and exercises in order to achieve and maintain a high state of readiness as requested by the City and as needed.
- Normal communications and reporting channels will be used to the maximum practical extent possible.
- Departments will employ business continuity and business resumption planning principles to ensure the continuity of essential TPL services.
- Day-to-day functions that do not contribute directly to the operation may be suspended for the duration of the emergency. Efforts that would normally be required of those functions will be redirected to accomplish the emergency task.
- Aspects of the TPL Emergency Plan are tested each year. The testing schedule for the plan is brought forward annually. Each Library department's plans will address considerations arising before during and after an emergency. Most of the emergency preparedness activities have annual deadlines. The rollout of staff training is coordinated with City training opportunities.

4.0 Who does what during an emergency

4.1 External

The federal and provincial governments may declare that an emergency exists in Canada and Ontario, respectively.

4.1.1 Mayor

The Mayor or designate is the Chair of the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee (TEMPC) and may declare that an emergency exists or has been terminated in the municipality. The TEMPC reports to Council on all steps taken during a declaration of emergency. In an emergency, TPL staff may be asked to assist in maintaining essential City services.

4.1.2 Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee

The TEMPC is responsible for emergency management in the City of Toronto. The committee is generally responsible for the initiation and coordination of plans for all divisions, agencies and local boards under the jurisdiction of City Council. It is also responsible for the coordination of any procedures for implementation of the plan developed by such divisions, agencies and local boards for the purpose of integration with the plan. The usual role of the committee is proactive, comprising mitigation and preparedness activities, but it activates in an operational capacity during an emergency.

The TPL's contact on the TEMPC is the General Manager of Shelter, Support and Housing Administration.

4.1.3 The Toronto Office of Emergency Management

The Toronto Office of Emergency Management (TOEM) is the coordinating City unit for emergency and disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities, as part of the City's Emergency Management Program. The TOEM is responsible for developing the Toronto Emergency Plan (TEP) and coordinating City agencies in developing supporting documents to the TEP.

TOEM is responsible for maintaining the Toronto Emergency Operations Centre (TEOC), a physical location where members of TEMPC convene to coordinate the emergency response operations within the City of Toronto.

4.2 Internal

TPL is responsible for engaging in preparedness training and exercise activities to ensure continual readiness of the TPL Emergency Plan. TPL employs standard business continuity and business resumption planning principles to ensure the continuity of priority services.

4.2.1 Toronto Public Library Board

The Toronto Public Library Board approves the TPL Emergency Plan. The TPL Emergency Plan is consistent with the City of Toronto Emergency Plan. During an emergency the City Librarian will consult with the Board chair, as soon as practically possible. Depending upon the extent and nature of the emergency, a special Board meeting may be called to seek advice from the Board on the strategic direction of TPL's response to the emergency situation.

4.2.2 City Librarian

The TPL Emergency Plan will be activated and terminated by the City Librarian or designate. The City Librarian will seek advice from the Mayor, the City Manager, the Toronto Public Library Board or the Toronto Emergency Operations Centre, as soon as practically possible.

Financial authority control is governed by the Library's Financial Control Policy.

4.3 TPL Incident Management System

The Incident Management System (IMS) is an emergency response model that provides a way of coordinating the efforts of agencies and resources by using a common organizational structure that can expand or contract based on the scope of response. IMS design makes a coordinated response possible, as it uses standard terminology and communication systems, consolidated action plans, pre-designated facilities, and an all-hazards approach appropriate for all types of emergencies.

The IMS is used by agencies across the City to respond to emergencies. TPL has adopted the IMS and will organize itself accordingly to communicate, cooperate and respond collectively with other City emergency response partners.

4.3.1 TPL IMS Structure

The IMS structure is built around five functions: **Command (Control Room Manager, Communications and Media Relations Officer and External Liaison), Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance**. In a small-scale emergency response, one person can perform all functions. In a complex, large-scale emergency response, the system can quickly expand to several hundred people supporting each function.

1. **Command** determines the flow of decision-making and communications. In an emergency, the **Control Room Manager** will be appointed by the City Librarian and will lead the command function and the overall response effort. **External Liaison** function co-ordinates with participating agencies and represents the Control Room Manager in dealings with other agencies and community groups. **Communications and Media Relations Officer** is responsible for media relations, communications strategy, and releasing information about the Library's response to staff, other organizations, the public and the media.
2. **Operations** function is responsible for managing the TPL response operations, such as Information Services and Support.
3. **Planning** assesses the situation and creates an Incident Action Plan, which identifies objectives for the emergency response and the response activities.
4. **Logistics** coordinates facilities, services, materials and personnel for the emergency response. This includes organizing and confirming the availability of staff.

5. **Finance** tracks all expenditures, claims, purchases and contracts initiated during the emergency.

4.3.2 Control Group

The **Control Group** includes the Control Room Manager, the Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance Leads and the positions advising the Control Room Manager.

Objectives of the Control Group

- Mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery
- Support of emergency operations at the site(s)
- Overall management of operations
- Risk identification, critical infrastructure protection
- Immediate effective response to an emergency
- Requests for assistance to the City and other agencies
- Prevention of further injury, loss of life, property damage
- Establishment of information mechanisms for the public and news media
- Procurement of essential resources
- Rehabilitation of library services.

Responsibilities of Control Group

- Advising the City Librarian on the scope of the emergency and the appropriate response
- Calling out and mobilizing library staff, services, equipment and supplies
- Coordinating and directing services
- Mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery
- Ensuring support to the emergency site(s)
- Arranging for services and equipment from local agencies or providers
- Ensuring timely and consistent messages are provided to all staff and media
- Notifying, request assistance from, and/or liaison with, the City, local municipalities and other levels of government
- Determine the need to establish advisory or working groups or sub committees for any aspect of the emergency
- Authorizing the expenditure of money required to deal with the emergency, consistent with the Financial Control Policy
- Maintaining a log outlining decisions made and actions taken relative to its area of operations
- Restoring responsibility for services to normal operations
- Debriefing, evaluating and reporting out after emergency events and training exercises

During an emergency, the Control Group has the authority and responsibility to activate, coordinate, direct and otherwise bring about the implementation of the TPL Emergency Plan.

5.0 TPL Preparedness Cycle and Operational Levels

Four operational levels have been identified, consistent with the operational levels adopted by the Toronto Office of Emergency Management.

5.1 Normal Operations

Normal operations consist of the daily operations the Library must carry out, in the absence of an emergency situation, to ensure readiness. During the course of normal operations the Library will be engaging in preparedness training, and exercise activities to ensure continual readiness. Operations plans will be reviewed and equipment will be checked annually to ensure everything is ready to go, should the need arise.

5.2 Monitoring

Monitoring attempts to address the potential for an event that could threaten library services, life, property or the environment. Monitoring arises when there are highly probable hazard conditions and a strong potential for property damage, or loss of life. The Control Room is staffed with support drawn from the TPL Emergency Planning Committee and the Directors. During this operational stage, the full IMS Control Group may be called in to attend the Control Room in anticipation of an emergency plan activation.

5.3 Activation

Activation involves the escalation of an event to require the gearing up of the Control Room. It indicates extremely hazardous conditions that are imminent or already present, depending upon the conditions of the emergency. The Control Room will remain staffed until such time as the Control Group decides to either scale back or stand-down Control Room operations.

5.4 Recovery

The Control Group has responsibility for planning the transition to normal operation. Once the transition is complete, resources assigned to the Control Room are then reallocated. Coordination of recovery assistance may still be required.

6.0 Essential Library Services

One of the first issues to be dealt with in any emergency is determining the impact of the emergency on library services. Will the service levels include only essential services, or are other services a high priority in the particular situation? Should service levels depend on resources available or will other limits be set (e.g. Public Health limits on public gatherings)? Are available resources affected by emergency response needs elsewhere in the Library or the City?

The Library's requirements for **Essential Library Services** include the following:

6.1 Health and Safety:

- Maintain emergency and related communications;
- Inspect, secure and perform emergency maintenance on buildings and property;
- Monitor and maintain building automation systems, air conditioning/heating systems and fire detection, suppression and prevention services.

6.2 Legislative Requirements:

- Close commercial transactions required by existing agreements;
- Comply with legislative requirements such as requirements under Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

6.3 Maintain Revenue:

- Process payments to the Library;
- Continue procedures related to investments.

7.0 Library Operations Support Functions

During an emergency some or all of the following support functions will be used.

7.1 Control Room Operations

Control Room Operations outline the procedures and functions involved in the Control Room activation and operation. The function of this facility is to support site operations. It is the location from which the Control Group coordinates the management of the Library's response.

7.2 Crisis Communications

This operational support function provides direction on the communications strategy during an emergency.

7.3 Health and Safety

This operational support function develops protocols and training for use prior to and during an emergency. Health and Safety function provides advice on appropriate health and safety measures, prevention, identifying hazardous situations and appropriate action.

7.4 Psychosocial Response and Recovery

This function outlines the processes specifically designed to prevent or mitigate the development of post-traumatic stress and other ongoing impacts on Library staff.

7.5 Circulation Services

Circulation services maintains, establishes or supports collections and circulation processes for the public at branch or alternative locations. This function also manages the shut down and re-establishment of circulation services.

7.6 Information Services and Support

Information services and support establishes and supports branch, off site and virtual information services. This may include securing and providing current, accurate information about the emergency, community information for recovery and access to and completion of forms and applications. These services are coordinated with City and other information services and supports.

7.7 Library Programs

Library Programs establishes and supports or maintains the provision of appropriate library programs including those offered via the web. Includes services in branch or alternative locations and room bookings

7.8 Outreach and Partnerships

This function coordinates with community partners to establish library service during the emergency and/or informing external partners of services and resources available in branches, at alternative locations and virtually.

7.9 Collection Protection and Recovery

Collection protection and recovery determines and directs collection protection and recovery processes and procedures. Establishes priorities for collection protection and recovery, provides guidance on dealing with damaged materials.

7.10 Records Protection and Recovery

Records protection and recovery determines and directs records protection and recovery processes and procedures. Establishes priorities for records protection and recovery, provides guidance on dealing with damaged materials.

7.11 IT Disaster Recovery

IT disaster recovery ensures that procedures and practices are implemented to minimize disruptions to critical operations in the event of prolonged system outage triggered by natural or human events.

7.12 City Services and Mass Care

City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing administration negotiates the details of the Library's response to assisting the City. The City may require services, buildings, vehicles, equipment or staff. The City establishes the details of its requirements including training, scheduling and health and safety.

During a City emergency the Library will support the Mass Care Operations Function. Mass Care involves efforts to provide mass care needs to victims of an emergency. These services could include, but are not limited to, providing shelter, food and emergency first aid assistance to those affected by an emergency. Additionally, this function supports the establishment and maintenance of systems to provide bulk distribution of emergency disaster relief supplies to both victims and response personnel and the collection of information to operate an information system for the purpose of reporting victim status.

8.0 TPL Information Service Goals in an Emergency

The mission of the Toronto Public Library is to provide public library services which meet the changing needs of the people of Toronto. In an emergency, their information needs will shift. The Information Service Goals outlined below reflect the changing needs to prepare for, react to, and recover from, an emergency.

8.1 TPL Information Service Goals

TPL's information service goals are:

- To support the overall goals of the TPL and City of Toronto Emergency Plans to minimize illness and death, to reduce societal disruption and minimize the impacts of societal disruption.
- To meet the changing information needs of the people of Toronto during a crisis.
- To identify and maintain priority services.

- To coordinate TPL's information services with Access Toronto, school boards and other services.

8.2 Information Needs

8.2.1 Pre-emergency Information Needs

Before an Emergency the public needs information about:

- Emergency preparedness
- Infection control measures
- How to care for themselves and care for their dependents
- Dealing with stress
- Dealing with death, grief and mourning

8.2.2 During an Emergency Information Needs

The pre emergency information needs continue during an emergency. In addition the public will need:

- Information for daily living (city services, commercial and community services)
- Information about public health measures
- Current affairs information (e.g. information about the emergency in other parts of the world and world events)
- Access to stress reduction strategies – self help, spiritual support (e.g. places of worship), recreational activities
- Communication with relatives and friends

8.2.3 Post-emergency Information Needs

Information needs will return to pre-emergency topics as well as reflecting recovery processes and long term impacts of the emergency

8.3 Information Strategies

8.3.1 Pre-emergency Information Strategies

In coordination with the Toronto Office of Emergency Management, provincial and federal public education campaigns:

- Co-sponsor programs
- Host displays
- Enhance access to information and resources by creating features, reading lists and subject access on TPL's web site and the Virtual Reference Library

- Enhance collection development in this area through collection enhancement programs

8.3.2 During an Emergency Information Strategies

In coordination with the Toronto Office of Emergency Management, the information strategies during an Emergency will focus on reducing risk and harm to lives and property. Any specific information strategy may be affected by disruption to IT hardware, software or networks, telephone service, utilities or transportation.

8.3.3 Post-emergency Information Strategies

Information strategies post-emergency will be affected by recovery strategies and the long term impacts of the emergency. The long term impacts will be reflected in strategic, collection development and service plans.

9.0 Evaluation of TPL Emergency Response

9.1 Responsibility for evaluation

Evaluation of TPL's emergency response will be conducted during the emergency by the Control Group on an ongoing basis.

TPL's Emergency Planning Committee will be responsible for coordinating the post emergency evaluation.

9.2 Evaluation factors

During the operation of the Incident Management System, each department will pass on to the Control Group issues, problems and concerns as well as feedback from the public, staff, partners and stakeholders. Media monitoring will also be used to assess the reaction of the media and the public to TPL's response.

The post emergency evaluation will review, in particular, the information and reference services provided, support services, support for City services and support provided to staff.

A key aspect of the post emergency evaluation will be to determine the implications of the emergency for future Library budgets and plans.