

## WILLIAM JEANES MEMORIAL LIBRARY

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURE: Tornado

#### Watch/Warning/Alert/Shelter-in-Place

#### DEFINITIONS:

**Tornado Watch: Be Prepared!** Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Review and discuss your emergency plans and check supplies and your safe room. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching. Acting early helps to save lives! Watches are issued by the [Storm Prediction Center](#) for counties where tornadoes may occur. The watch area is typically large, covering numerous counties or even states.

**Tornado Warning: Take Action!** A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. There is imminent danger to life and property. Move to an interior room on the lowest floor of a sturdy building. Avoid windows. If in a mobile home, a vehicle, or outdoors, move to the closest substantial shelter and protect yourself from flying debris. Warnings are issued by your [local forecast office](#). Warnings typically encompass a much smaller area (around the size of a city or small county) that may be impacted by a tornado identified by a forecaster on [radar](#) or by a [trained spotter](#)/law enforcement who is watching the storm.

--National Weather Service

**SHELTER-IN-PLACE** may be issued by authorities. If local officials tell you to “stay put,” act quickly. Listen carefully to local radio or television stations for instructions, because the exact directions will depend on the emergency situation. In general you should:

- **Get inside.** Bring your loved ones, your emergency supplies, and when possible, your pets,
- **Find a safe spot** in this location. The exact spot will depend on the type of emergency,
- **Stay put** in this location until officials say that it is safe to leave.

--emergency.cdc.gov

#### PREFERRED SOURCES:

National Weather Service—website

Weather.com—app

Local news stations (KYW, 6ABC, NBC10)

## **LIBRARY PROCEDURE**

Should a Tornado WATCH be issued for our area by the National Weather Service, supervisory staff will check that the door signs are ready and review WARNING procedure with desk staff.

--Inform patrons that a Watch has been issued, and if a Warning comes through, they will have to move when/where the staff tell them, or they may leave. It's just a head's up at this point.

--This includes any programs or outside groups in the meeting rooms.

If a Tornado WARNING is issued for our area, supervisors will coordinate with each other, if there are multiple in the building, or with desk staff to do the following:

### **Upstairs and Downstairs:**

Inform all patrons that we are temporarily closing the Library due to the Warning in our area, and they may shelter with us or go, but they cannot remain in the public areas of the Library.

--Tutors will need to end their sessions, contact the student's parents if they are not in the building, and inform subsequent appointments.

If you are able to, bring in any outside signs/tables, but don't worry about it.

Don't worry about the cash drawers.

All patrons who chose to stay must move quickly to the Community Room and back hallway downstairs, AWAY from the window in the Comm Room.

One supervisor or staff should make contact with the Director, or in their absence, the Circulation Manager. The Director or Circ Mgr. will make contact with the next shift, if there is one.

Overall: Patrons may leave the building at any time, but if they choose to stay or come in during, they must follow Library staff directions, as per the Library Use Policy.

### **Upstairs:**

Once patrons have moved out or down, close and lock the front doors, and hang the sign that reads the Library is temporarily closed for the duration of the Warning, but if patrons wish to shelter in place with us, to proceed around the building to the lower entrance.

Turn off main lights (over Circ Desk.)

Check bathrooms, and work with supervisor to share a sweep of the upstairs. Close the doors at the top of the stairs behind you, then move downstairs.

**Downstairs:**

Once patrons have moved to the Community Room or left, lock one of the two doors, and hang the sign that say the library is temporarily closed for the duration of the Tornado Warning. If you wish to shelter in place with us, come inside to the Community Room only.

Turn off stairwell lights when upstairs staff have come down.

**Community Room:**

Ensure that patrons remain away from the windows.

Unlock and prop open the Mech Room door. Prop open door to kitchen and hallway.

Patrons may take down chairs if they are stacked.

Inform patrons of bathroom locations.

Close Comm Room doors, but if staff is available, post someone to keep an eye on the entrance doors, to usher in any patrons seeking shelter.

Dial phones into wi-fi, if possible.

Throughout, patrons may leave the building at any time. But if they remain or come in, they must follow Library Staff instructions.

**Remain in the Comm or Mech Room until the Warning is lifted by the National Weather Service.**

Then reverse the procedure: turn on lights, unlock doors, take down signs, etc. Report any property damage to the Director or Circ Manager as soon as it is noted.

Approved by the Library Board of Directors: 8-23-23