BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PACKET

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 5:00 PM
Main Library, Community Meeting, and via Zoom

Zoom Link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89453220157

EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 5:00 PM
Main Library, Community Meeting Room, and remote
Zoom Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89453220157

Members of the public are invited to provide comments in person during the Public Comment portion of the meeting or by submitting written comments in advance via the following link: https://forms.gle/16fGTFeqEFR6tmro8
Written comments will be attached to the Board minutes and distributed to Trustees.

MEETING AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

2. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
   Not to exceed 45 minutes

3. **CITIZEN COMMENT**

4. **OLD BUSINESS**
   a. Board Policies (Discussion)
   b. Board Retreat (Discussion)

5. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. Governance Review
   b. Continuity of Operations Plan (Discussion)
   c. Crisis Communication Plan (Discussion)
   d. Agenda items for next meeting

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: October 15, 2025, at 5:00 pm via Zoom and hybrid
The City of Evanston and the Evanston Public Library are committed to ensuring accessibility for all citizens. If an accommodation is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the Library at 847-448-8650 or TDD/TTY number 847-866-5095 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements can be made for the accommodation if possible.

MEMORANDUM

To: Evanston Public Library Management Committee

From: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing and Communication Manager

Subject: Final Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) 2025

Date: September 17, 2025

Attached is the current draft of the **Evanston Public Library Continuity of Operations Plan**. As part of our preparedness efforts, I am requesting that the Management Committee review the document in advance of our upcoming meeting on **Wednesday, September 17**.

Your feedback is essential to ensure the plan is clear, comprehensive, and aligned with both the Library's mission and the City of Evanston's communication protocols. Please review the draft and be prepared to suggest edits, additions, or areas needing clarification at the meeting.

Our goal is to refine this plan into a practical, effective tool that supports the Library, its staff, and the continuity of operations in the event of an emergency.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful input and guidance.

This report is in draft format. Once approved by the EPL Board of Trustees, this report will be available in print and digital form.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Evanston Public Library
Effective Date: 9.17.25

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1. Executive Summary / Purpose

The Evanston Public Library Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) serves as a companion to the Library's Crisis Communications Plan and is designed to ensure that essential library services can continue—and recover quickly—in the event of an emergency. Potential disruptions may include natural disasters, power outages, pandemics, or cyberattacks.

This plan also outlines how Evanston Public Library (EPL) will support the City of Evanston's emergency response and is structured to align with the City's COOP, once finalized. Placeholders are included where City details are pending.

Because EPL is a component unit of the City of Evanston but operates in its own facilities under the management of the Library Executive Director, it is critical to have a Library-specific COOP. EPL will defer first to the City's directives. If City guidance is not immediately available, the library board will be informed and authority will proceed in the following order of succession: Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager.

The Library Board of Trustees shall be kept advised of emergency conditions and will retain authority over extraordinary financial approvals consistent with its bylaws. In circumstances

where a quorum cannot be achieved due to the emergency, the Board's designated officers may act under temporary delegated authority to ensure continuity of essential financial decision-making.

This plan establishes the roles, responsibilities, communication protocols, and recovery procedures necessary to maintain core library operations during emergencies while ensuring coordination with the City of Evanston.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Evanston Public Library COOP is to:

- Ensure the Library can maintain and restore essential functions during and after emergencies.
- Protect the Library's ability to provide critical services, safeguard staff and patrons, and support the City's overall emergency response and recovery efforts.
- Minimize disruptions, protect assets, and enable a timely recovery.

3. Scope

This plan applies to:

- All Evanston Public Library facilities, staff, resources, systems, and services.
- Events that disrupt normal operations (e.g., natural disasters, utility failures, pandemics, technological disruptions, security incidents).

This plan:

- Complements and aligns with the City of Evanston's COOP.
- Applies specifically to responsibilities under the authority of the EPL Executive Director and successors.

- Excludes City-managed activities such as citywide emergency communications and facilities not under EPL control.

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4. Objectives

The objectives of the Evanston Public Library COOP are to:

1. Identify and protect essential library functions
2. Establish clear leadership succession and authority
3. Protect the safety and well-being of staff and patrons
4. Ensure continuity of communications internally and externally
5. Safeguard essential records, digital systems, and resources
6. Identify alternate facilities and work procedures
7. Support the City of Evanston's emergency operations
8. Provide a framework for resuming normal operations
9. Maintain readiness through training, testing, and plan updates

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5. Essential Functions

Tier 1 — Mission-Critical (resume within 12—24 hours)

- Emergency Information Access (Email, Phones, Informacast)
- Library IT Systems (ILS, catalog, website, staff communications)
- Coordination with City of Evanston
- Facility Safety and Security

Tier 2 — Essential Services (restore within 24—72 hours)

- Circulation of Materials
- Public Access to Digital Resources
- Public Technology Access (computers/Wi-Fi)

- Reference & Information Services

Tier 3 — Deferrable Services (resume within days—weeks)

- Building Access
- Programs and Events
- Outreach Services
- Collection Development
- Volunteer Programs

Supporting Notes:

- Each function has designated staff responsibilities.
- Recovery timelines may shift based on severity.
- Functions are reviewed annually.

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6. Orders of Succession & Delegations of Authority

Order of Succession

1. Executive Director
2. Assistant Director
3. Facilities/Safety Manager
4. City of Evanston Emergency Personnel

Delegations of Authority

Executive Director / Successor: Activate EPL COOP, authorize closures, approve emergency expenditures, liaise with City Emergency Operations Center.

Assistant Director: Direct staff operations, oversee communications, ensure essential services.

Facilities Manager: Ensures the safety, security, and operational readiness of the library building and coordinates with City of Evanston emergency response teams to support the continuity of library and municipal services.

Board of Trustees Authority: The Board of Trustees will be notified of the emergency situation as soon as practicable. Consistent with Library bylaws, the Board (or designated officers when a quorum cannot be convened) shall retain authority to review and authorize emergency purchases at or above $25,000.

> In circumstances where a quorum cannot be met, the Board President, Vice President, and Treasurer (acting jointly, if available) are authorized to approve such purchases, subject to full Board ratification at the next available meeting. Purchases under $25,000 may be authorized by the Executive Director or designee consistent with delegated financial authority.
>
> Criteria for emergency purchases include:
>
> - Direct impact on health, safety, or security of staff, patrons, or facilities
>
> - Immediate need to restore or maintain essential functions as defined in this COOP
>
> - Availability of sufficient budgeted or emergency-designated funds

City of Evanston Emergency Personnel

The City of Evanston's emergency personnel serve as the operational backbone during crises—leading incident response, ensuring life safety, and supporting the library's ability to maintain or restore its essential services under the COOP plan. The COE Emergency Personnel will provide, when necessary:

Incident Command & Coordination

- Lead the overall emergency response under the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

- Coordinate citywide resources, interdepartmental communication, and mutual aid with outside agencies.
- Establish an Incident Command Post or activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if needed.

Life Safety & Security

- Ensure the safety of staff, patrons, and facilities through police, fire, and EMS response.
- Manage evacuation, crowd control, medical care, and site security until the situation is stabilized.

Damage Assessment & Recovery Support

- Conduct or support initial assessments of damage to library facilities.
- Advise on safety of re-entry and continuity of services.
- Provide logistics and situational updates to the City Manager's Office and Facilities Management.

Continuity of Operations Support

- Assist the library in activating its COOP plan (e.g., relocating essential functions, maintaining communication channels, safeguarding critical records).
- Ensure the library's role as a community hub (information access, public communications support, safe space, etc.) is incorporated into broader city recovery priorities.

Training & Preparedness

- Provide the appropriate library staff (Facilities & Safety Teams) with guidance, training, and exercises related to emergency preparedness and COOP integration.
- Ensure EPL staff understand their role within the citywide emergency response framework.

7. Continuity Facilities

Primary Facilities

- Main Library (1703 Orrington Ave)
- Robert Crown Branch (1801 Main St)

Alternate Facility Arrangements

- Other City facilities (Civic Center, Parks & Rec sites) as designated by COE.
- Remote/virtual operations (cloud-based systems, remote staff access).
- Partner facilities through mutual aid agreements.

Facility Prioritization:

- Safety, accessibility, technology readiness, EOC (Emergency Operations Center) coordination.

Use of Library Facilities by the City During Emergencies:

In the event the City of Evanston designates an Evanston Public Library facility as a Command Center, Disaster Recovery Center (DRC), or similar emergency response site, the Library shall be entitled to reimbursement for associated costs, including but not limited to additional cleaning and maintenance, staff time required for cancellations and rescheduling, and any loss of rental income. The City will provide all equipment and supplies necessary for emergency operations. A daily facilities use reimbursement rate of **$450 per day** will be applied, consistent with comparable practices in other municipalities, and subject to review and adjustment by the Library Board of Trustees.

8. Continuity Communications

Internal to (Staff & Leadership)

- Primary: City Email
- Secondary: Informacast
- City Alerts via designated City Channels
- City of Evanston Emergency Google Chat Channel

External to (City of Evanston)

- EPL liaison to City EOC in order of command:
  - Executive Director
  - Assistant Director
  - Facilities Manager
  - Marketing & Communications Manager
- Updates provided via City Communications Department

Public (Patrons & Community)

- EPL Website & Catalog (primary platform)
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram)
- GovDelivery press releases
- Onsite signage and phone system updates
- COE Communications to enhance or coincide with EPL comms

Redundancy & Information Assurance

- Staff phone trees, portable radios, City emergency systems
- Only Executive Director, Assistant Director, or City Communications may release official statements

9. Essential Records & IT Systems

Essential Records

- Patron Records (ILS)
- Financial & Administrative Records
- Policies & Procedures
- Facilities & Security Records
- EPL/City COOP & Emergency Plans

Essential IT Systems

1. Network & Internet Access
2. Integrated Library System (ILS)
3. Library Website
4. Digital Resources (ebooks, databases, streaming)
5. City IT Systems (email, payroll, communications)
6. Phone Systems

Backup & Recovery

- City & EPL IT ensure regular backups (offsite/cloud)
- Vendor coordination for service continuity
- Priority restoration order: staff comms → ILS → website/digital → public internet/Wi-Fi

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10. Human Capital (Staffing & Roles)

Guiding Principles

- Safety first
- Alignment with City directives
- Flexibility in assignments/locations

- Clear authority under succession

Staffing During Emergencies

- **Essential Staff**: IT, facilities, communications
- **Non-Essential Staff**: May be reassigned or placed on leave
- **Cross-Training** ensures service continuity
- **Volunteers/intern**s paused unless authorized

Roles & Responsibilities

- **Executive Director**: Overall authority, City coordination
- **Assistant Director**: Staff assignments, communications, service continuity, second-in-command
- **Facilities Manager**: Building safety/security
- **Department Managers**: Prioritize essential functions
- **All Staff**: Follow supervisor direction, maintain availability
- **Board of Trustees:** Will be informed of the situation in a timely manner. The Board is responsible for oversight and authorization of emergency purchases at $25,000 or greater, either through full quorum action or, if a quorum cannot be convened, through designated officers as outlined in the Board's bylaws and this plan. The Board shall also ensure that post-emergency ratification and financial reconciliation are documented in Board minutes.

Staff Support & Well-being

- PPE, wellness resources, City HR policies
- Employee Assistance Programs available
- Regular communications via phone trees, contact lists, remote work guidelines

11. Recovery & Reconstitution

- **Damage Assessment** with City Emergency Management
- **Phased Reopening** of facilities
- **Vendor Support**: See Appendices
- **Return to Normal**: Transition plans, staff support, counseling
- **After-Action Review**: Post-mortem analysis, lessons learned, improvements

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12. Training & Exercises

- Annual staff training on COOP roles
- Tabletop and drill exercises with City Emergency Planning Team

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13. Plan Maintenance

- Reviewed and updated annually
- The Board of Trustees shall review and, if necessary, amend its bylaws to ensure alignment with this COOP, particularly regarding emergency purchasing authority, delegated officer responsibilities, and ratification procedures.
- Responsible Party: Communications Manager (or designee)

Appendices

A. **Crisis Specific Action List**
B. **Vendor & Critical Support Contact List**

Appendix A: Crisis Specific Action List

Type of Emergency	What to Do	Contact Person	Contact Info	City Involvement
Power Outage	Activate backup generators if available; communicate limited hours/services to the public via website/social media; implement remote work procedures if prolonged.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for City-wide guidance, utility coordination)
Flood	Assess damage; initiate water remediation; secure vital records; coordinate with City facilities for building recovery.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for damage assessment, public works, City facilities)
Tornado/Severe Weather	Follow emergency alerts; initiate shelter-in-place or evacuation as directed; assess building safety post-event; communicate status to public.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for emergency response, shelter coordination, public safety)
Pandemic	Implement remote work procedures; activate online services; develop social distancing measures for in-person services; provide staff/patron safety guidance.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for public health directives, City HR policies)
Cyberattack/IT System Failure	Isolate affected systems; restore from backups; notify City IT; communicate impact on services to staff/public.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, IT Dept, Comms Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for City IT support, broader network security)
Building Security Incident (e.g., threat, intrusion)	Follow active threat protocols; secure premises; notify law enforcement; communicate with staff/public as advised by authorities.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager, Safety/AF	Appendix B	Yes (for law enforcement, emergency response)

		Manager		
Utility Failure (beyond power, e.g., water, gas)	Secure affected area; notify relevant utility company; coordinate with City facilities for repairs; communicate service disruption to public.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager, Safety/AF Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for City facilities, utility coordination)
Fire	Evacuate building; notify fire department; assess damage; coordinate with City facilities for recovery.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager, Safety/AF Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for fire response, building safety, City facilities)
Hazardous Material Incident	Isolate area; notify emergency services; follow hazardous material protocols; ensure staff/patron safety.	Executive Director, Assistant Director, Facilities Manager, Safety/AF Manager	Appendix B	Yes (for emergency response, City environmental services)

Appendix B: Vendor & Critical Support Contact List

Vendor Type & Name	Service	Contact Info
Administrative & Financial Support Providers		
City of Evanston Management	Leadership/Emergency Coordination Assistance	Luke Stowe, COE City Manager's Office, 847-448-4311
City of Evanston Facilities Management	Assistance in physical safety, integrity, and operability of library buildings, damage assessment, emergency repairs, and restoration of critical systems	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
City of Evanston Finance Department	Insurance Claims	COE Finance Department: Hitesh Desai, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
COE HR	Payroll services and/or adjustment during crisis as needed	HR@cityofevanston.org
COE Public Works	Public Works needs (snow removal, etc.)	Ann Hunwick, Monica Dyer publicworks@cityofevanston.org
COE EPD, EFD	Emergency Management/Police/Fire	Non-emergency: PD 847 -866-5000 FD 847) 448-8191
EPL Board President	Approvals and Authorization of Emergency Purchases	Tracy Fulce, Board President
EPL Board Treasurer	Approvals and Authorization of Emergency Purchases	Michelle Mills, Board Treasurer
Communications/IT		
Integrated Library System (ILS) provider (CCS)	Manages the Library catalog and circulation	help@ccslib.org, 847-483-8600

BiblioCommons	Front-end website & Catalog services	Chantel Clayton, chantel.clayton@bibliocommons.com, Emergency Ticketing system via Partner Portal (account required)
COE IT	Website Hosting Services, ISP (Internet Service Provider), Wi-Fi/network infrastructure vendors	Roger Wood, Information Services COE
COE IT	Email and cloud service providers (e.g., Gmail, Google Workspace, Google Drive)	Roger Wood, Information Services COE
COE IT	Phone/Email/ Hardware/Printer Systems	847-448-4311 or email ithelpdesk@cityofevanston…
COE IT/EPL IT	Data Backup/Restoration	EPL IT, Roger Wood, Information Services COE
Facilities & Building Operations Vendors		
COE Facilities Manager/Department	HVAC, plumbing, and electrical contractors	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
EPL Safety/Facilities Manager	Janitorial and sanitation services	Carlos Hernandez, EPL Facilities Manager
EPL Safety/Facilities Manager	Security system vendors (alarms, cameras, etc.)	Carlos Hernandez, EPL Facilities Manager
EPL Safety/Facilities Manager	Access control and keycard system providers	Carlos Hernandez, EPL Facilities Manager
COE Facilities Manager/Department	Pest control service	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
ALARM DETECTION SYSTEMS, INC (ADS)	Alarm Systems	630-844-5317 adsusersupport@adsalarm.com
Schindler Elevator Corp	Elevator Services	Jason Lazzara, P:630-478-7113,

		C: 312-758-6221
COE Facilities Manager/Department	Building maintenance & repair contractors	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager

Emergency & Recovery Vendors		
COE Facilities Manager/Department	Flood Remediation	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
COE Facilities Manager/Department	Fire Damage Remediation	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
COE Facilities Manager/Department	Exterior/Interior Storm Damage Remediation	Sean Ciolek, COE Facilities Manager
COE Finance Department	Insurance Carrier for Facility	COE Finance Department: Hitesh Desai, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
COE Finance Department	Insurance Carrier for Collections	COE Finance Department: Hitesh Desai, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Post-Emergency Maintenance, Cleaning & Repair		
Total Building Services	Cleaning, Non-emergency	Tony Anika, 847.439.1146; 847-439-1030
Total Fire & Safety	Reset/Replace Fire Equipment	(630) 960-5060
COE Insurance Carrier	Collections Restoration	Claims Preparer for EPL
Various	Supply Replacement	Lea Hernandez

For more in-depth information regarding vendors such as account numbers, ask a member of Library Admin.

MEMORANDUM

To: Evanston Public Library Management Committee

From: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing and Communication Manager

Subject: Final Comprehensive Crisis Communications Plan 2025

Date: September 17, 2025

Attached is the current draft of the **Evanston Public Library Crisis Communications Plan**. As part of our preparedness efforts, I am requesting that the Management Committee review the document in advance of our upcoming meeting on **Wednesday, September 17**.

Your feedback is essential to ensure the plan is clear, comprehensive, and aligned with both the Library's mission and the City of Evanston's communication protocols. Please review the draft and be prepared to suggest edits, additions, or areas needing clarification at the meeting.

Our goal is to refine this plan into a practical, effective tool that supports the Library, its staff, and the community in the event of an emergency.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful input and guidance.

This report is in draft format. Once approved by the EPL Board of Trustees, this report will be available in print and digital form.

Evanston Public Library Crisis Communications Plan

September 9, 2025

I. Introduction

Purpose of this Plan:

The purpose of the Crisis Communications Plan for Evanston Public Library (EPL) is to provide a clear, coordinated, and proactive framework for communicating during emergency situations or events that may disrupt library operations, compromise public safety, or impact the Library's reputation and community trust.

This plan ensures that all communication—internal and external—is accurate, timely, and consistent, minimizing confusion and misinformation. It is designed to support EPL leadership, staff, and stakeholders in managing a wide range of crises, from natural disasters and technological failures to public safety incidents and reputational challenges. The first 24 hours of a crisis are often the most critical and clear information and direction is necessary for the public and staff to avoid misinformation and mishandling of crises.

Objectives:

By following this plan, EPL aims to:

- **Ensure Accurate and Timely Communication:** Provide reliable, up-to-date information to all stakeholders during a crisis to prevent confusion, misinformation, or speculation.
- **Protect Health, Safety, and Wellbeing:** Support EPL's overarching priority to safeguard patrons, staff, and community members by communicating clearly about threats, risks, and safety protocols.
- **Maintain Public Trust and Confidence:** Reinforce EPL's role as a transparent, accountable, and responsive public institution, even in moments of disruption or uncertainty.

- **Support Operational Continuity:** Facilitate clear internal communication that enables staff and leadership to respond effectively and resume services as quickly and safely as possible.
- **Promote Consistency in Messaging:** Ensure that all communications across EPL channels and representatives are unified, aligned with leadership, and reflect the Library's values and policies.
- **Define Roles and Responsibilities:** Clarify who communicates what, when, and how—helping staff act quickly and confidently under pressure.
- **Preserve the Library's Reputation:** Minimize long-term reputational damage by addressing issues proactively, truthfully, and with empathy.
- **Support Post-Crisis Recovery and Learning:** Provide a framework for reflection, documentation, and improvement after a crisis to strengthen future preparedness.
- **Inform and reassure stakeholders:** Informs stakeholders that the library crisis team is in control of the situation and will make informed, careful decisions in the time of crisis.

Crisis Definition:

In this plan, a crisis is defined as a significant event or incident that disrupts, or has the potential to disrupt, regular operations of the library. It can also be a situation in which the reputation or integrity of EPL is in jeopardy of being damaged.

Key Organizational Information:

Evanston Public Library consists of two branch locations. Our Main Library Branch is located at 1703 Orrington Avenue in the heart of Downtown Evanston. Our Robert Crown Branch Library is located in the Robert Crown Community Center located at 1801 Main Street, also in Evanston.

The Evanston Public Library is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees, appointed by the Mayor of Evanston and confirmed by the City Council. The Board has legal and financial responsibility for the library's operations. They oversee the library's budget, levy taxes, and the Executive Director. The library is responsible for creating its policies that the board approves, ensuring that the library serves the community.

The day-to-day operations of EPL are overseen by an Executive Director, followed by the Assistant Director. The Library operates as a component unit of the City of Evanston local government.

II. Crisis Response Team:

Roles and Responsibilities of Crisis Response Team

- **Executive Director:**
  - **Role:** The Executive Director of Evanston Public Library (EPL) holds primary leadership responsibility during any crisis situation.
  - **Key Responsibilities:** To guide the organization's overall response, ensure public accountability, and serve as the top decision-maker regarding communication strategy and operational continuity.
- **Assistant Director**
  - **Role:** The Assistant Director plays a critical operational and communications support role during a crisis. The Assistant Director works closely with the Executive Director and COE Crisis Communications Team to direct communications in a crisis situation.
  - **Key Responsibilities:** The Assistant Director serves as the spokesperson in the absence of the ED, or as directed by the ED. They help coordinate the Library's internal response, ensure smooth execution of crisis protocols, and manage logistics that support timely and effective communication.
- **Board of Trustees**
  - **Role:** The Board of Trustees has legal and fiduciary oversight of the Evanston Public Library. While not public spokespersons during a crisis, Trustees must be kept advised of significant developments that impact library finances, operations, or reputation.
  - **Key Responsibilities:**
    - Receive timely updates from the Executive Director (or designee) during crisis events.

- Authorize emergency financial expenditures ≥ $25,000 when required, as outlined in the Continuity of Operations Plan and Board bylaws.
- Support the Executive Director in reinforcing key messages with community stakeholders, donors, and civic leaders when appropriate.
- Ensure post-crisis ratification of any delegated emergency actions.

- **City of Evanston Crisis Communications Team**
  - **Role:** In the event of an emergency involving the Evanston Public Library, the City of Evanston Communications Department plays a key role in coordinating and disseminating accurate, timely information to the public by reporting on behalf or in conjunction with library communications.
  - **Key Responsibilities:** As the library is a component unit of the City of Evanston government, all official emergency communications are managed in collaboration with the COE Communications Department to ensure consistency, clarity, and alignment with the city's overall emergency response efforts.

- **Communications Manager**
  - **Role**: The Communications Manager is responsible for planning, developing, and delivering all internal and external messaging during a crisis as directed and approved by the ED and/or the Assistant Director.
  - **Key Responsibilities:** As a central member of the Crisis Communications Team, the Communications Manager ensures that communication is timely, accurate, consistent, and aligned with the Library's values and public responsibilities.

- **Facilities Manager**
  - **Role:** In the event of a crisis, the Facilities Manager serves as the primary lead for all building-related emergency response activities. Their role is to ensure the physical safety and operational integrity of

the library facilities while supporting the broader emergency response managed by the Executive Director and/or City of Evanston. During a crisis or emergency, the Facilities Manager also serves as the lead coordinator for all safety-related protocols and procedures. Their primary role is to ensure the health, safety, and security of staff, patrons, and volunteers, while working in alignment with the library's leadership and the City of Evanston's emergency response teams. The Facilities Manager supports crisis communication by providing real-time updates on safety conditions and procedures, and ensures that emergency actions—such as lockdowns, evacuations, or shelter-in-place directives—are carried out effectively and consistently.

- **Key Responsibilities:** The Facilities Manager coordinates with emergency services, library leadership, the EPL Safety Supervisor/Assistant Facilities Manager, and the City of Evanston Facilities Department to provide timely facility updates and response actions. They initiate and oversee emergency procedures—such as evacuation, lockdown, or first aid—and ensure all staff are accounted for, safety briefings are delivered, and first responders receive support on-site. The Facilities Manager also leads preparedness and recovery planning, secures the facility, directs damage assessment and documentation, and ensures safety and infrastructure concerns are effectively communicated as part of the library's overall crisis response.

2025 Crisis Team Contact Information Guide

Name	Line	Cell	Email
Yolande Wilburn	847-448-8655		ywilburn@cityofevanston.org
Heather Norborg	847-448-8641		hnorborg@cityofevanston.org
COE: Cynthia Vargas	847-448-8234		cvargas@cityofevanston.org
COE: Jessie Mayo	847-448-8041		jmayo@cityofevanston.org
Ellen Riggsbee	847-448-8628		eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

Carlos Hernandez	847-448-8615	Calls forward to cell	chernandez@cityofevanston.org

III. Types and Definitions of Possible Crises:

Public libraries, including Evanston Public Library, can face a wide range of crises—both predictable and unexpected. These can be grouped into several categories under these general categories:

- Immediate
- Emerging
- Sustained

Immediate:

- Natural and Environmental Crises:

  - Severe Weather: Tornadoes, blizzards, floods, extreme heat or cold

  - Fires: Structural fires, nearby wildfires, electrical fires

  - Earthquakes: Less common in the Midwest but possible

  - Pest Infestations: Bed bugs, rodents, termites damaging books or spaces

  - Utility Failures: Power outages, water main breaks, HVAC failures

Immediate and Emerging:

- Human-Caused Emergencies

  - Violence or threats

  - Active shooter incidents

  - Domestic disputes in the library

  - Patron aggression or assault toward staff/others

  - Vandalism or theft

  - Damage to property, materials, or equipment

  - Substance abuse issues

  - Overdose incidents, drug use in restrooms or public areas

- Civil disturbances

- Protests, large demonstrations, or political disruptions near the library

- Technological or Cyber Crises

  - Cyberattacks

  - Data breaches, ransomware, system outages

  - System failures

  - Catalog or circulation system downtime

  - Website/server crash

  - Privacy violations

  - Leaked patron data, surveillance misuse

- Health and Safety Crises

  - Pandemics or disease outbreaks

  - COVID-19, flu outbreaks, norovirus, etc.

  - Medical emergencies

  - Staff or patron health issues (e.g., heart attacks, seizures)

  - Contamination or hazardous material exposure

  - Gas leaks, chemical spills, mold

Sustained Crisis

- Reputational and PR Crises

  - Controversial events or displays

  - Public backlash to programs (e.g., drag storytime, banned books week)

  - Staff misconduct

  - Allegations of discrimination, harassment, or abuse

  - Social media controversy

  - Viral misinformation or misinterpreted posts

  - Intellectual freedom challenges

  - Book banning, challenges from community groups or individuals

- Operational and Administrative Crises

  - Leadership vacancies or scandals

  - Sudden departure or misconduct of leadership

  - Funding shortfalls or budget cuts

- Threats to service continuity, layoffs
- Union or labor disputes
- Strikes, walkouts, unresolved grievances
- Legal and Regulatory Crises
  - Legal action
  - Lawsuits from patrons or staff
  - Non-compliance
  - Violations of ADA, FOIA, privacy laws, or employment law
  - Intellectual property issues
  - Unauthorized use of copyrighted material

IV. Crisis Command Center

In the event of a major emergency or disruption affecting Evanston Public Library (EPL), a Crisis Command Center will be established in coordination with the City of Evanston to serve as the central hub for decision-making, communication, and operational oversight. The location and activation of the command center will be determined by the City of Evanston based on the scope, severity, and type of crisis.

Activation:

- The Executive Director or designee will notify the City of Evanston Communications Department and Emergency Management Team when a library-related incident requires activation of a centralized command structure.
- The City of Evanston will designate the physical or virtual location of the Crisis Command Center. Possible locations may include 909 Davis, the Evanston Emergency Management Office, or another secure facility.
- EPL representatives will report to the designated site or connect remotely if virtual command operations are initiated.

Participants: The following representatives will participate in the Crisis Command Center for library-related emergencies:

- Public Information Office (PIO) of the City of Evanston.

- Executive Director (EPL): Provides leadership and decision-making authority for library operations.
- Assistant Director (EPL): Supports operational and communications coordination; may serve as alternate spokesperson.
- EPL Communications Manager: Prepares and delivers all messaging in alignment with City of Evanston communications.
- City of Evanston Communications Department: Oversees public messaging and ensures coordination across city departments and emergency responders.
- Facilities/Safety Manager (EPL): Provides updates on building integrity, safety, and operational readiness.
- Board of Trustees President (or designated officer) will be briefed regularly by the Executive Director to ensure the Board is informed of critical decisions, particularly those with financial or reputational implications. The Board does not participate in message drafting or public release but provides governance-level oversight.

Functions of the Crisis Command Center:

- Establish a unified communication strategy and approve key messages before release.
- Coordinate directly with the COE Public Information Officer, first responders, city departments, and emergency management officials.
- Track real-time developments and maintain situational awareness.
- Provide timely updates to staff, trustees, community stakeholders, and the media.
- Oversee safety actions including evacuation, shelter-in-place, or facility closures.
- Document decisions, communications, and actions for post-crisis review.

Chain of Communication:

All crisis-related messages must flow through the Crisis Command Center before dissemination. No staff or board member may release independent statements

without prior approval from the Executive Director (or designee) and the City of Evanston Communications Department.

Post-Crisis Transition:

Once the immediate crisis has subsided and normal operations are restored, the Crisis Command Center will deactivate. EPL leadership will then conduct a debrief with the City of Evanston to review response effectiveness, document lessons learned, and identify improvements for future crisis preparedness.

V. Stakeholder Information

A stakeholder is any individual, group, or organization that has an interest in or is affected by the library's services, operations, and outcomes. This includes patrons, staff, board members, city officials, donors, community partners, and residents—anyone who benefits from, supports, or influences the library's mission and impact in the community. Stakeholders are defined in this plan because they would either individually or collectively be affected by crises at the library.

- Internal Stakeholders
    1. EPL Staff
    2. Board of Trustees
    3. Volunteers
- External Stakeholders
    4. Library Patrons
    5. City of Evanston Officials
    6. Evanston Residents
    7. Local Media
    8. Donors and partner organizations

Role of the Board of Trustees

Trustees are key internal stakeholders and must be kept promptly informed of crisis events, potential financial impacts, reputational risks, and recovery progress. Their

role is to provide **oversight, guidance, and accountability** to ensure the library's response aligns with its mission and public responsibilities.

The Board does **not** act as a public spokesperson during crises. All **external communications**—including media inquiries, public statements, and community messaging—are managed by the **Executive Director**, **Communications Manager**, and the **City of Evanston Communications team**. Trustees may refer inquiries to these designated contacts to maintain consistent, accurate messaging.

VI. Established Emergency Communications Channels

In the event of a crisis, clear, timely, and consistent communication is essential to maintaining public trust and ensuring the safety and well-being of staff, patrons, and the community. The following communication channels will be used by the public library to share accurate information, provide updates, and coordinate messaging both internally and externally. These channels will be activated based on the nature and severity of the crisis.

- **InformaCast:** A mass internal notification and incident management solution that is pre-loaded with messages that are delivered to all staff via the library phone system, work email and personal cell phones if the employee opted in.
  - Approved Users: Executive Director, Assistant Director, Communications Manager, Facilities Manager
- **Library Patron Email:** A patron specific email platform used for marketing that could be used to email all patrons in the event of an emergency. This would be facilitated by the Communications Manager.
  - Approved User: Communications Manager
- **COE Email:** GovDelivery is a City of Evanston specific email notification system available to EPL to be used for multiple purposes, including sending messages related to emergency situations. This would be facilitated by the Communications Manager, or anyone skilled and with access to the platform.
  - Approved User: Communications Manager, COE Communications Team

- **Website Banner:** A system message that is placed on the top of the home page of the EPL website and the top of the app for all visitors to see, and used to push out emergency notifications.
    - Communications Manager
    - Website Administrator
- **Social Media:** Emergency messages could be posted on appropriate social media platforms which at this time include Facebook, Instagram.
    - Communications Manager
- **Physical Signage:** Signs for the doors will be created in the event of an emergency involving a closure, changes to operating hours, or other such announcements needed.
    - Admin Team, Communications Manager
- **Emergency Response Website Page:** Permanent live, but hidden, page on the website that gives information about how to access our crisis team and reviews basic emergency response information.
    - Communications Manager
- **City of Evanston Emergency Chat Communications Channel via Google Business Suite**
    - All approved users have the ability to send direct group messages with real-time updates

VII: Crisis Response Communications Procedure

Following Crisis Response Communications Procedures is essential to ensure clear, accurate, and coordinated messaging that protects public trust and supports effective decision-making during an emergency.

1. **Designate Spokesperson Hierarchy:**
    1. Executive Director
    2. Assistant Director
    3. City of Evanston
    4. Communication Manager
2. *Assess the Current Situation:*
    - What is known and who knows it?

- Convene the Crisis Communication Team
- Determine the level of crisis and determine appropriate response
- Assign spokesperson and messaging lead

3. Set Communication Goals and Measurable Objectives

- When will the first message be released?
- What is the cadence of communication
- Set hourly/daily goal as needed for communication
- Share plan with team

4. Identify Intended Audiences:

- Internal vs. External

5. Develop and Pretest Messages

- Draft messages, share with the team for accuracy and fluency

6. Select Channels and Activities:

- Choose specific channels for the scenario at hand (Appendix A)

7. Develop an Action Plan

- Create an action plan and detail the emergency steps to follow in short form
- Share plan with crisis team, managers and COE emergency response team

8. Ongoing Response

- Share updates with Media as inquiries arise
- Actively keep stakeholders informed as the situation evolves
- Assign staff to answer inquiries as they arise

9. Post-crisis Evaluation and Plan Modification

- As the crisis subsides, inform all stakeholders of procedures, if needed, to exit or safely exit the building or the crisis area
- Conduct a Post-crisis review
- Debrief internally
- Conduct a public follow-up if needed
- Report to Board of Trustees
- Report to all stakeholders

- Report to the Board of Trustees on crisis response, financial impacts, and communications effectiveness.
- The Board of Trustees will review and ratify any emergency authorizations made during the crisis in accordance with bylaws and the COOP.

VIII. Responding to Crisis: Key Messages, Guidelines and Process

In the event of a crisis, the Evanston Public Library is committed to communicating transparently, compassionately, and responsibly with all stakeholders. The following guidelines and message approval process define the key principles and parameters that should shape all messages during a crisis situation:

Key Messages (See Appendix B)**:**
Key messages are the core facts, themes, and talking points that guide all internal and external communication during a crisis. They ensure that everyone speaking or writing on behalf of the library communicates consistent, accurate, and reassuring information to the public, media, staff, and stakeholders.

In a crisis, clear key messages help to:

- Provide essential information quickly and accurately
- Reinforce the library's values and commitment to safety, service, and transparency
- Prevent the spread of misinformation
- Maintain trust and credibility with the community

These messages should be adapted as the situation evolves but always reflect the library's mission, the known facts, and alignment with the City of Evanston's official communications. The message templates provided in **Appendix B** will help guide the key messages, and can be adapted to fit different scenarios.

Guidelines:

1. Prioritize Accuracy Over Speed

- Communicate verified facts only. If information is still being gathered, acknowledge that and indicate when updates will be provided.
- Avoid speculation or assumptions.
- Confirm accuracy of information.
- Use official sources for confirming information before releasing statements.

2. Be Clear, Concise, and Accessible

- Use plain language that is easy for the general public to understand.
- Avoid jargon, overly technical terms, or acronyms unless explained.
- Provide translations or accessible formats when appropriate, based on community needs.

3. Align with City Messaging

- Coordinate with the City of Evanston Communications Team to ensure messages are consistent with citywide information and response efforts.
- In citywide or multi-agency incidents, defer to or align with messaging from the City's Communications Director.

4. Communicate Empathy and Responsibility

- Acknowledge the impact of the crisis on affected individuals or communities.
- Express concern, support, or regret as appropriate.
- Demonstrate the library's commitment to safety, equity, and public service.

5. Keep Internal and External Audiences Informed

- Tailor messages for different audiences: staff, patrons, media, partners, and city officials may need different levels of detail or focus.
- Ensure staff are briefed before or at the same time as the public to prevent misinformation and confusion.

- Release messages in a timely way.

6. Maintain Message Consistency Across Channels

- All external communication platforms—website, social media, email, signage, media interviews, and in-person conversations—should reflect the same core message and tone.
- Designate a single point of contact for media inquiries to ensure controlled and unified communication.

7. Provide Clear Calls to Action

- Let audiences know what they need to do (e.g., avoid a location, check back for updates, follow safety guidance, etc.).
- Direct them to official channels for the latest information.

8. Update Regularly

- Provide updates as new information becomes available, even if the situation remains unchanged, to maintain transparency and public trust.
- Timestamp all public updates and maintain an internal log of all communications.

Message Approval Process

In the event of a crisis affecting the Evanston Public Library, a streamlined, accountable communication approval process ensures accurate, timely, and unified messaging aligned with City of Evanston protocols. (*See Appendix B for sample messages)*

- Message Drafting: The Marketing & Communications Manager is responsible for drafting initial internal and/or public-facing crisis communications (press releases, social media posts, website alerts, staff updates, etc.).
- The draft should include:
    - A concise summary of the situation
    - Key facts known at the time

- ○ Response actions underway
- ○ Patron/staff guidance
- ○ City-approved language, if applicable
- Internal Review: The Executive Director or Assistant Director reviews the draft for accuracy, tone, clarity, and alignment with EPL and City messaging standards.
- The Executive Director/Assistant Director may request edits or clarification before forwarding.
- Executive Approval
  - ○ The Executive Director has final approval authority for all EPL crisis messages.
  - ○ In the Executive Director's absence, the Assistant Director is authorized to approve.
- Coordination with City of Evanston
  - ○ All final crisis communications must be shared with the City of Evanston Communications Office for alignment and coordination before public release.
  - ○ In the case of a citywide or multi-departmental crisis, EPL messaging must defer to and be approved by the City's Communications Director.
- Message Release:
  - ○ Upon all necessary approvals, the Marketing & Communications Manager publishes or distributes the message through appropriate channels (email, website, social media, signage, press, etc.).
  - ○ Ongoing updates are provided to the previously used communications channels.
- Updates or changes follow the same approval flow:
Marketing Manager → Assistant Director → Executive Director → City Communications Office (if applicable).

Media Contact:

Ellen Riggsbee

Marketing and Communications Manager

847-448-8628/ ▮▮▮▮▮▮

eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

IX. Media Relations

In a crisis, media inquiries must be handled with care, consistency, and coordination to protect the credibility of the Evanston Public Library and the City of Evanston. The following guidelines ensure that all media communications are accurate, appropriate, and aligned with city protocols:

1. Release Statements via designated spokespersons only:

Only the Executive Director, Assistant Director, or a designated City of Evanston Communications Officer may speak to the media on behalf of the Evanston Public Library during a crisis. Staff members should not speak to reporters or provide comments unless explicitly authorized.

2. Refer Media to the Proper Contact

All media inquiries should be promptly directed to:

- EPL Executive Director or Assistant Director
- COE Communications Staff (If the situation is citywide or sensitive in nature)
- EPL Designated Spokesperson such as the Communications Manager

3. Coordinate with the COE before responding to media requests

Stay in contact with the COE Communications team while responding to ongoing or sudden crises.

4. Stay on Message

Spokespersons should:

- Stick to approved key messages and facts
- Avoid speculation or assigning blame

- Redirect off-topic or sensitive questions to official statements or the City's Public Information Officer (PIO)

5. Maintain a Calm, Professional Tone

Speak clearly and calmly. Express empathy and a commitment to transparency and public safety. Do not respond to confrontational or leading questions emotionally.

6. Record and Document

Keep a log of all media inquiries, who responded, and what was said. Save copies of any statements or interviews for EPL's internal crisis documentation.

X. Define Crisis Communications Policy

1. All crises should be immediately reported to the EPL Executive Director, the EPL Assistant Director, The Safety Manager and Communications Manager. They will notify the City of Evanston Crisis and Communications Teams.
2. Only the Executive Director, Assistant Director and the Communications Manager are authorized to release information to the media and the public.
3. All media inquiries should be directed to the Communications Manager.
4. If a question is asked of a staff member and they do not have the answer, they should not respond "no comment". Staff should always respond "Please send/write down your question and a representative will get back to you as soon as possible."
5. Board of Trustees members are not authorized to release public statements during a crisis. All media inquiries must be referred to the Executive Director, Assistant Director, or Communications Manager. Trustees may, however, reinforce official library messages in one-on-one conversations with community members, civic leaders, and donors, provided they use approved talking points.

XI.   Ongoing Crisis Management:

1. **Executive Director & Assistant Director:** Direct staff to maintain their emergency protocols as needed and keep procedures and documentation up to date at all times. They will also inform management of emerging potential threats and crises as needed. Conduct an annual vulnerability check-up to assess the probability of a crisis in the future.

2. **Communications Manager:** Maintains an ongoing relationship with the City of Evanston's Communications Department in order to collaborate and coordinate messaging in all emergency and crisis situations. Keeps all communications and messaging accounts up-to-date with quick access. Maintains all safety and crisis communications training and manuals to stay updated on the most effective communications methods.

3. **Facilities & Safety Supervisor Managers:** On an ongoing basis, the Facilities Manager directs staff to maintain emergency systems and participate in planning and drills to ensure the library is prepared for future incidents. Post-crisis, they coordinate necessary repairs and recovery efforts. For the Safety Supervisor/Assistant Facilities Manager, after the crisis, they conduct a post-incident review, assist with staff debriefings, and update safety protocols based on lessons learned. They also maintain emergency supplies, and ensure staff are well-prepared for a variety of emergency scenarios.

4. **All Staff: Ongoing Training**
   - Bi-Annual training for all staff
   - Regular updates via our internal communications actions
   - Updating staff intranet with crisis procedures, etc.
   - On an ongoing basis, they participate in safety training

5. **Crisis Communications Plan Review and Maintenance**
    - Plan owner Maintains all facets of CCP (e.g., Communications Manager)
    - Annual review and update cycle
    - Contact info verification schedule
    - Integration with City of Evanston's Emergency Management protocols

Appendix A: Communications Channels per Scenario Plan

Incident	Internal Channels	External Channels	Message
Active Shooter	Activate InformaCast	COE Crisis Team	Internal: Run, Hide, Fight External: Defer to COE
Bomb Threat	Activate InformaCast	COE Crisis Team	Closure/Evacuation Messaging
Violent Action from Patron	InformaCast Message	Emergency Comms with Authorities and COE	If the event was public, issue statement with updates
Fire	Fire Alarm system will notify patrons to evacuate	Emergency Comms with Authorities and COE	Closure Messaging related to Fire until further notice
Medical Emergency	Activate InformaCast	N/A	Only Internal message needed
Missing Child	Defer to Safety Team	N/A	Only Internal message needed or Safety Team will handle situation
Natural/Weather Related Events	Activate InformaCast	Emergency Comms with Authorities and COE	Seek Safety/Shelter Messaging
Power Outage	Activate InformaCast	Emergency Comms with Authorities and COE	Closure/Evacuation Messaging

Workplace Violence	Activate InformaCast	Emergency Comms with Authorities and COE	Seek Safety/Shelter Messaging

Appendix B: Sample Key Messages

1. Sample Position Statement: *This statement is a sample only to be used as a template for a position statement as needed.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 25, 2025
Contact: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing & Communications Manager
847-448-8628
eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

Statement from Evanston Public Library Regarding Ongoing Emergency Response

The safety and well-being of our patrons, staff, and community remain our top priority. Evanston Public Library, a component unit of the City of Evanston, is currently responding to an emergency situation that occurred at the Evanston Public Library on [date/time].

We are actively working in coordination with the City of Evanston and local emergency services to manage the situation. Out of an abundance of caution, the library has been [temporarily closed/evacuated/secured], and all scheduled programs and services are suspended until further notice.

We ask for the community's patience and cooperation as we gather accurate information and follow established emergency protocols. Updates will be provided through the City of Evanston and Evanston Public Library's official communication channels, including the COE's notification system, our website and social media accounts.

We are committed to transparency and will share more details as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so. In the meantime, we thank our patrons for their understanding and support.

2. Sample Immediate Crisis Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 25, 2025
Contact: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing & Communications Manager
847-448-8628
eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

Evanston Public Library Responds to Emergency Situation

Evanston, IL — The Evanston Public Library (EPL) is currently responding to an emergency situation at the Main Library at 1703 Orrington Avenue, which began earlier today at approximately 10:00 AM.

All patrons and staff have been safely evacuated from the building, and first responders are on site managing the situation. At this time, the nature of the incident is under investigation by authorities.

Out of an abundance of caution, the library will remain closed to the public until further notice. The safety of our patrons, staff, and community remains our top priority, and we are working in full coordination with the City of Evanston Police Department, City of Evanston Fire Department, and the City of Evanston Administration to respond appropriately.

We will continue to provide timely updates through the library's website and social media platforms as more information becomes available.

For patrons who need access to library services, please visit epl.org for digital services.

We appreciate the public's patience and understanding during this time.

For more information, please contact:

Ellen Riggsbee

Marketing & Communications Manager

Evanston Public Library

eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

3. Sample Emerging Crisis Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 25, 2025
Contact: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing & Communications Manager
847-448-8628
eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

Evanston Public Library Responds to Emerging Crisis Situation

Evanston, IL — The Evanston Public Library (EPL) is currently monitoring an emerging situation at the Main Library, which began at approximately 10:00 AM. At this time, we are taking precautionary steps to ensure the safety of all patrons and staff.

Library staff have been in contact with the City of Evanston and emergency responders, and we are following all recommended safety protocols. While details are still developing, we want to assure the community that the situation is being actively assessed and managed with the utmost care.

As a precaution, the Main Library will be closed early at 1:00 PM. The safety of our visitors, staff, and community remains our highest priority.

We will share additional information as soon as it becomes available through the library's website at www.epl.org and our official social media channels.

We appreciate the public's understanding as we work with our partners at the City of Evanston to respond appropriately and responsibly to this situation.

For more information, please contact:

Ellen Riggsbee
Marketing & Communications Manager
Evanston Public Library
eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

4. Sample Sustained Crisis Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 25, 2025
Contact: Ellen Riggsbee, Marketing & Communications Manager
847-448-8628
eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org

Evanston Public Library Responds to Ongoing Situation

Evanston, IL — The Evanston Public Library (EPL) is aware of and continues to respond to ongoing public concern regarding [brief summary of the issue—e.g., a recent decision, staff conduct, or policy change]. We take the feedback and voices of our community seriously and are committed to listening, learning, and taking meaningful action.

As a trusted public institution and a division of the City of Evanston, we hold ourselves to high standards of transparency, equity, and accountability. While we are limited in what we can share at this time due to [insert reason, if applicable—e.g., personnel privacy, ongoing review], we want to reaffirm our commitment to:

- Engaging openly with our community
- Reviewing policies and practices with care and integrity
- Making changes when warranted to reflect our values of inclusion, respect, and access for all

We recognize that trust is earned through actions, not just words. In the coming days and weeks, we will:

- Provide regular updates as appropriate
- Host opportunities for public dialogue and feedback
- Share steps the library is taking in response to the concerns raised

The Evanston Public Library remains dedicated to serving the diverse needs of our city and creating a welcoming space for every member of the community. We thank those who have reached out to express their perspectives and encourage continued respectful engagement as we work through this difficult moment together.

For more information, please contact:

Ellen Riggsbee

Marketing & Communications Manager

Evanston Public Library

eriggsbee@cityofevanston.org