

<b>West Neighbourhood House</b>	
<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Emergency Response Policy</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	West Neighbourhood House Board of Directors
<b>Approval date:</b>	January 2004 as Unpredictable Events Policy
<b>Revision dates:</b>	December 2010 / March 2013 / March 2014 / April 2017 / March 2021

## **Policy Statement**

West Neighbourhood House is committed to minimizing risk and protecting the health and safety of staff, participants, and community members during an emergency. The goal of this policy is to balance risk with the service needs of the community, especially essential services.

With the occurrence of an emergency, West Neighbourhood House commits to:

- Making every reasonable effort to maintain provision of essential services even when West Neighbourhood House locations need to be closed temporarily
- Endeavouring to have programs and services available open during regular scheduled hours as appropriate to the circumstance
- Providing service availability status updates to the public and program participants
- Responding to a community crisis as appropriate and reasonably practicable
- On a case-by-case basis, Management will determine the closure of West Neighbourhood House locations and/or services

Accompanying this policy is the West Neighbourhood House Emergency Response Plan (ERP) which outlines West Neighbourhood House's procedural document for organizing, coordinating and directing available resources toward the mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery in the event of an emergency.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, West Neighbourhood House may prepare an emergency specific plan to complement this policy.

## **Applicability**

- Staff
- General public
- Program participants, Clients, Members
- Volunteers
- Students
- Community groups who utilize West Neighbourhood House space for events
- Contractors

## **Definitions**

Emergency: a condition or circumstance which constitutes a danger that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property that is caused by the forces of nature, disease or other health risk, an accident or an intentional act or otherwise.

## **Essential Services**

All West Neighbourhood House programs are considered important services; however, some programs are deemed “essential services”. These are:

- Home Support Services
- Home at Last
- Meals-on-Wheels
- Payroll
- Supportive Housing/Assisted Living
- The Meeting Place
- Violence Against Women

Other services and programs may be deemed essential on a permanent or temporary basis by the Executive Director or designate.

During times of emergencies, any available employees may be reassigned to provide assistance in order to keep these programs operational.

## **Management’s Role**

Ensure delivery of commitments outlined in this Policy by managing activities and outcomes to the procedures outlined below.

Ensure that appropriate emergency preparedness, response awareness and emergency preparedness training activities are scheduled annually.

## **Employees’ Role**

Support and enable West Neighbourhood House in delivering on the commitments outlined in this Policy and in the ERP. Operate as per the procedures outlined below and refer questions to their Supervisor.

## **All Other Individuals’ Role**

Follow the direction provided by West Neighbourhood employees during an emergency.

## **Procedures**

### **Early Departure for Employees**

Should an emergency occur during the workday, staff may be allowed to leave early at the discretion of their Director or designate, who after taking into account, for example, the particular situation being faced, distance to be travelled, mode of transportation, or conditions likely to be encountered, may decide to send some or all employees home early. Barring exceptional circumstances Employees may not leave without prior approval from their Director or designate and may be expected to make up any lost time or use compensatory or vacation time off to cover the time.

### **Absence Due To An Emergency**

- (a) Employees should make every reasonable effort to arrive at work for programs normal start times:

During times of inclement weather and other emergency circumstances, West Neighbourhood House will endeavour to remain open and deliver programs as usual either remotely or in person. Therefore, it is the expectation that all employees will make every reasonable effort to arrive for work (remotely or in person, as appropriate) at their normal starting time, unless specifically contacted and instructed otherwise. Each Director shall also exercise discretion in setting flexible work arrangements for their employees, (for example: work remotely, later start times, etc.), if the program can support these arrangements.

- (b) Notify your supervisor if an unexpected delay or absence occurs

Should employees encounter unexpected delays or not be able to work, they must notify their supervisor at the first available opportunity of their circumstances. If the supervisor is not available, they should contact their Director. Staff may be expected to make up any lost time and arrangements to do so should be made with their supervisor at the earliest opportunity upon their return to work. Alternatively, employees may elect to use compensatory or vacation time off to cover the absence.

### **Declaring an Emergency**

The Executive Director or delegate in consultation with the Management Team has the sole authority to declare an Emergency. The President of the Board will be informed as soon as possible after an emergency is declared. Once an emergency is declared, the ERP will be activated.

### **West Neighbourhood House Closure**

Only the Executive Director or designate may make the decision to close West Neighbourhood House and internal notification of House closure will be made via an “all staff email”.

Directors will notify individual teams with specific closure procedures.

The Executive Director or designate will also notify the following of West Neighbourhood House closure:

- The President of the Board of Directors
- Funders and partner agencies
- Program participants and the general public. Notification that West Neighbourhood House is closed will include:
  - Updating voicemail messages at all West Neighbourhood House locations
  - Updating the West Neighbourhood House website
  - Issuing appropriate social media alerts
  - Contacting various media
  - Posting signage at the location(s)

### **West Neighbourhood House Main Contact Information**

**General Phone Line: 416-532-4828**

**General West Neighbourhood House Email: [info@westnh.org](mailto:info@westnh.org)**

**West Neighbourhood House Website: [www.westnh.org](http://www.westnh.org)**