

Extreme Heat Policy for Outdoor Events

Adopted: 5/26/26

Revised:

Approved by: Library Board of Trustees

Purpose

The Fenton Free Library is committed to ensuring the safety of staff, volunteers, vendors, and attendees during outdoor events. This policy establishes guidelines for planning, monitoring, and responding to extreme heat conditions in accordance with guidance from the New York State Department of Health.

Definition of Extreme Heat

Extreme heat conditions may include:

- Heat index of **90°F or higher**
- National Weather Service **Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning**
- Environmental conditions that pose a health risk (high humidity, direct sun exposure, limited shade)

General Safety Principles

In accordance with New York State Department of Health guidance:

- High temperatures can be dangerous and potentially life-threatening
- Heat-related illness may not be immediately apparent
- Prolonged outdoor exposure increases risk, especially for vulnerable populations

At-Risk Populations

Extra precautions should be taken for:

- Older adults (65+)
- Infants and young children
- Individuals with chronic health conditions (heart, respiratory, diabetes, etc.)
- Individuals taking medications that affect hydration or heat tolerance
- Individuals with limited mobility or who are socially isolated

Preventative Measures for Outdoor Events

When outdoor events are scheduled during warm weather, the Library will:

1. Provide Cooling and Hydration

- Ensure access to **free drinking water**
- Encourage attendees to drink water regularly (even if not thirsty)
- Promote hydration messaging (2–4 glasses per hour during high heat)

2. Provide Shade and Rest Areas

- Set up tents, umbrellas, or shaded seating areas when possible
- Encourage attendees to take breaks from direct sunlight

3. Adjust Event Timing and Activities

- Schedule physically active programming during **morning or evening hours** when possible
- Limit or modify strenuous activities during peak heat (typically 11 AM – 4 PM)

4. Communicate Heat Safety

- Share heat safety tips via signage, announcements, and event materials
- Encourage lightweight, light-colored clothing and sunscreen use

Monitoring Conditions

Library staff will:

- Monitor local weather forecasts and heat advisories leading up to and during the event
- Evaluate conditions including temperature, humidity, and shade availability

Event Modification or Cancellation

The Library reserves the right to modify, postpone, or cancel outdoor events when:

- Heat index exceeds **95°F**, or
- A **Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning** is issued, or
- Conditions are deemed unsafe by Library administration

Possible modifications include:

- Relocating the event indoors
- Shortening event duration
- Reducing physically demanding activities

Recognition of Heat-Related Illness

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms:

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness, dizziness, headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Cool, pale, or moist skin

Heat Stroke Symptoms (Medical Emergency):

- Body temperature above 103°F
- Hot, red, dry skin (no sweating)
- Confusion, unconsciousness
- Rapid, strong pulse

Emergency Response Procedures If Heat Exhaustion is Suspected:

- Move the individual to a shaded or air-conditioned area
- Provide cool water
- Encourage rest
- Use cool compresses if available
- Seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour

If Heat Stroke is Suspected:

- Call **911 immediately**
- Move the person to a shaded area
- Begin rapid cooling (cool water, wet cloths, fanning)
- Do not give alcohol or caffeine

Staff Responsibilities

- Be aware of weather conditions and heat risks
- Monitor attendees for signs of heat-related illness
- Encourage hydration and breaks
- Initiate emergency response when necessary

Good Faith Safety Measures

The Fenton Free Library prioritizes proactive and responsive safety measures to reduce the risk of heat-related illness and ensure a safe environment for all participants