



MEDIA RELEASE

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DOWNTOWN CENTRAL LIBRARY REDUCES AFTERNOON HOURS ***TEMPORARY MEASURE DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS***

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director John Spears announced today:

“In an effort to safeguard library patrons and staff, beginning tomorrow, Friday, March 10, 2023, the downtown Central Library will reduce its open public hours during the week. The Library will now close at 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.”

The early closure is intended to be temporary until a plan is in place for how the Library can serve the community in a safe atmosphere. “Unfortunately, incidents at the Central Library have now escalated to the point where we cannot provide the environment that our users expect and deserve. The problems we are experiencing with patrons of all ages, but especially youth, are being seen beyond just the Library, and we hope that these issues can be addressed across the entire community. We want to be a part of the solution. It is our hope we can soon go back to serving all of the community in a safe space,” concluded Spears.

After much reflection and discussion with administration, Library security, and staff, it was determined this is the best solution to adequately address untenable safety concerns we are seeing throughout the Library until a permanent strategy will allow for a return to our normal hours.

The Library System’s Telephone Support Line (716-858-8900) will remain available during regular hours as will the online AskUs email service. The book drop will remain available and weekend hours will be unchanged. Central Library tenants and organizations which use the meeting rooms will be contacted regarding their use, and it is expected that their use will not be impacted.

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