

MAXFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
Infectious Disease Outbreak Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the protocol to be used in the event of a local, regional, or global infectious disease outbreak. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, Maxfield Public Library (MPL) may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness. These measures may include service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure of the library to the public as directed by the Library Board of Trustees or by order of local public health officials.

POLICY

Priorities throughout all levels will be given to the following essential services:

- Communication with Library staff and Library Board of Trustees
- Information services for the public, both in-person and online
- Payroll/Timesheet submissions
- Accounts Payable
- Facilities Maintenance

In the event that the Library Director is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Children's Librarian will be appointed to act in the absence of the Library Director.

Level 1: Precautionary Health Measures

1. Cleaning and Supplies
 - a. Purchase additional cleaning and disease prevention supplies and provide tissues, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizer to staff and patrons in public areas.
 - b. Offer staff facial coverings and gloves, if recommended by local health officials. Library Director may allow for staff to wear facial coverings and gloves as a precautionary measure without recommendation by local health officials.
 - c. Perform additional routine cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces in the Library such as workstations, countertops, doorknobs, elevator buttons, and touchpads.
 - d. Contact Library custodian if particular areas need to be more thoroughly cleaned.
 - e. Determine, if possible, longevity of contagion life on hard surfaces and disinfect/quarantine returned materials accordingly.
2. Work Schedule Adjustments
 - a. Authorities may request that persons returning from a highly infectious area not return to work for a period of time. Library employees are required to follow those recommendations. Absences for this purpose will be excused.
 - b. Any employee presenting symptoms consistent with the outbreak will be asked to return home and/or refrain from coming to work.

- c. Library Director may reallocate employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours.
3. Communication with the Public
 - a. Share official local, state, and national sources for health information with patrons.
 - b. Recommend that patrons and staff with symptoms not enter the building.
 - c. Promote healthy habits to decrease the spread of illness such as handwashing, coughing or sneezing into one's elbow, encouraging social distancing, and using hand sanitizer when handwashing is not an immediate option.
 - d. Update library website and social media with the most recent information.
 - e. Promote digital library services.
 4. Communication with the Staff and Trustees
 - a. Remind staff to review these procedures
 - b. Remind staff to update their contact information to include address, phone number, and email address.
 - c. Emphasize that staff should stay home if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with the outbreak or any other illness and to avoid close contact, if possible, with people who are sick.
 - d. Encourage staff who are traveling to check with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Traveler's Health Notice for travel advisories relating to the outbreak
 - e. Library Director will maintain communication with Library Board of Trustees

Level II: Adjustments to Library Services

In the event that an official source declares a pandemic, epidemic, or other emergent infectious disease crisis, the Library will respond according to the official recommendations of the CDC and state and local public health officials. Responses to those recommendations may include:

1. Service Adjustments
 - a. Extend due dates or waive fines on overdue materials as necessary.
 - b. Encourage social distancing by increasing distance between seats in public areas, including the public computers and children's library, limiting the number of patrons in the Library at one time, adjusting the Library's operating hours, or closing portions of the Library to the public.
 - c. Public health officials may advise the Library to minimize or entirely suspend gatherings in public spaces, which may include:
 - i. Library programs
 - ii. Public meeting room use
 - iii. Circulation desk assistance
 - iv. Limiting number of patrons in public computer area
2. Work Schedule Adjustments
 - a. Cancel all library-related travel to areas under a CDC's Traveler's Health Notice, and reconsider all nonessential library-related travel.

- b. Consider postponing library-related meetings or moving meetings to an online format.
 - c. Consider altering work schedules so fewer staff members are working in close proximity to one another.
 - d. Reallocate employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours.
 - e. Allow certain staff members to work from home, if possible, or work inside the library outside of operational hours.
 - f. Allow non-essential staff to take time off.
3. Communication with the Public
- a. Continue the same messaging as in Level 1. Messages should explicitly state that service reductions and occupancy restrictions are being done to slow the spread of infection per the recommendations of local health officials.
 - b. Continue to update library website and social media with the most recent information and provide links to local, state, and national resources.
 - c. Share messages and be transparent about the adjustments to services and the reasons why the measures were taken.
 - d. Contact affected program registrants, upcoming program presenters, and meeting room users to notify of service adjustments.
 - e. Remind patrons that they do not have to return borrowed materials if they are not feeling well, and note this in their accounts by extending the due date and leaving a message in their patron account. Fines may be waived.
 - f. Continue promoting digital services
4. Communication with the Staff and Trustees
- a. Library Director will monitor and coordinate responses among authorities, local schools, town officials, New Hampshire State Library (NHSL), New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA), and public health officials and direct appropriate staff to communicate as needed.
 - b. Library Director will continue maintaining communication with Library Board of Trustees
 - c. Library Director will review timesheet submissions and paycheck distribution with Selectmen's Office.

Level III: Temporary Closure

1. Service Adjustments
- a. During the course of an infectious disease outbreak, the Library Director may temporarily close the library under certain conditions, including:
 - i. Public health officials advise, request, or order the closure
 - ii. Merrimack Valley School District closes due to infectious illness
 - iii. In-house patron use is too low to justify keeping the Library open
 - iv. Staffing levels are too low to maintain basic functions of the Library
 - v. Any other conditions that prevent the Library staff from working safely and effectively

- b. Extend due dates and continue to waive overdue fines.
 - c. Inform vendors and delivery services that the Library is closed.
 - d. Cancel all programs and presenters.
2. Work Schedule Adjustments
- a. Under direction from the Library Director, essential personnel will continue to work remotely to perform necessary business functions, promote patron engagement on social media, and communicate with staff.
 - b. Certain staff will visit the Library to monitor building and facilities conditions, ensure the security of the building, collect incoming mail and newspaper deliveries, and perform job duties relevant to maintaining the Library's collection (weeding, shelf reading, materials processing, deletions, etc.).
 - c. Reallocate employee responsibilities to provide optimum virtual services and accessibility to staff members working remotely.
 - d. Other staff members may be given projects or work assignments to complete remotely.
 - e. Staff who have been directed not to return to work will refrain from reporting to work and entering the building. Any staff member who does not follow this directive will be forced to hand over their building keys.
 - f. Library Director will work with the Library Board of Trustees to determine appropriate measures related to emergency closings and employee pay as defined in the Personnel Policy, depending on the length of the closure.
3. Communication with the Public
- a. Continue to update library website and social media with the most recent information.
 - b. Continue to share reputable local, state, and national sources for health information and library service updates.
 - c. Continue promoting digital services
4. Communication with the Staff and Trustees
- a. Library Director will continue to monitor and coordinate responses among authorities, local schools, town officials, New Hampshire State Library (NHSL), New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA), and public health officials and direct appropriate staff to communicate as needed.
 - b. Library Director will communicate with staff via email and telephone.
 - c. Library Director will continue maintaining communication with Library Board of Trustees.

If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, recovery may be slow and limited staff, reduction of services, and reduction of hours may be necessary for an extended period of time. Should the situation call for a more extensive response than is outlined here, the Library Director and Library Board of Trustees may adjust the Library's response to meet emergent needs.

(trustee)

(date)

(trustee)

(date)

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(date)

Policy adapted from DeKalb (Illinois) Public Library Communicable Disease Outbreak Policy and Jaffrey (New Hampshire) Public Library Pandemic Policy

Approved 5/2020