

Public Health Emergency Plan

Purpose

To establish a protocol that will be used in the event of an epidemic/pandemic or other public health emergency.

The Library should plan for staff being unable to report to work in the event of a serious infectious disease outbreak. In addition, during any public health emergency organizations may be required to take measures to help slow the spread of illness such as closing by order of county, state or federal health or government officials. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the Library can be maintained with limited staff and reduced hours as determined by the Library Director.

Continuity of Operations Plan—Epidemic/Pandemic

This plan differs from a general emergency preparedness policy or procedure. With an emergency preparedness policy, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building or begin recovery work almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm). If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, recovery may be slow and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for several weeks or more.

Library Closure

Minor Memorial Library may temporarily close or limit services because of a public health emergency such as an epidemic/pandemic in the event that any of the following occur:

- A. A mandate, order, or recommendation for closure is issued by the Connecticut State Health Department or other local government officials.
- B. If a Library employee has been diagnosed with the epidemic, MML will temporarily close.
- C. At the direction of the Library Board of Trustees
- D. At the discretion of the Library Director

In addition, Minor Memorial Library may temporarily close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services in the event that there is insufficient staff to maintain basic service levels or to reduce the possible spread of the contagion. In the event of closure, overdue fines will be suspended. The exterior book drop may be closed or kept open and cleared periodically.

Types of Library Closures:

- Complete Closure: no staff in the building at any time.
- Library Closure with Essential Services Only: exempt and other essential library employees may be required to work from home or on site during closures to

perform necessary duties, such as payroll, bill paying, building maintenance, emptying book drops, etc.

- Library Closure with Reduced Services – staff may:
 - be allowed to work inside the building, although the building is closed to the public
 - be assigned to provide services to patrons in newly determined ways
 - be assigned to clean the building

School Closures

In the event that Region 12 schools are closed because of an epidemic, Minor Memorial Library will remain open unless one of the above conditions under the “Library Closure” section above are met.

Library Staffing

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as two healthy employees available to be present at the library when the building is open to the public. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than *two consecutive days* will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director or designee:

- Increased health/safety measures for staff (wearing gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.)
- Social distance practices in public areas and work spaces
- Reduction of staffing
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours
- Closure of the library.

If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established Personnel policy.

Compensation in an Epidemic/Pandemic

Library Facilities Closed to Public: In the event that Library facilities are closed to the public but remain open to employees, employees will have the following choices: report to work (work schedules and hours of operation may be modified), use paid leave, or choose to be unpaid. Where possible, employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks.

Library Facilities Closed to Everyone: In the event of an extended closure, employees may be compensated based on their average pay (or average job position hours

if employed for less than a year) for the previous 12 months. The length of time for this compensation will be determined by the Library Director and Library Board. If the library is closed or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours.

The Library Board may consider furloughing or laying off employees.

Communication in the event of cancellation of services, programs, meeting room usage or Library closures, administration staff will:

- Notify staff, trustees, and Friends board members, custodial staff and public via email, social media and the website
- Call or email scheduled program presenters, community room reservations, outreach sites, program attendees (if we have contact information)
- Provide information regarding the epidemic/pandemic on the Library website
- Create signage for updating patrons inside the library
- Notify local media and other government entities as deemed necessary

Employee Absences

The Minor Memorial Library Personnel Policy outlines the regular PTO policy. This policy shall continue to be followed in the event of an epidemic/pandemic or public health emergency while the library remains operational. Pre-approved time off will be honored unless voluntarily cancelled.

Social Distancing

If recommended by local, state or federal health officials, Library staff will follow suggestions and directions to implement social distancing within the Library buildings.

Additional Cleaning Measures

During the epidemic/pandemic, the Library will ask staff and contracted custodians to increase cleaning within each location. The Library Director will devise new cleaning procedures for MML during the epidemic.

Responsibility for Library Operations

If, for any reason, the Library Director is unable or unavailable to perform the responsibilities and decisions outlined in this policy, administrative authority for this policy and all Library operations shall be provided by the Board Chair.