



1060 Hicksville Road Massapequa, NY 11758-1289

Tel: (516) 735-4133

Fax: (516) 731-3117

mlipson@plainedgelibrary.org

Michele Lipson
Library Director

Health Emergency Response Plan

Adopted by the Board of Trustees
April 19, 2021

I: Purpose:

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

If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the Library must plan for staff being unable to report to work. In addition, during a public health emergency, businesses, social organizations, or schools may be required to take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness including closing down by order of local public health officials. Other public health measures may include limiting or canceling social and public gatherings, requiring quarantines and /or other social distancing measures.

Recovery from a disease outbreak may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or some other physical crises. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours due to a pandemic.

II: Definitions

“Public Health Emergency Response Plan”:

A public health emergency 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 rebuilding, almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm, or if there is a utility shortage). 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.

“Pandemic”:

A disease epidemic occurs when there are more cases of that disease than normal. A pandemic is

a worldwide epidemic of a disease and may occur when a new illness appears against which the human population has no immunity. If a pandemic were to occur today, we could expect the illness to spread rapidly due to the interconnected nature of the world and the high level of global travel. During a pandemic any number of employees may be absent at one time due to their own illness. Additional employees may be absent for other reasons.

“Employees” and “Staffing Level”:

For the purposes of this plan, in the sections Minimum Staffing Level, Prioritization of Services, and Responsibility for Library Operations, the terms “employees” and “staffing level” pertain to permanent part time and permanent full time library staff.

III: Temporary Reduction or Suspension of Services:

At the discretion of the Board of Trustees of the Plainedge Public Library, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily (e.g. programming) in the event that:

- there is not sufficient staff to maintain basic library service levels
- public visitation is too low to warrant keeping the Library open
- or any other condition exists which prevents the Library from operating safely and effectively.

The Library will close due to a public health emergency in the event that a mandate order or recommendation for closure is issued by public health or government officials on the town, county, or state level.

In the event of closure, it is imperative that the Library Director or designee follow the communication procedures and submit payroll.

Due dates will be adjusted so that no overdue charges are assessed on dates in which the Library is closed. We will make decisions about whether the exterior book drop will be kept open and cleared as the situation evolves. We will keep it open for as long as possible.

IV: School Closure Due to a Public Health Emergency

In the event that the School District is closed due to a public health emergency, the Plainedge Public Library will remain open unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing are also met. However, all Library programs and special events will be canceled on any day in which any or all of the schools served by the Plainedge Public Library are closed due to a public health emergency.

V: Minimum Staffing Level

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as 6 healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 7 hour workday and 35 hour work week per employee. Thus, at least 12 employees must be available to be present at the Library Monday-Thursday, and 6 employees must be available to be present Friday-Saturday. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than five consecutive days will result in reduced hours or closing the Library. The level of excused absence of Library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours.

Phases may include:

- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations.
- Staff Library at minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time; employees may be reallocated and have shifts reassigned and lengthened to provide coverage.
- Reduce open hours if number of employees falls below temporary minimum level.
- Close the library for one or more days if the number of employees further declines or only minimum level can be met for five or more days.

If the Library is open, healthy employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the Plainedge Public Library's sick leave policy.

VI: Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by a public health emergency, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours is of the utmost importance. Library staff will be informed by a member of administration. Then, the public will be notified, via email, social media, and information will be on our website.

VII: Prioritization of Services

If reduced staffing, open hours or services are required, employees shall perform priority responsibilities that most directly impact patrons prior to any other work tasks. A minimum of one healthy employee will be assigned to staff each service area.

Priority responsibilities shall follow this order:

1. Direct patron assistance: check out; issuing library cards; computer and reference assistance; facility and collection supervision/safety.
2. Patron related-tasks: check in; incoming delivery; shelving.
3. Workflow tasks: Hold Cancellations list; Send Item list.
4. Essential services: payroll; processing bills for payment; Library Board meetings.

Individual responsibilities outside of those described shall be completed after these prioritized tasks, if time permits, performing those duties with a deadline or significant impact first.

Employees should consult with the Director or designated administrative authority to determine staffing area assignment and which individual work tasks should take priority, or in the event that they feel a responsibility not listed here that requires urgent attention.

VIII: Employee Absences

The Union Agreements outline the sick leave policy; this policy shall be followed in the event of a public health emergency.

IX: 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 will be handled by the Systems Integrator, together with the Personnel Clerk, with guidance from the Board of Trustees.

Contingency Plan (Details of the Above Health Emergency Response Plan)

Note: For the purpose of this document, 'we' is defined as the Director, together with the Board.

Essential Staff

Director will maintain and oversee operations, prepare for Board meetings, keep the Board informed
IT Systems Integrator to maintain and oversee tech issues

Personnel Clerk for bookkeeping, payroll, bill paying, etc.

Head of Reference and Children's (to maintain collection, staffing, scheduling, programming)

All of our staff members have been provided the means to telecommute - some needed laptops, wifi hotspots, printers, and remote access to their work computers.

Technical Processing/Circulation Clerks to process library cards, new materials, etc.

Custodians are essential for keeping the building clean, sanitary, disinfected, for bringing out the garbage, handling snow, keeping an eye on our HVAC system, etc.

Pages are essential if we are open and have to reshelve items as they're returned.

Phones

In terms of phones... staff members will be responsible for checking their phone and email messages.

Staggered Work Shifts

As the numbers in the community rise, it may become necessary to work out a split shift schedule. We will have minimal staff in the building, masks will be worn, and distance maintained at all times.

Telecommuting or WFH

Most staff members can work from home. Some were given laptops, or software specific to their job. All are sent webinars, training, articles, and various tasks that they can perform, in addition to their regular work. Many staff members can log into their work computers. We all use Google Suite, and have uploaded important documents to their Drive. Administration is always available via phone, text, or email.

Personal Protective Equipment

We have been able to keep an adequate supply of gloves, masks, face shields, sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer, etc. We have been participating in group purchases through the Nassau Library System, as well as purchasing it on our own. Senator Thomas has also generously donated bottles of hand sanitizer to the library. We have a six month supply, at the rate that we've been using them, including washable, reusable, cotton masks that were given to each employee.

An immediate supply of PPE is kept in the Director's Office, and the rest is stored in the Custodial Office.

In the event that a staff member tests positive:

- Notify whoever had been exposed, and let them know when they were exposed, and what they were expected to do. They would be asked to quarantine for two weeks, and get tested prior to coming back to work.
- Contact the Department of Health
- Depending on when the last time the person had been in the building, we may close for cleaning and disinfection.
- Put a sign on the door, letting the community know.

- We have made everything as touchless as possible, and the custodians clean every touchable surface multiple times per day, but in the event of a positive case, they would do an extra thorough cleaning, including special attention to that person's work space.
- The staff member who has COVID has to quarantine for a minimum of two weeks, and have a doctor's note, and a negative result before returning to work.

In the event that a staff member is directly exposed to COVID:

- They are expected to quarantine, and test on day 10. If they receive a negative result, they are permitted to come back to work.
- If someone in their home is still positive, the staff member will still be expected to quarantine and will not be permitted to return until their family member tests negative.

Available Leave for Testing, Treatment, Isolation, or Quarantine

- FFCRA expired on December 31, 2020, but the Board voted to extend it until May 19, 2021. It will run concurrently with the NYS Guidance.

Work from Home Policy

- Please see separate document.
- Employees can clock in and out, from home (with a special 'work from home' designation)
- They each have to submit a work from home log to the Director, each week.