

Mifflin Community Library

LIBRARY PANDEMIC POLICY

I: Purpose To establish the protocol to be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a pandemic, the library may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of public health officials. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or 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 Pandemic Plan A pandemic 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). Recovery from a pandemic may be slow and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for an extended period of time.

Pandemic A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

Appropriate Staffing Level For the purposes of this policy, Appropriate Staffing Level refers to the minimum number of qualified staff necessary to provide service safely and efficiently, as determined by the Library Director or his/her designee.

III: Library Closure Public Health Mandate Mifflin Community Library will close due to pandemic in the event of a mandate order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.

Discretionary Service Level Changes At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate social distancing for health and safety.

In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or designee will maintain communication with staff, and the Library Board of Trustees.

IV: School Closure Due to Pandemic In the event that the Governor Mifflin School District is closed due to pandemic illness, Mifflin Community Library will remain open, but with reduced hours and services, unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing is also met. All library programs, special events, and meeting room reservations will be canceled.

V: Staffing Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as two healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a 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 (e.g., wearing of gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.) as advised by the CDC guidelines.
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., closing floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Social distancing practices in public areas; patrons required to wear masks for entry
- Reduction of open hours;
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations. Virtual programs only
- 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.

If the Library is closed or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours.

VI: Communication In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on wfmz.com, Facebook, and the library website.

VII: Prioritization of Services Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Information services for the public, both in-person and online;
- Payroll;
- Accounts Payable;
- Facility Maintenance.

Coronavirus/Pandemic Levels - MCL

Level 1: Do Nothing. Normal Operations

(Threat Level: Low)

1. Make no changes to current operations and procedures.

Level 2: Enhance Sanitation

(Threat Level: Elevated)

1. Provide additional hand sanitizer, soap and towels throughout library buildings
2. Wipe down all horizontal surfaces and high contact items (doorknobs, phones, keyboards, coffee makers) at midday and at the end of the day
3. Spray soft furnishings with disinfectant spray at the end of each day
4. Weekly deep clean of children's area (toys, etc., with bleach solution)
5. Remove soft toys from children's areas (run in hot dryer, then bag up)
6. Stop serving food at programs unless individually packaged

Level 3: Rigorous Sanitation

(Threat Level: High)

1. In addition to Level 2 actions, add:
2. Encourage flu shots or other immunizations for all staff
3. Hourly hand sanitizing or handwashing for all staff
4. Wipe/disinfect all returned materials before re-shelving
5. Hold all returned materials for 48 hours after disinfecting before recirculating
6. Close Children's Area

Level 4: Restrict Activities

(Threat Level: Emergency)

1. In addition to Levels 2 and 3, add:
2. Cancel passive programs to reduce spread of contact infection (shared pencils, etc.)
3. Cancel all library programs to reduce person-to-person infection (Virtual Only)

Level 5: Building Closures

(Threat Level: Critical)

1. Reduce hours or close individual branches if staffing falls to specified levels for each branch: If down to one F/T staff, can't open beyond 40 hours/week. If P/T, can't open beyond 29 hours/week
2. Close library system if required by State Health Department or other health authority

Staff Illnesses

(Threat Level: High +)

1. Staff should absolutely stay home at earliest signs of possible infection or if family member is infected
2. Staff should remain home until infectious period is past, following CDC or Health Department guidelines
3. Telework is an option for a few staff (Children's Librarian, PR Coordinator, Director)