

GREENVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Pandemic Policy

Background

The purpose of this policy is to establish the protocol that will be used in the event of a pandemic. A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the library must plan for staff being unable to report to work. In addition, other public health measures may require limiting or canceling social and public gatherings, quarantines and/or other social distancing measures which can impact library hours and services. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, recovery may be slow and 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.

The library staff and board are committed to providing excellent library service while doing all they can to support the health of the community.

Closure/Curtailed Hours

Closure

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.);
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., closing rooms or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Social distancing practices (6' separation between individuals) in public and staff areas;
- Reduction of open hours;
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations;
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open or closed hours.
- Closure of the library.

The library will close to the public due to pandemic if (1) a mandate order or recommendation for closure is issued by public health or government officials on the local, county or state level, or (2) an insufficient number of library staff are able to report to work. At the discretion of the Library Director, the Greenville Public Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily (i.e. programming) in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain basic library service levels.

In the event of closure all library programs, special events, and meeting room reservations will be canceled and the book drop will be closed. Circulating materials will not accrue fines during this time.

In the event of a closure of more than five business days, the Mid-Hudson Library System will be notified and asked to remove the Greenville Public Library from the paging list for holds. As soon as a re-open date is confirmed, MHLS will be notified of the date.

Curtailed Hours

In the event that an insufficient number of library staff are able to report to work, library hours will be curtailed. Shortened hours will be determined by the Library Director. In the event of reduced staffing, employees shall perform priority responsibilities that most directly impact patrons prior to any other work tasks.

Staffing and Compensation

If the library is open but closed to the public and there is no internal threat to the health and safety of the staff, healthy staff are expected to report to work on a schedule identified by the Library Director. The Library Director will prioritize service-related tasks and assign a work plan to staff. Under these circumstances, evening and weekend hours would not be maintained.

In the event of curtailed hours, staff who work will be paid for their regularly scheduled hours. In the event of library closure where staff is asked to stay home, or the need to isolate as ordered by a doctor or health authority, all staff shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

In the event of a closure, staff may be asked to work on projects or participate in training webinars from home.

Communication

In the event of curtailed hours or closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication is a priority. Information will be posted on the library's website as well as signage at the facility. Every effort will be made to keep the information current. The Library Director will maintain communication with staff and the Library Board of Trustees.

Prioritization of Services

Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Dissemination of necessary information to the public
- Payroll
- Facility Maintenance
- Accounts Payable

Prevention

All precautions established, required and designated by the appropriate authorities – e.g., DOH, CDC, or Greene County Board of Health – should be followed.

Surfaces and objects (keyboards, computer mice, doorknobs, light switches, desks, telephones, etc.) will be disinfected daily. Staff will be reminded of the importance of frequent and thorough hand washing.

If a serious infectious disease outbreak reaches our community, staff with even a mild cough or low-grade fever will be advised to stay home. Staff members who believe they have had exposure to an infectious disease should notify the Library Director as soon as possible.

Visitors to the library who are obviously ill will be asked to leave the library and anything they touched will be disinfected.

Daily Infection Control Practices

- Wash your hands frequently throughout the day for at least 20 seconds each time with hot water and soap.
- Drink plenty of fluids and get enough rest.

- Cover your cough by using the sleeve of your garment.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after.
- Wash your hands after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective, but it is better to wash your hands with soap and water. Gels should be rubbed into hands until they are dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Regularly disinfect commonly touched surfaces, such as counters, desks, tables,
- Doorknobs, railings, keyboards, mice, telephone handsets and drinking fountains.

Return to Normal Operations and Services

When advised by local, state and/or federal health authorities that the pandemic is no longer a threat to the community, the Greenville Library Board of Trustees will convene to confer and vote on resuming normal operations and services.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
June 15, 2020