

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 or modification to digital services, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local 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

The Nyack Library may need to close the building for services to the public under the following scenarios:

Public Health Mandate

The Nyack Library will close to the public 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 Board of Trustees, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, limit public service to digital, technology mediated, 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.

School Closure Due to Pandemic

In the event that the Nyack School District is closed due to pandemic illness, the Nyack Library will close to the public. All library programs, special events, and meeting room reservations will be canceled.

Staff Availability

Minimum staffing level for public service is defined as eight healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours during a temporary period of time. Full-time employees will work no more than a 7 hour workday and 35 hour workweek, and Part-Time employees will work no more than

29-hour workweek. 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.);
- 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, with timely and appropriate communication in keeping the Nyack Library Staff Association agreement.
- 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 an employee receives medical direction to isolate and is confined to home, they will notify the Library Director and will be excused from reporting to work without cost to their Sick Leave. If they are able to work remotely, they can continue to perform job duties as assigned by their supervisor.

In the event of library closure, or the need to isolate as ordered by a doctor or health authority, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

IV: Communication

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

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 social media channels, email blasts and the library website.

V: Prioritization of Services

Priority will be given to the following essential services:

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

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director or designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff. If the library building can remain

open for non-public service, staff who are healthy should report to work on a schedule identified by the Library. Under these circumstances, evening and weekend hours would not be maintained. Staff whose job duties include tasks that can be done remotely may be assigned tasks and projects to assist the library with offering digital services and support to the public. This work may include working on future program planning, remote training via webinars, providing email reference services to the public, posting information updates and providing digital resources for supporting the social fabric of the community during this time of increased anxiety and stress.

VI: 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 Nyack Library Board of Trustees will convene to confer and vote on resuming normal operations and services.

Approved by the Nyack Library Board of Trustees 03/15/2020