Pandemic Operations Plan

Bethlehem Public Library 2021

Overview

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

This plan has been developed with input from CSEA Bethlehem Public Library Unit #6015-00 Albany County Local 801 as required.

Nothing in this plan is intended to impede, diminish, or impair the rights of us or library employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the right and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved by the Library Board of Trustees.

Signature: _____

By:

Title:

Date:

Record of changes chart
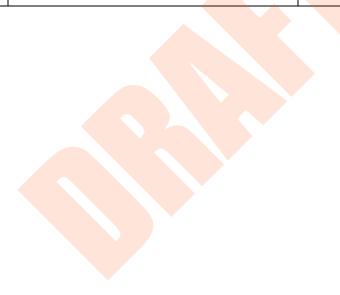
Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by

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Purpose, Scope, and Assumptions

Purpose

 This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan will be invoked in response to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations. It is in the interest of the safety of library employees, contractors, patrons, and the community that this plan has been developed.

Response to current pandemic

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared a pandemic for the novel coronavirus which causes COVID-19 severe acute respiratory syndrome. This plan has been developed to support the resilience of the library and community in response to this disease or other infectious diseases which may emerge and cause a future health emergency.

The health and safety of library employees is crucial to maintaining the mission of the library. We encourage all employees and contractors to adhere to current CDC guidelines to reduce the spread of infectious disease. Currently these include:

- Using hand sanitizer and washing with soap and water frequently including:
    - After using the restroom
    - After returning from outside the library
    - After touching or disposing of garbage
    - After using public computers, touching public tables, countertops, door handles, etc.
- Practice social distancing when possible
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify a supervisor and GO HOME IMMEDIATELY
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or tissue. Immediately dispose of any used tissue.
- Assign work stations to individuals for a specific period of time during a shift. Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, and end of each shift and whenever assigned to a new individual.
- Any other guidance published by the CDC, NYS Department of Health, or Albany County Department of Health.

Assumptions

This plan was developed with the best information best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. It was developed largely in response to the current Coronavirus pandemic but may be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following are founding assumptions made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of library employees, library users, and the local community are of the upmost importance
- A public health emergency may directly impact library operations
- It may take time to respond to health emergencies and to put appropriate safety measures in place
- The local community expects the library to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other libraries, library systems, suppliers, and contractors may be severely impacted
- Supply chains (particularly those for personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies) may be particularly vulnerable, resulting in considerable delays in procurement
- Operation of other libraries, contractors, vendors, and government agencies may be impacted and cause disruptions in service
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor
- According to Labor Law 27-c an 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physical present at a work site to perform their job
- According to Labor Law 27-c a 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physical present at a work site to perform their job

Implementation

The library director, or designated successor, in consultation with the Library Trustees holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to the plan may be implemented by additional personnel at the discretion of the library director, or designated successor.

Upon implementation of the plan all employees will be notified via email, text, or phone message. Details will be provided as possible and necessary, with additional information provided on a regular basis. The public will be notified of operational changes via email newsletter, the Footnotes, social media, local news media, library website, and postings at the library. The Public Information Specialist, along with other designated employees will maintain communication with the public as needed. The director, or designated successor, will maintain awareness of the information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the New York State Governor's office, directing implementation changes as necessary.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency the library director, or designated successor, will direct the resumption of normal operations or modified operations as necessary.

Mission essential functions

Bethlehem Public Library is committed to ensuring that essential functions be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those that enable the organization to:

- Maintain the safety of employees and the community
- Provide vital services
- Provide services required by law
- Sustain quality operations
- Uphold the mission of the library

Bethlehem Public Library has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other services may be suspended to focus on providing the most critical functions with the goal of building internal capacity to increase and eventually restore services. Ongoing communications with library employees, trustees, and the public will be a priority.

Essential functions will be prioritized based on:

- Time criticality of each function, focused on life safety
- Interdependency of essential functions
- Recovery sequence of each function and associated processes

Priority essential functions

Essential Function	Description	Priority
Buildings and grounds	Maintain the physical plant. Cleaning/disinfect the library. Maintain building security. Landscaping particularly snow removal or other landscaping that impacts safety.	1
Information Technology	Provides hardware and software for the organization. Maintains the network including public Wi-Fi at the library and in the community. Maintains phone system.	1
Business office	Processes bills, accounts payable, produces purchase orders, and maintains payroll.	1
Administration	Inspection of building. Coordinates contactless pickup of equipment, files, and resources necessary for remote work. Processes mail.	1
Circulation and Collection Management	Work necessary for physical materials distribution.	2
Human resources	Access to physical personnel files.	3
Technical Services	Technical Services staff members receive, process, catalog, and complete billing paperwork for new items	3

Public Services	Provide direct customer support when safe. Assist Circulation and Technical Services in distribution of physical materials	3
Public Information	Access to equipment, create physical signage and communication tools	3

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. In varying situations, some positions and associated personnel might be essential and some of these functions can be completed remotely by associated personnel.

Essential Function	Essential Positions	Justification
Buildings and grounds	Buildings and Grounds Supervisor Maintenance workers (full-time) Maintenance workers (part-time)	Supervisor established building priorities including: daily and preventative maintenance, cleaning, delivery and receiving, building security, repairs
Information Technology	Network Systems and Support Specialist Library Clerk	IT infrastructure essential to providing both physical and virtual library services
Business office	District Library Treasurer Account Clerk II	Essential for business continuity
Administration	Library Director Assistant Directors Library Clerk	Retrieve and distribute materials and resources safely under plan guidance, sign purchase orders and approve invoices, retrieve and distribute mail; access to necessary files, Library Clerk 1 aids the administration team
Circulation and Collection Management	Principal Library Clerk Senior Library Clerk Library Clerk Page	Managers schedule and deploy Circulation and Collection Maintenance staff; provide materials to the public, shelve library materials
Human resources	Human Resources Administrator	Continuity in hiring and necessary NYS and federal filings, Civil Service liaison
Technical Services	Librarian I Senior Library Clerk	Receive, process, catalog, and complete billing paperwork for new items

Public Services	Librarian II Librarian I Library Assistant	Managers schedule and direct work of the department; provide direct customer support including answering reference questions and programming
Public Information	Public Information Officer	Produces necessary communications and information for the public, access to printing equipment, review of signage for the public

Reducing Risk through remote work and shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites. Tasks for library workers may be deemed essential at different phases of pandemic response. Changing shifts and assigning workers to remote work can play an essential role in the library's response to the pandemic.

Emergency Telecommuting – The library may, at the discretion of the director, assign workers to remote work in order to allow an employee to fulfill job responsibilities necessary for library operations.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
    a. Internet capable laptop
    b. Internet access device (wifi hotspot)
    c. Necessary peripherals
    d. Access to remote desktop and/or secure network drives
    e. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties
    f. A solution for telephone communications
        i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff
        ii. Staff members' personal privacy will be factored in to telephone solution

Equipment

The library director, or designee, may contact staff members to assess the need for equipment to facilitate emergency telework. The IT Department and Administrators will evaluate the priority for tasks and assign equipment.

Equipment supplied by the library will be maintained by the library. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate, will be maintained by the employee. The library accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Equipment supplied by the library should be used for library purposes only, unless the equipment is otherwise available for public checkout. The employee must attest via email that the property has been received in working condition.

Employees agree to take reasonable care and action to protect library property from damage and theft. Upon termination of employment all library equipment must be returned to the library, absent exigent circumstances.

The library will supply employees with appropriate office supplies, programming materials and equipment, and other supplies deemed necessary for the completion of library tasks. The employee will establish an appropriate work environment. The library will not be responsible for setting up the remote work space, though library equipment (including WiFi hotspots, telephone, or internet access) and furniture may be made available on a case-by-case basis as necessary.

Employees are expected to steward confidential library, patron, and community data with the same care as they would in the library. Steps may include locked cases, regular password maintenance, shutting down computers when not in use, and any other appropriate measures.

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner. Injuries sustained in the remote workspace and in conjunction with regular job duties are normally covered by the library's worker's compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are expected to notify the library as soon as practical. The library is not responsible for injuries sustained by visitors to an employee's home workspace.

Telecommuting is not designed as a replacement for appropriate child care. Individual employee's schedules may be modified as necessary to accommodate child care needs. Please notify the HR department if accommodation is necessary.

Employees working remotely are expected to keep track of work time. Hours work in excess of those scheduled require advance approval from a supervisor. Failure to comply with this may result in discipline. The library may rescind the offer of remote work for repeated offenses.

Staggering shifts and redundancy scheduling may be necessary to accommodate appropriate social distancing at different phases of the plan. Supervisors will assign remote work shifts at the needs of the department, at the discretion of the director. Important work that needs to happen on-site but is less time sensitive may be accomplished outside of core business hours.

The library will work with all staff members to address concerns specifically those based on childcare or physical and mental health. Concerns should be addressed to the human resources administrator.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, the library will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered by director and administration
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours by director, administration, and scheduling supervisors

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) can reduce the spread of infectious disease and is important to support the safety and health of employees and the community. Necessary PPE may include:

- Masks
- Face Shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons
- Other task specific PPE

While cleaning supplies are not PPE they are related to the need for maintaining a safe and healthy environment. They are included in this section because of their importance in protecting health and safety for employees and the community.

Personal Protective Equipment Protocols

The library will provide necessary PPE as required by law. Supply chains are subject to significant disruptions. The library will work to procure sufficient backstock of appropriate PPE necessary for operations.

- The library director and administration will identify appropriate PPE based on job duties.

- The library will conduct a PPE hazard assessment (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132-136) to determine appropriate PPE for employees. This should be done utilizing CDC/DOH and OSHA guidance at the time of communicable disease. Training would also need to be provided under the regulation.

- Procurement
    - As specified in law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee during any given work shift for at least six months
    - Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement

- Storage, access, and monitoring
    - PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation as much as possible
    - Employees must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency
    - The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates

The library will procure all equipment following its purchasing policy. Supplies will be purchased in bulk and stored on location. The library will maintain at least a two-month supply of PPE and cleaning supplies. All maintenance staff will have immediate access to cleaning supplies. PPE will be monitored by procurement clerks and library administration.

Staff exposures, cleaning, and disinfecting

Staff Exposures

Bethlehem Public Library follows federal, state, and local guidance on pandemic response. As of March 8, 2021 our protocols in response to COVID-19 include:

Notifications to Staff and Public
The library with notify the public and staff if an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and was in contact with other employees within 14 days. Staff names will be withheld to follow HIPPA guidance.

Quarantine/Isolation Protocol for an Employee who tests Positive:
- Isolate for at least 10 days after the onset of symptoms or if they've never had symptoms, at least 10 days passed since your test date (specimen collection date) and at least 3 days (72 hours) of self-monitoring after recovery.
- If they experience symptoms within the 10 days, they should remain out of the library for an additional 10 days (beginning on the last day of onset of symptoms).
- Return to work if they are fever free (if that was a symptom) without using fever-reducing medications and has experienced progressive improvement or resolution of other symptoms.
- And, they will have to complete the wellness check-in form without issue.
- Contact Albany County DOH 518-447-4580 or NYS DOH 1-888-364-3065 to report and/or ask questions

Quarantine Protocol for Contacts of a Positive COVID case:
Without symptoms during quarantine period:
- Quarantine for a full 10 days, without testing requirement.
- Continue to self-monitor for a full 14 days since your last date of exposure to a positive case.
- Return to work after at least 10 days of quarantine and no symptoms reported.
- And, they will have to complete the wellness check-in form without issue.

With symptoms during quarantine period, or after quarantine period:
- If symptoms develop, self-isolate and contact Albany County Department of Health at (518) 447-4669 for guidance on testing and quarantine.
- Contact your doctor for guidance on testing and managing your symptoms.
- Isolate for at least 10 days after onset **and** at least 3 days (72 hours) after recovery.
- Return to work if they are fever free (if that was a symptom) without using fever-reducing medications and has experienced progressive improvement or resolution of other symptoms.
- And, employee will have to complete the wellness check-in form without issue.

Protocol for Contacts of a Positive COVID case, with Testing:
- **Exposed and they test positive.**
- Isolate for at least 10 days after onset of symptoms or if they've never had symptoms, at least 10 days passed since your test date (specimen collection date) **and** at least 3 days (72 hours) of self-monitoring after recovery.

- Return to work if they are fever free (if that was a symptom) without using fever-reducing medications and has experienced progressive improvement or resolution of other symptoms.
- And, employee will have to complete the wellness check-in form without issue.

- **Exposed and they test negative.**
- Quarantine for at least 10 days – from the last date of contact with the positive COVID case.
- Return to work after a negative test result.
- And, they will have to complete the wellness check-in form without issue.
- *NOTE: This covers people living with a positive person or a caregiver. It is not only the 10 days they are absent from the library as a close contact, their 10-day count begins after the positive person ends their 10-day quarantine. So, the employee could quarantine for a minimum of 20 days.*

Similar protocols may be implemented for a contact of a contact of a positive COVID case.

In response to guidelines above, Library administration and HR will proceed with:

a. Identification of other employees potentially infected
b. Interviews conducted by supervisors and/or HR. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
c. Apply steps above for potentially exposed employees

Work from home assignments may be offered to employees if they are in quarantine or isolation.

Employees who elect to travel resulting in state or local required quarantine may not be eligible for work from home assignments.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas.

OSHA Hazcom and NYS Right to Know training will be provided for cleaning supplies being used by employees. Safety Data Sheets will be available for review prior to usage. PPE assessment will be conducted taking into consideration application method and safety data sheet/product label information.

Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning and end of their shifts, at a minimum. Workspaces will also be cleaned by the employee when a new individual is assigned to the workspace.
   a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected frequently.
   b. The maintenance supervisor and library director will assign cleaning of common areas by maintenance staff members.

2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected.
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Employee Leave

The library will follow all federal, state, and local applicable laws relating to employee leave based upon legal requirements during the duration of the enacted plan.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work, off-site visits. This information may be used by the library to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Work hours and locations will be recorded through wellness check-in forms, departmental schedules, and communication with employees.

Housing for Essential Employees

Consideration for library arrangement of essential employees' housing through hotels or other means to prevent spread of communicable disease will be made on a case-by-case basis as dictated by federal, state, or local guidance.