

When local or state authorities declare the threat or existence of an epidemic or pandemic, the Library Director, in consultation with the President, shall undertake proactive measures intended to mitigate the threat. In the context of this policy, the word “pandemic” shall also mean “epidemic”. Recovery from a pandemic 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/or reduced hours. A separate document shall set out the protocol and procedures that will be used in the event of a pandemic. Those procedures will address issues such as: staff being unable to report to work; limiting or canceling social and public gatherings; closings; and quarantines.

Purpose

The overriding principle in the event of the threat of a contagious disease is to prevent, to the extent possible, the sickness of staff, patrons and the community.

A secondary objective is to protect staff from potential loss of income.

Also, to the extent possible without exposing the library to potential contamination, take measures that will allow the library will remain open on some basis.

Definitions

Epidemic - a disease affecting many persons at the same time and spreading from person to person in a locality where the disease is not permanently prevalent.

Pandemic- a worldwide epidemic of a disease that may occur when a new virus appears against which the human population has no immunity.

Library Closure

At the discretion of the Library Director or the Board of Trustees President the Bridgton Public 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. The Town of Bridgton closure policy as well as closure orders issued by public health or government officials will be taken into consideration.

In the event that any Lake Region District school is closed due to pandemic illness, the Bridgton Public Library will remain open unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closings are also met. However, all library programs and special events will be canceled on any day in which any or all Lake Region School District schools are closed due to pandemic-related illness.

Employee Absences

The Bridgton Public Library Personnel Policies and Handbook includes Sick Days (for employee) and Personal Days (to care for family members) policies. In the event of a confirmed epidemic or pandemic the Library Board of Trustees may vote to suspend normal sick days and personal days and substitute a temporary measure greater than the time allotted by current policy. The measure may include supplementary paid sick leave for an agreed upon length of time for any library employee who is quarantined.

The Family Medical Leave Act also applies, and any employee may request up to an additional 10 weeks of unpaid Family Medical Leave as required, in addition to the time and benefits covered by this policy.

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 is as follows:

1. Board of Trustees: President

2. Board of Trustees: Vice President
3. Board of Trustees: Secretary
4. Board of Trustees: Personnel Chair
5. Library Staff: Circulation Manager
6. Library Staff: Youth Services Librarian