

Bridgton Public Library

PANDEMIC POLICY

1. **Scope.** The overriding principle in the event of, or 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 Bridgton Public Library (BPL) to potential contamination, take measures that will allow the BPL to remain open to the extent possible. Whenever and wherever possible, BPL will follow Maine CDC guidelines.

2. Definitions.

a. 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.

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

3. **Pandemic Actions.** When local or state authorities declare the threat or existence of an epidemic or pandemic, the Library Director, in consultation with the President of the Board of Trustees (Board), shall undertake proactive measures intended to mitigate the threat. In the context of this policy, 'pandemic' shall also mean 'epidemic.'

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 BPL 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 may address such issues as: staff being unable to report to work; limiting or canceling social and public gatherings; closings; and quarantines.

4. **Library Closure.** At the discretion of the Library Director or the President of the Board of Trustees (Board), BPL may close, reduce its operating hours or temporarily limit services (e.g., programming) in the event there is not sufficient staff to maintain basic 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 BPL will remain open unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing is also met. However, all BPL programs and special events for youth services will be canceled on any day in which any or all Lake Region School District schools are closed due to pandemic-related illness.

5. **Employee Absences.** The BPL Personnel Policy and Handbook includes the policies for Sick Days (for the employees) and Personal Days (to care for family members). In the event of a confirmed epidemic or pandemic, the Board may vote to suspend or supplement 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 BPL 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.

6. Responsibility for Library Operations. If, for any reason, the Library Director is unable or unavailable to perform the responsibilities and/or make the decisions outlined in this policy, administrative authority for this policy and all library operations is as follows:

- a. Board of Trustees: President
- b. Board of Trustees Vice President
- b. Board of Trustees: Secretary
- c. Board of Trustees: Personnel Committee Chair
- d. Library Staff: Circulation Manager

Approved by the Board of Trustees 3/16/2020

Approval Updated: 11/16/2021