



Emergency Pandemic/Infectious Disease Policy

1.0 Purpose

The Durham Public Library strives to provide optimum service to the Town of Durham in satisfying the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the Library may be required to take measures to stop the spread of disease in the community.

In the event of a declared pandemic, as determined by the World Health Organization (WHO), or known infectious disease situation, the Library may have to suspend or modify existing library policies, limit hours of operation, limit or cancel programming, deny access to parts of the building, or even close our doors completely to the public.

This Policy differs from the Library Closing Policy, which applies to situations in which staff is expected to return to work immediately after an emergency is resolved. This pandemic policy applies to an infectious disease situation, in which staff may be absent from the building for an extended period.

2.0 Changes to Patron Services

In worsening conditions, the Library Director, working with the Library Board of Trustees and the Town Administrator, may choose to reduce Library open hours or limit services to patrons in the event that staffing is not adequate to serve the public at normal levels.

Additionally, if it is deemed that the Library is unable to follow recommended social distancing for public health and safety, programming may be cancelled, services limited, or the Library may be closed to the public.

The Library Director, or designated person, will maintain communication with the Library Board of Trustees and the Town Administrator.

3.0 Library Closing

The Durham Public Library will close due to infectious disease in the event of a mandate or recommendation for closure issued by local, county or state public health officials, government officials or at the discretion of the Library Board of Trustees.

Should the Town of Durham close its buildings to prevent the spread of disease, The Durham Public Library shall also close.

If a staff member becomes ill with infectious disease as a result of Pandemic, the Library will close, at the discretion of the Director and Library Board of Trustees, for a period of (14) days or as recommended by public health officials.

4.0 Precautionary Measures

The Library will implement additional health/safety measures to combat the spread of disease:

- Additional Cleaning and sanitation measures
 - Sanitizer and antiseptic wipes shall be stationed near public computers and bathrooms.
 - Frequent antiseptic wiping of door handles, door jambs, keyboards, computer mice, toilet handles and faucets, counter/table/desktops as resources are available.
 - Gloves shall be provided for staff if needed.
- Recommended health guidelines as published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) will be posted prominently for patron reference.
- Social distancing practices in public areas as recommended by the CDC.
- Temporary removal of non-essential items from public areas.
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations as necessary
- Closure of the library as recommended/required.

5.0 Communication

In the event of changes to library services or a closing due to the spread of infectious disease, Library Staff will follow the normal procedures for emergency closing notifications. Changes to service/closings will be communicated through physical signs on the Library doors, email, Library website, social media outlets, WMUR. The Library Board of Trustees and Town Administrator will be notified.

6.0 Core Services and Business Operations

The Library Director, or designated person, will be required to maintain daily building security and core library business operations while the library building is closed.

Priority will be given to the following core services while the Library is closed:

- Information services for the public
- Payroll
- Accounts payable
- Facility maintenance and building security
- Returned library materials

In the event of closure, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

Staff work from home will be approved by the Library Director on a case-by-case basis.

This document will remain in force until it is deemed that normal library services can be resumed.

Objections to Library Resources

The Library will review, consider and respond to all comments and questions about library materials, services, programming, and policy although greater weight may be given to the requests of eligible cardholders, who are the Library's constituents. Any individual who wishes to provide comments or questions about any item(s) in the collection or the services and programs the Library provides to the community should complete a [REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LIBRARY RESOURCE FORM](#). Requests for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Director who will respond to the requesting individual in writing within thirty days with a decision on the request.

If dissatisfied with the Director's decision, the individual may appeal the Director's decision to the Library Board of Trustees. The appeal must be in writing and filed within 7 days of the Director's written decision by delivery to the Library Director. The Board of Trustees will review the individual's written appeal request, the original Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource Form and the Director's decision at the next available regular meeting. This may not be the next scheduled meeting if the agenda has already been published or if there is a full agenda already established. The individual will receive a letter with the Board's decision on the appeal within thirty days of the meeting at which the appeal is considered. The Board's decision is final and will remain in effect for a term of five years during which a challenged resource will not be subject to further challenge absent recommendation from the Director.