



Pandemic Policy

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, limited hours of operation, or 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 are maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours due to a pandemic.

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 as determined by the Library Director or his/her designee, or the maximum level of staffing permitted by governmental authorities, whichever is fewer.

Library Closure

Public Health Mandate: James Prendergast Library will close due to a 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 Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, 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 or appropriate facility sanitation for health and safety. In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or his/her designee will maintain communication with staff, Library Board of Trustees, and the community.

School Closure Due to Pandemic: In the event that the Jamestown Public Schools close due to pandemic illness, the James Prendergast Library may remain open, but may reduce hours and services, unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing is also met. All library programs, special events, and meeting room reservations may be canceled. Hours may be reduced and services may be restricted on any day in which Jamestown Public Schools is closed due to pandemic-related illness.

Staffing: Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as three healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 7.5-hour workday and 37.5-hour work week per full-time employee, and no more than 35-hour work week per part-time employee. 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.

The following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director or his/her designee in order to provide service safely:

- 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 floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Social distancing practices in public areas
- Reduction of open hours
- Cancellation of some or all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours and implement increased health and safety measures for staff and public.
- 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. In the event of closure, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours in all approved schedules. If the closure extends beyond all of the approved staff schedules (maximum two weeks), part-time hours will be determined by the availability of work-at-home tasks. Full-time staff will work from home to continue providing library services as prioritized by Library Director or his/her designee.

If the Library is closed, or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours per Director's discretion. When appropriate, work tools (e.g., laptops, supplies, etc.) will be checked out to employees by the Library Director or his/her designee for work-at-home assignments.

Communication

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 Facebook, and the library website.

Prioritization of Services

Priority will be given to the following essential services:

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

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director or his/her designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff.