

SUN PRAIRIE PUBLIC LIBRARY
EPIDEMIC & HEALTH EMERGENCY POLICY

I. Purpose

To establish a protocol that will be used in the event of an epidemic or health emergency. The library should plan for staff being unable to report to work in the event of a serious infectious disease outbreak. In addition, during an epidemic or health emergency organizations may be required to take measures to help slow the spread of illness such as closing by order of Dane County Public Health officials. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained with limited staff and reduce hours as determined by the Library Director.

This 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 recovery work almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm). If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, recovery may be slow and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for several weeks or more.

II. Definitions

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

Library health emergency – The state of affairs in which there are not enough healthy library staff to maintain normal hours of operation, or it is unsafe for library staff to provide in-person service to the public.

III: Library Closure

The Library may temporarily close or reduce service because of an epidemic or health emergency in the event that one of the following occur:

- A. The City of Sun Prairie offices close because of a health emergency.
- B. A mandate, order, or recommendation for closure is issued by Dane County public health or other government officials.
- C. The Library may close if SPASD closes due to an epidemic or health emergency.

At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may temporarily close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services in the event that there is insufficient staff to maintain basic service levels. This may include suspending library programs or events even if the library remains open. The use of restroom facilities may not be available to the public during an epidemic or health emergency.

The Library in consultation with Dane County Public Health or other government officials, may encourage patrons to wear face coverings upon entering the library especially where social distancing cannot be practiced. Exceptions may be made for individuals under the age of two or for individuals with special health circumstances. At the discretion of the Library Director, individuals exhibiting symptoms of an infectious, epidemic or public health emergency may be asked to leave the library.

In the event of closure, due dates and holds pickup dates for library materials will be adjusted so that no overdue charges are assessed and holds do not expire on dates in which the library is closed. The exterior book drop may also be closed. Closure of the book drop will be determined by the Library Director.

Minimum Staffing Level

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as five healthy staff available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 8 hour workday and 40 hour workweek per FTE. One of the five staff must be a library operational supervisor and one of the five must be from circulation services. This minimum staffing level is for situations that will be in effect for at least one full day. Minimum staffing requirements that impact less than one full day are left to the discretion of the Library Director or the Supervisor on Duty.

An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level will result in reduced hours or closing the library. The absence of healthy library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours. At the library director's discretion, this may include:

1. Cancelling programs, special events, and meeting room reservations.
2. Reassigning employee duties and shifts.
3. Reducing open hours if the number of employees falls below minimum levels.
4. Limiting staff assistance for all services.
5. Closing the library for one or more days.

VI: Communication

In the event of closure Library staff will follow the Library's Emergency Closing Procedure.

VII: Prioritization of Services

If reduced staffing, hours, or services are required, employees shall perform priority responsibilities that most directly impact patrons prior to any other work tasks.

Priority responsibilities shall follow this order, with safety being a priority:

1. Direct patron assistance, e.g. check out, issuing library cards, computer and information assistance.
2. Processing incoming holds, check in, incoming delivery returns, shelving.
3. Processing holds, shelf action lists, pick lists.
4. Submission of payroll, processing bills for payment, preparing for and holding
5. Preparing and holding of Library Board meetings.

VIII: 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 shall follow the Library Operations Policy.

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