

Dudley-Tucker Library Pandemic Policy

I. 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 with limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including severe restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local public health officials.

II. Definitions

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 or outbreak, recovery may be slow; limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for several weeks or more.

Pandemic: A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease.

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.

III. Library Closure

The Dudley-Tucker Library may temporarily close because of an epidemic or library health emergency in the event that either of the following occur:

- A. The Town of Raymond offices close because of a health emergency;
- B. A mandate, order, or recommendation for closure is issued by Rockingham County public health or other government officials.

The Dudley-Tucker Library Board of Trustees establishes for any public health emergency, epidemic, or pandemic an emergency Minimum Staffing Level of two persons per shift with appropriate specialties, as determined by the Library Director. The severity, virulence, and duration will be determined by the Board of Trustees and Library Director. Inability to meet this staffing minimum due to illness or Health Department mandatory exclusion, or safety issues shall be deemed sufficient criterion for closing the library. Staff available to be present at the library during all open hours are limited to a maximum 8-hour workday and 40-hour workweek per employee.

At the discretion of the Library Director, the Dudley-Tucker Library may temporarily close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services in the event that there is insufficient staff to maintain basic service levels. In the event of closure or reduction of operating hours, the Library Director

or designee will maintain communication with staff, Dudley-Tucker Library Board of Trustees, and the Town Manager.

In the event of closure, due dates and holds pick-up 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 will be kept open and cleared periodically for as long as possible.

IV. School Closure Due to Pandemic and Library Response

In the event that the Raymond School District is closed due to pandemic, the Dudley-Tucker Library may remain open, but with reduced hours and services, unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing is also met. All library programs and special events will be cancelled.

Should school be cancelled due to a pandemic, disinfecting and/or cleaning procedures issued by public health officials will be followed as appropriate.

V. Staffing

The absence of healthy library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours. In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be enacted at the discretion of the Library Director, Dudley-Tucker Library Trustees, or designee.

- Increased health/safety measures for staff (e.g., wearing of gloves, wiping down patron and staff work areas, etc.);
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., closing of floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Establishment of materials quarantine;
- Social distancing practices in public areas;
- Reduction of open hours if the number of employees falls below minimum levels;
- Cancellation of all programs and special events;
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;
- Closure of the library for one or more days.

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

VI. Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by a pandemic, Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on Facebook, Twitter, RCTV channels 13 and 22, WMUR, and the library website.

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.

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

Individual responsibilities shall be completed after prioritized tasks if time permits, performing those duties with a deadline or significant impact first. Employees should consult with the Director or designated administrative authority to determine staffing area assignment and which individual work tasks should take priority, or in the event that they feel a responsibility not listed here requires urgent attention.

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 lies with the Dudley-Tucker Library Trustees and designee.

Adopted April 3, 2020

by Dudley-Tucker Library Trustees: Sabrina Maltby, Valerie Moore, Jill Galus