

Dedham Library

Pandemic and Health Emergency Policy

The Dedham Public Library has established the following policy to follow in the event of a pandemic or health emergency.

1. The Dedham Library will close due to a pandemic or health emergency in the event that there is a mandate or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.
2. In the event that the Dedham Public School system is closed due to an outbreak, the Dedham Library will remain open unless the aforementioned requirement for closing is also met.
3. At the discretion of the Library Director or the Library Board of Trustees, the Dedham Library may close, shift services to one location, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain basic library service levels.
4. Due to a pandemic or health emergency, non-circulating children's materials will be removed from public areas during the duration of the outbreak to minimize spread through surfaces frequently touched by children. Disinfecting and/or cleaning procedures issued by public health officials will be followed as possible.
5. Depending upon the severity, virulence and duration of a pandemic or health emergency, the Library Director in conjunction with Trustees will consider the promotion of social distancing and the suspension of Library programs to discourage public gatherings. This includes limiting attendance and arranging furniture to distance attendees from one another in accordance with public health recommendations.
6. In the event of a pandemic or health emergency we acknowledge the ability of the director to work with the trustees to perform duties different from standard operating procedure.
7. The minimum staff requirements and Library staff sick leave, as outlined in the Library union contract, shall be followed in the event of a pandemic or health emergency. The level of excused absence of library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours. In the event that the Library building is closed, staff may still be required to report to perform duties within the building and assist patrons by phone or with online needs.
8. In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic or health emergency, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours is of the utmost importance. Library staff should immediately post information about closures on the Library website, social media sites, and outside the library.
9. If a reduction in staffing, open hours, or services is required, Library staff at the direction of the Director shall perform priority responsibilities that most directly impact patrons prior to any other work tasks.
10. 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 Library Organizational Chart.

Adapted from Stoughton (WI) Public Library Epidemic and Library Health Emergency Policy

Adopted by the Dedham Library Board of Trustees March 16, 2020