



PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE POLICY

Adopted 03/15/2020; Amended 12/13/2023;
see related [Emergency Closure Policy](#)

This policy establishes the protocol that will be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the Library District must plan for staff being unable to report to work. In addition, during a pandemic, businesses, social organizations, or schools may be required to take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness including closing down by order of local public health officials. Other public health measures may include limiting or canceling social and public gatherings, requiring quarantines and/or other social distancing measures. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or some other physical crisis. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours due to a pandemic.

Jefferson County Public Health will be our primary source of local information and as part of its public health responsibilities, will provide guidance and direction to the community. The link to the Jefferson County Public Health website is: <http://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org>.

Employee Awareness and Education

Email and the “JCL-ALLSTAFF” site will be the primary means of communicating pandemic-related information to Library District employees. In addition to documents that are placed on the staff site, there will be links shared to other web resources. If access to the staff site is not available, or during closures, information may be communicated via email or phone.

Community Messaging

The Library Director or designee will use the Library District’s website, electronic newsletter, and social media to communicate closures and other information to the public.

Precautions

The Library District and its employees are expected to follow the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Jefferson County Public Health regarding personal and organizational precautions to avoid transmitting a pandemic illness. These include personal hygiene and not coming to work with symptoms that could be those of pandemic illness. Employees showing the symptoms listed on the CDC website and/or other official health information sources are expected to stay home. Social distancing (keeping a physical distance of 3-6 feet from others and limiting contact such as shaking hands) is encouraged.

Employee Absences

Employees may be absent because of their own illness, a family member's illness, or to care for well children because of a school closure. It is also possible that employees may be quarantined or asked to self-quarantine during a pandemic. Following established Library District policies, employees may utilize paid sick leave for absences due to illness of the employee or family member (as defined in the Employee Manual). Employees may also be placed on Administrative Leave with Pay if the Director determines this best meets the needs of the Library District during a pandemic. For all other pandemic-related absences, employees may use vacation or personal leave. In the event that the pandemic event limits access to medical providers, the Library District may waive the requirement of medical certification for absences of over 3 days.

Pandemic Response Procedures

The Library District uses a three-tiered system for evaluating conditions and enacting procedures during a pandemic (see [Pandemic Response Tiered Guidelines](#)). This system includes minor accommodations (heightened sanitizing, signage with hygiene reminders, etc.) through major disruptions of service (suspension of programs and meeting room use, limited public access, etc.) and up to complete closure of Library District facilities and suspension of public services. It is updated whenever new guidance is received from health professionals. The Library Director or designee is responsible for enacting these procedures when conditions warrant.

Minimum Staffing Level

Minimum staffing level to provide public services is defined as:

Library: three employees with a minimum classification of Library Assistant I (or equivalent, with Manager approval) present during all hours the Library building is open to the public.

Bookmobile: two employees with a minimum classification of Library Assistant I present during all hours the Bookmobile is open to the public.

If minimum staffing levels cannot be met, the Library Director may reduce open hours and/or close the Library facility or suspend Bookmobile service. (see [Emergency Closure Policy](#)).

If the Library District is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any absences allowed as Sick Leave or Administrative Leave with Pay.