

Proactive Pandemic and Public Health Policy

The following proactive policy provides library staff guidance in the event of pandemics, epidemics, public health concerns, and public infection concerns. The Library Director is encouraged and authorized to:

1. Take actions in accordance with the recommendations and edicts of the Westford Health Department and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (such as hand washing, cough containment, use of personal protective equipment, social distancing, etc.).
2. Promote staff inoculation in accordance with Board of Health's demographic priorities and guidelines, identifying high-risk staff for immediate Health Department inoculation.
3. Enforce the Westford Board of Health's exclusion edict.
4. Enact and enforce a "Go home if sick" policy whereby staff arriving to work sick, or becoming ill during the day are given a mask and sent home.
5. Follow the Westford Health Department mechanism for illness surveillance and centralized reporting.
6. Waive the requirement for a doctor's notification of illness during the height of any pandemic, epidemic or public health emergency.
7. Calculate and communicate the financial impact of staff absences and leaves to Town officials and the Finance Department.
8. Follow a Continuity of Operation plan that includes cross training, remote access, single point service access, reduced hours of service and *authorized* staff working from home.
9. Link the Departmental website to the Westford Health Department Information site.

The Board of Library Trustees establishes for any public health emergency, epidemic or pandemic an emergency Minimum Staffing Level of four persons per shift with appropriate specialties and sufficient security per shift, as determined by the 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.

Depending upon the severity, virulence and duration of a public health emergency, pandemic or public infection, the Library Trustees and Administration will, with Health Department input, consider restrictions on work-related travel, suspension of story times and other library programs to discourage public gatherings and to promote social distancing, reduction or suspension of meeting room use and suspension of Homebound service for the protection of patrons and staff.

Approved and Voted by the Board of Library Trustees: 10/5/09; Revised 7.8.19; Revised 3.13.20.