



## **Pandemic Illness Policy & Response Plan**

The Geneva Public Library (“the Library”) strives to maintain a safe workplace and protect the health of employees, patrons, visitors, or others in the event of a severe pandemic illness such as influenza. The Library also wants to ensure the continuity of business operations in the event of a severe pandemic illness.

### **1. Guidance**

Efforts for an effective response will be followed by recommendations issued by public health authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other governmental agencies. When guidance on the Library’s response differs across multiple authorities, the Library will follow directives from the Ontario County Department of Public Health as long as such directives are in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

### **2. Transmission Protection**

All employees are asked to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of pandemic illness in the workplace. We encourage employees to assist in reducing the transmission of pandemic illness by following CDC recommendations, which may include but are not limited to: frequent hand washing with warm, soapy water, using hand sanitizer, covering mouths with tissues when sneezing and coughing, and discarding used tissues.

### **2. Staying Home When Ill**

The Library provides employees with paid time off benefits to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness. During flu season and/or some other pandemic illness, it is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing influenza-like symptoms including, but not limited to: fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, diarrhea, vomiting, and fatigue. The CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

### 3. Work Schedules

A severe pandemic illness could result in a significant level of absenteeism. Some employees may be unable to work if they become ill due to the virus while others may need to remain home to care for ill family members or to provide care for children during school closings. The Library has provisions in place to allow staff to work remotely in order to ensure an efficient workplace and employee productivity during various situations, including the event of a severe pandemic illness. During this time, unless otherwise notified in consultation with the Library's Emergency Closing Policy, normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place.

Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during a severe pandemic illness should take steps as early as possible to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, employees might want to arrange for alternative sources of childcare should schools close and/or speak with supervisors about the potential to work remotely or on an alternative work schedule if necessary.

### 4. Confidentiality of Medical Information

The Library treats any medical information obtained from an employee or an employee's health care provider, including any voluntary disclosure that the employee has contracted an illness, as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of illness-related medical information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis and only as necessary to prevent or slow the spread of the illness at work, while maintaining confidentiality to the extent reasonably possible. Information will be shared with government officials only if required by law.

### 5. Library Pandemic Response Plan

The following are general guidelines for a pandemic. Plans may need to adjust depending on conditions of the specific pandemic, and recommendations from Ontario County, the City of Geneva, the Geneva City School District, the Pioneer Library System (PLS), New York State, and other authorities.

**In the event that Library staffing falls below the minimal level, or if a quarantine has been issued by a public health authority, the Library will move immediately to Level 4.**

#### Business as Usual – Preparedness.

- All Library services are provided as scheduled.
- Cleaning and health supplies are regularly restocked.
- Staff is informed on general pandemic risks and responses.
- The Director will check that emergency contact information for all staff is accurate and up to date.

#### Level 1 – Business as Usual but staff are on alert.

- Online resources for reliable information about the pandemic are posted on the Library's website and social media.
- Staff are informed about risks, safety supply instructions, and preventative measures, and are educated about how to find, interpret, and share reliable information with the public.
- Assessment and restocking of sanitation supplies will be made.
- Staff will sanitize frequently touched areas.
- Staff business trips deemed too risky for travel may be cancelled by the Director.
- Meetings/programs of large gatherings may be deemed too risky, and thus postponed or cancelled
- The Director and Board of Trustees ("Board") President will regularly assess risks and plan appropriate responses.
- Preparations for Level 2 are made; otherwise, business as usual.

Level 2 – *Library will restructure services.*

- Changes to Library services will be announced on the website, social media, and other marketing channels.
- Staff will report to work unless directed otherwise, but should be prepared for their duties and responsibilities to shift temporarily.
- Patrons and staff will follow the guidelines of the Library’s Personal Protective Equipment Policy, if in place.
- All borrowed materials must be placed in a book drop, which may then be sanitized/quarantined.
- Children’s toys will be removed to discourage prolonged library visits.
- Public computers/laptops will be rearranged and some may be shut down to encourage social distancing.
- Seating areas will be rearranged to encourage social distancing; unnecessary furniture may be removed.
- Programs, outreach, and external group meetings of more than 5 people will be canceled, unless they are deemed essential by the Director or the Board.
- Acceptance of item donations may be limited.
- Staff will not bring in food to share, or accept food from patrons.
- PTO is granted through normal procedures, with the realization that notice may be less than usual due to illness or caretaking for an ill family member.
- Preparations for Level 3 are made.

Level 3 – *Library will limit building access and services.*

- Changes to Library services will be announced on the website, social media, and other marketing channels.
- The Director and Board will decide which staff are responsible for reporting to the building based on how access to library spaces are restricted.
- Remote working schedules for staff may be implemented.
- Open hours may be restricted.
- Patrons and staff will follow the guidelines of the Library’s Personal Protective Equipment Policy, if in place.
- Patrons will be asked to wear masks and maintain social distancing.
- Curbside pickup services will be provided.
- The Library will remain open for circulation, quick browsing, and quick reference.
- Public computers will not be accessible, though wireless printing or scanning may be available.
- The Reference Desk will be closed, moving the Reference clerk to the Main Desk.
- Two staff members will be scheduled on the Main Desk for all open hours.
- All in-house programs and meetings regardless of size will be cancelled.
- The Library may shift to virtual programming and pick-up kits.
- Only the Main Floor bathrooms will be accessible to patrons,.
- All seating areas will be removed to discourage patrons from lingering in the building.
- The Community Room will act as a quarantine area for incoming materials.
- All returns must be made to the outdoor bookdrop and designated staff will quarantine all incoming items.
- Interlibrary Loan may be canceled by PLS.
- Late fees will be waived.
- Item donations of any kind will not be accepted.
- Preparations for Level 4 are made.

Level 4 – *Library will be closed to the public entirely.*

- After consulting with the Board, the Director will close the Library to public use if either of the following criteria are met:

- On the recommendation of Ontario County, the City of Geneva, the Geneva City School District, the Pioneer Library System, New York State, and other authorities.
  - Minimum staffing levels cannot be reached.
- Book drops will be blocked off and patrons will be unable to return items.
- As funding and staffing allow, virtual services that do not require direct public contact may continue.
- The Board will decide what public and support services to maintain, as well as how to administer core operations including but not limited to:
  - Payroll;
  - Communication with staff;
  - Maintaining the website, social media, and signage to keep the public informed on the Library status and pandemic response;
  - Reference questions may be answered by phone and email;
  - Caring for Library pets and plants;
  - Security of the Library building, collections, and equipment;
  - Ongoing construction project administration;
  - Preparations to resume full or limited Library services.

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