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## PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

### 1. Purpose

The Newark Public Library has adopted this Pandemic Response Plan in compliance with New York State Labor Law §27-C to implement operational plans in the event of certain declared public health emergencies including, but not limited to, novel coronavirus (COVID-19) or other communicable disease or pandemic illness.

The primary goals of Newark Public Library's Pandemic Response Plan are to establish:

- The roles and responsibilities during all phases of a public health emergency
- Preparedness activities and response protocols
- Coordination and decision making for the continuation of operations

The Pandemic Response Plan is designed to ensure precautionary, response, and recovery measures to a public health emergency involving a communicable disease threatening to impact or immediately impacting the library's staff, trustees, volunteers, and/or community members.

### 2. Administration

The library Director, as authorized by the Board of Trustees, administers the Pandemic Response Plan. This includes activating the plan, establishing an internal communications network, and coordinating all response and recovery activities. If, for any reason, the Director is unable or unavailable to administer the plan, administrative authority shall be passed to the Youth Services Librarian.

### 3. Definitions

The following terms are hereby defined for the purposes of this policy:

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Equipment worn to minimize exposure to communicable disease or pandemic illness as mandated by local, state, or federal law and/or any Executive Orders related to the public health emergency or mandates issued by federal agencies including the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- **Employee:** Any person employed by the Newark Public Library regardless of job classification or title.
- **Contractor:** Any individual performing paid services for the library but not an employee of the Newark Public Library.
- **Essential:** Designation made to an employee or contractor whose duties require them to be physically present at the Newark Public Library to perform their job, OR tasks that are vital or necessary to the safety or operational needs of the library.
- **Non-essential:** Designation made to an employee whose duties do not require them to be physically present at the Newark Public Library, OR tasks that are not vital or necessary to the safety or operational needs of the library.

- **Communicable disease:** Illness caused by an infectious agent that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its byproducts or via inanimate environment or object to a susceptible person or persons.
- **Retaliatory Action:** The discharge, suspension, demotion, penalization, discrimination, or other adverse employment action taken against any employee.

#### **4. Essential Employees or Duties**

In the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, the library Director shall be designated as an Essential Employee and is permitted to be physically present at the Newark Public Library to perform tasks essential to their job or the operations of the library including, but not limited to, maintenance to the facilities that could otherwise threaten or pose a risk to the library's facilities if not performed; bookkeeping such as accounts payable, accounts receiving, and processing payroll; and/or accepting, sorting, and opening postal mail or packages.

These essential tasks may be delegated to a specific employee or contractor at the discretion of the Director. This employee or contractor is permitted to be physically present at the Newark Public Library to perform only the designated essential tasks as assigned.

#### **5. Telecommute/Work from Home**

In the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, the Newark Public Library's Working Remotely Policy will be implemented.

All employees whose duties and routine tasks require the use of a computer and/or internet access, will be provided library-issued equipment necessary to perform those duties and tasks as needed.

The Director will provide instructions for downloading/installing any software for employees to perform their duties remotely. The Director will also provide instructions for transferring office phone lines to personal cell phones as applicable to the employee's job description.

#### **6. In-Person Reporting**

The Director will coordinate the schedule for employees and contractors reporting to the library in-person to perform essential tasks so that the Newark Public Library remains in compliance with the state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce. No employee or contractor is permitted to report to the Newark Public Library without authorization from the Director.

#### **7. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE as required by local, state or federal laws or Executive Orders will be provided by the Newark Public Library. As per OSHA guidelines, employees are not financially responsible for mandated PPE. Employees may provide their own PPE if they desire and if it is in compliance with all local, state, or federal laws or Executive Orders and CDC and OSHA regulations.

The Newark Public Library will provide any necessary training for mandated PPE including proper use and disposal.

The Newark Public Library will keep a supply of PPE in storage in the event a public health emergency is immediately declared. All employees will be aware of the storage location of PPE. The Director will monitor PPE supply levels and replenish the supply as needed in accordance with the library's Procurement Policy.

Failure to comply with PPE mandates may result in disciplinary action.

## **8. Exposure to Communicable Disease**

If required by local, state or federal laws or Executive Orders, mandatory, continuous health screening practices will be implemented for all employees.

In the event an employee is exposed to/has close contact with (as defined by the CDC) a known case of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency, exhibits symptoms of such disease, or tests positive for such disease, the following procedures will be immediately implemented:

- The employee must not report to the library or they must leave the premises immediately, if already at work, and notify the Director.
- The Director will notify both local and state health departments as directed by those departments and will follow guidance specific to workplaces with a suspected or positive case when provided.
- The Director and the employee will determine which other staff members were in close contact and possibly exposed to the communicable disease and notify those individuals while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act.
- Employees determined to have been exposed will follow current CDC guidelines for isolation, quarantine and monitoring.
- Employees should seek testing to determine status as soon as possible and as advised by the CDC and keep the Director informed of the results.

## **9. Cleaning Contaminated Areas**

The work area(s) used by the employee will be cleaned, vacuumed, and disinfected including work spaces, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like computers, tablets, keyboards, and other office supplies. The area(s) will be cleaned by library staff using CDC-recommended cleaning solutions and wearing appropriate PPE.

## **10. Contact Tracing**

The Director will adhere to local and state guidance regarding Contact Tracing which may include reporting or contacting other employees, contractors, visitors, and patrons who voluntarily supplied their information for the purpose of Contact Tracing who may have been in close contact with the employee suspected or confirmed to have the communicable disease.

The Director will keep the health status of employees confidential.

## **11. Compensation**

The Newark Public Library will adhere to all local, state, or federal laws or Executive Orders regarding sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to this communicable disease.

## **12. Returning to Work**

If an employee is exposed to the communicable disease or exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease, they must follow all CDC, local and state health department directives which may include being tested for that communicable disease and/or quarantining for a specified amount of time at home.

If an employee has a suspected or confirmed case they must not report back to work until they have met all criteria in consultation with a healthcare provider and in accordance with the CDC, local, state, and/or federal criteria specific to the communicable disease.

All other employees will be provided instructions for returning to work dependent on the determination of risk of exposure by the CDC, local or state health department.

### **13. Mitigating Risk**

Reporting to work following a known-exposure to the communicable disease, having symptoms consistent with the communicable disease, or reporting to work following a positive test without being medically cleared to return to work as defined above will be considered a violation of library policy and may result in disciplinary action.

The Newark Public Library will not take any retaliatory action for employees not reporting to work due to a suspected or confirmed case of the communicable disease. Employees must follow established protocols for reporting an absence.

### **14. Continuation of Operations**

In the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease, the Director will address operations according to the following outline. Some circumstances will require deviation from this sequence in order to best serve the safety and health of the library staff and community.

- Assess the emergency declaration as it relates to the library's facilities, materials, staff, or community.
- Notify the appropriate persons including employees and the Board of Trustees.
- Determine the next steps, with the information available, regarding:
  - Services or service points
  - Hours of operation
  - Personnel
- Draft a press release or statement to the public.
- Document in detail the sequence or timeline of events before, during, and after the declared public health emergency.
- Prepare for recovery.

### **15. Communication**

Once approved by the Board of Trustees, this Pandemic Response Plan will be published in a clear and conspicuous location at the Newark Public Library and on the library's website. A copy will be provided to all employees.

### **16. Ongoing Use Evaluation**

This Pandemic Response Plan was as required by law with the health and safety of the library's employees and community as the top priority.

The Pandemic Response Plan will be evaluated annually by the Director and Board of Trustees and updated as needed.

Questions or concerns regarding Newark Public Library's Pandemic Response Plan should be directed to the Director.

*Adopted by the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees November 12, 2020  
Amended February 10, 2022*