

POLICY

Category: Access & Facilities

Number: E.03

Title: Public Health Emergency Policy
Effective Date: February 13, 2021
Authorized By: Library Board of Trustees
Last Revision or Review: New

In the event of a public health emergency, the Cudahy Family Library may need to make immediate modifications to policies and procedures to comply with government orders enacted to slow the spread of an illness and to protect the safety of the public. While every emergency will be unique and require different specific responses, most public health emergencies will require quick action. This policy empowers the Library Director to make timely decisions in cooperation with all the appropriate government agencies while striving to ensure the continuation of its core public service activities.

Public health emergencies include, but are not limited to, epidemics and pandemics. An epidemic is a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time. A pandemic is an outbreak of an infectious disease that is prevalent over a whole country or the world. Serious outbreaks may necessitate a slow recovery that may impact the Library for several weeks or longer.

During a public health emergency, the Library will follow the guidelines for public facilities provided by local, state, and federal agencies in regards to preparing and cleaning the workplace, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and proper hygiene practices. The Library Director will keep the Cudahy Family Library Board up to date on any changes to current operations and will make recommendations to the Library Board during the emergency. Changes to the Library's operation and services will also be communicated to the public via the Library's website, social media accounts, and the telephone messaging system.

Library Closure

The Library will temporarily close its building to the public if there is a mandate, order, or recommendation for closure issued by the Cudahy Health Department. Curbside service for patrons to access library materials will be offered if it is not included in the closure order. The exterior book drops will remain open for patrons to return materials.

In the event of a closure, circulation rules may be modified in consultation with the Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS). Material due dates may be extended,

patron holds suspended, expired library cards may be extended or renewed, and overdue charges waived for a determined period. The MCFLS delivery system of materials between member libraries may be temporarily discontinued or the delivery schedule may be adjusted. Returned library materials may be placed in quarantine with the length of quarantine being determined by consensus on the system level or by the Library Director.

The Cudahy Family Library may also have to close if there are not enough healthy employees to maintain the hours of operation and basic library services implemented for the public health emergency.

Reduction of Services

If the Library remains open during the public health emergency or when it reopens after a closure, there may be a need to have a reduction in services. The availability of library staff and safety recommendations from health agencies will be considered by the Library Director in determining the level of library service. Examples of safety recommendations include social distancing, wearing protective face coverings, additional cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces, quarantining of returned materials, and limiting the number of individuals in gatherings.

The reduction of services may include any number of the following:

- hours of operation reduced
- limit in-person services such as copy and fax machines, shredder
- a lower building occupancy limit
- public seating capacity limited
- study and meeting rooms closed
- booked meeting room reservations cancelled
- meeting rooms available limited capacity to comply with gathering limits
- Computer Lab closed or a limited number of computers available
- children's toy collections unavailable
- outreach activities to children unavailable
- reference assistance limited to telephone and online
- programs, classes, events, and story times cancelled
- closing restroom stalls and sinks, drinking fountains

The amount of time the Library remains in the state of reduced services will be determined by the Library Director and Library Board based on the directives and guidelines from the health agencies and in some cases, the administration of the City of Cudahy. The reduction of services will be eventually restored by the gradual addition of services over time.

Employee Work Rules

Library employees will follow the City of Cudahy's policies during a public health emergency. Written specifically for the emergency, the policy will supersede the Library's personnel policies in terms of time off, vacations, and travel; sick leave, leave of absences, and FMLA; and how to proceed with illness related or unrelated to the emergency, including quarantine requirements. The policy will also specify proper hygiene protocol to help prevent the spread and infections rate among all city and library employees.

Like city employees, the library staff may be authorized to work from home with prior approval and set parameters from the Library Board, as recommended by the Library Director.