

Meredith Public Library
Pandemic Policy

I: Purpose

To establish the protocol to be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the library may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local public health officials. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or other physical crises. 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.

II: Definitions

Pandemic A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

Appropriate Staffing Level For the purposes of this policy, Appropriate Staffing Level refers to the minimum number of qualified staff necessary to provide service safely and efficiently, as determined by the Library Director or his/her designee.

III: Library Closure

Public Health Mandate

The Meredith Public Library will close due to pandemic in the event of a mandate order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.

Discretionary Service Level Changes

At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate social distancing for health and safety.

In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or designee will maintain communication with staff, Library Board of Trustees, and the Town Manager.

IV: School Closure Due to Pandemic

In the event that the Inter-Lakes School District school is closed due to pandemic illness, the Meredith Public Library may remain open, but may reduce hours and services, unless one of the aforementioned requirements for closing is also met. All library programs, special events, and meeting room reservations will be canceled. Hours may be reduced and services may be restricted on any day in which Inter-Lakes schools are closed due to pandemic-related illness.

V: Staffing

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as three healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 40-hour workweek per full-time employee, and no more than 29 hour workweek per part-time employee. An

inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than two consecutive days will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director or designee.

- Increased health/safety measures for staff (e.g., wearing of gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.);
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., closing floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Social distancing practices in public areas;
- Reduction of open hours;
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations;
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;
- Closure of the library.

If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established Personnel policy. In the event of closure, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

VI: Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on wmur.com, Facebook, and the library website.

VII: Prioritization of Services

Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Information services for the public, both in-person and online;
- Payroll;
- Accounts Payable;
- Facility Maintenance.

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director or designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff.