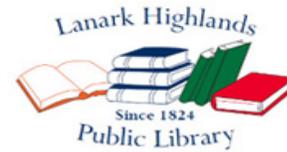

Lanark Highlands Public Library



Policy Type:	Operational	Policy Number:	OP-12
Policy Title:	Pandemic Policy	Initial Policy Approval	May 2020
		Year of Next Review:	May 2023 (or during a pandemic)

Section 1: Background

Pandemic flu spreads the same way as seasonal flu - through droplets contained in sneezes and coughs and by hand contact. Basic precautions can greatly reduce its spread.

These precautions include social distancing, frequent hand washing and in some cases social isolation or even quarantine. For public institutions such as schools, libraries, museums and municipal offices, closure is a public health imperative as are restrictions on public and social gatherings.

Section 2: What is a Pandemic Plan?

This plan describes how our organization will continue to function during or after some kind of emergency, disaster or event. It involves planning how our key services or products can be continued, and the recovery of key business and systems.

Lanark Highlands Public Library's Pandemic Plan is different from a general emergency preparedness plan. With an emergency preparedness plan, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building, or begin rebuilding, almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm, or if there is a utility shortage such as hydro, gas, etc.). If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, such as a pandemic flu, the organization must plan for the contingency of businesses, social organizations and public institutions being closed down by order of municipal, provincial or federal governments.

Recovery from an influenza pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or some other physical crisis. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the Library can be maintained for several weeks or months with limited staff due to an influenza pandemic. Lanark Highlands Public Library requires a specific plan during an influenza pandemic that will assist in resuming business in a methodical manner.

During a pandemic, up to 35% of employees may be absent at one time due to illness. Additional numbers may be absent for other reasons. The following are various reasons why employees will be unable to work during a pandemic outbreak:

- Employee is sick or quarantined (suspected, actual or post-infectious)
- Employees have volunteered to assist in the community, including helping with emergency services
- Employees who need to care for school aged children, if sick or if schools are closed, or to care for other family members (elderly, or other age family members)
- Employees who choose/prefer to stay at home or because of mandatory order by public health officials
- Employees who wish to avoid being in public spaces and/or gatherings

Section 3: Pandemic Characteristics

The pandemic virus may spread rapidly leaving little or no time to prepare. The pandemic will be widespread with simultaneous outbreaks. Municipalities may not be able to rely on neighbouring jurisdictions to assist and there will be stresses on health, emergency, and essential service resources due to illness, absenteeism and high demand. There will be shortages of personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies. There may also be scrutiny and heightened anxiety from the public & staff.

Section 4: Objectives of the Plan

This Pandemic Response Plan is intended to:

- Define critical operations that must be continued, those operations that can be postponed for a period of time and those operations that can be postponed indefinitely.
- Provide a planned transition for normal operations to emergency operations
- Provide a level of security and safety for employees.
- Manage successfully through a pandemic and reduce the disruption to services.

Section 5: Plan Activation

Significant consideration must be given to the decision to activate the plan. The risks inherent with the delay in implementing the plan must be considered and conversely the premature activation of the plan. Regular updates should be sought through the Township office, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit and the World Health Organization.

The Library CEO shall have the authority to suspend the delivery of services based on the resources available and to redeploy staff as necessary.

Once the plan has been activated, communications with staff (both at work and at home) and with contracted services such as the janitor must be maintained.

Section 6: Essential Services

The Lanark Highlands Public Library does not provide essential services to the public, as defined under municipal or provincial emergency orders. However, internal to the Lanark Highlands Public Library there are three (4) essential services critical to business continuity for employees and contracted services.

Payroll & Finance:

Payroll & Finance are identified as essential to the Library because during a pandemic the Library will make every attempt to keep staffing levels and resulting wages consistent and the Library must pay suppliers for goods and services ordered and received.

In the event that the CEO is ill, weekly payroll submission will be verified and submitted to the Treasurer by designates in the following order:

1. Assistant Librarian (Romalda Park)
2. Library Clerk (Sharon Turner)
3. Library Clerk (Amy Turner). Payroll submission will be verified by the Treasurer upon return to work.

Technology Services:

Technology services are essential as a means of communication with staff and with the public to provide continued

updates on the Library's website and Facebook page, maintain the electronic resources and to post public announcements of service levels.

The CEO will maintain the critical parts of the website, or if ill, will designate a staff member to maintain the critical parts of the website such as the home page and announcement areas. A designate will also be responsible for updating the Library's Facebook page.

Communications:

Internal communications is essential in order to keep staff aware of current service levels, duty assignments and chain of authority. Communication with the janitor must also be maintained. A current list of all staff is maintained by the CEO and circulated via email and a copy is kept on the bulletin board in the staff office. This list must be kept near the telephone for easy reference.

CEO Duties:

Deadlines for grants, board reports, subscription expirations/registrations and Ministry reporting must be maintained as well as participation in information sessions and emptying the book drop.

Section 7: Hierarchy of Decision Making and Reporting Responsibilities

In the event that the CEO is ill, the Assistant Librarian will assume control of the immediate functions of the library to maintain service. The CEO will assign signing authority to the designate at the appropriate level to maintain regular functioning of the library.

Section 8: Employee Protection Measures

The Library is committed to the health and safety of its employees, and will endeavour to take every step necessary to ensure this commitment is upheld. Depending on the circumstances and severity of the pandemic, in addition to mandates communicated by local health authorities, the Library will uphold its responsibility, legislatively and humanely, to provide employees with a safe and healthy environment during a pandemic outbreak.

- Education in proper sanitizing of hands, work areas and commonly touched surfaces will be reviewed.
- Social distancing will be encouraged.
- Practices for daily disinfection of all work surfaces and public areas will be put into place and supplies (See Appendix B) for staff will be available.
- Hand sanitizer will be supplied at the circulation desk and office area.
- Staff who are ill will be advised to stay home until the appropriate quarantine period, as outlined by public health, has passed.
- Through continued communications and collaborations with local health authorities and other key groups involved in pandemic planning and follow up, the Library will ensure that all employees receive the most up to date information and relevant legislation in relation to the pandemic and will communicate the information to employees in a timely and appropriate manner.

Section 9: Service Levels and Reallocation of Staff

Situation #1: Library is closed down by order of government

In the event that the library is closed down by order of municipal, provincial or federal governments, the Library will attempt to maintain the current levels of employment for each employee. Factors that may impede this goal would include loss of revenues (incl. local grant), and/or lack of meaningful work. Whether staff work from home or at the library and whether their schedule can be flexed during the pandemic will depend on a number of variables including:

- Applicable government mandates
- Whether meaningful work can be done at home
- If the nature of the task requires staff to be in the building
- Whether tasks are time sensitive

Situation #2: Library is Open

Service levels for the public will largely be determined by relevant legislation, our ability to adhere to mandatory safety guidelines and availability of staff.

During a pandemic, up to 35% of employees may be absent at one time for a number of reasons (See Section 2). Regardless of which phase of Re-Opening (Appendix A) we are in, if absenteeism is an issue our response will be:

1. Attempt to fill the shift with another staff member
2. Attempt to fill the shift using the CEO
3. Reduce hours of operation to adjust for reduced staffing levels

In addition to absenteeism, the hours of operation may need to be reduced to account for extra cleaning at the beginning and end of each day.

Section 10: Service Levels and Reallocation of Staff

Programs and outreach services for adults and children will be suspended at the discretion of the CEO based on reports, recommendations and mandates from the Township Office, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, the provincial government and the World Health Organization.

Section 11: Cross Training of Staff

For the following essential services there will be at least one alternative person trained to assume the duties of the job:

- Payroll preparation and submission
- Cataloguing of new library materials
- Processing of new library materials
- Updating our social media platforms and website

Section 12: Staff Communication Network

A current list of all staff will be maintained by the CEO and distributed to each staff member. This list will contain home phone numbers and e-mail addresses. The CEO and Assistant Librarian will communicate with employees throughout the closure period.

Staff will be expected to check the websites of the Library and the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit (<https://healthunit.org/>) and their emails regularly for updates on the pandemic.

Section 13: Contact with Contractors and Supply Deliveries

In the event of a closure of a branch, the cleaner will be notified. Cleaning services may be suspended until the branch reopens.

If the CEO and Assistant Librarian are absent and there is a problem with an essential facility function, such as, heat, security or water overflow, any staff person discovering the issue is authorized to contact the Township office for remedial action.

Section 14: Recovery Plan

The Lanark Highlands Public Library understands that all plans to return to work and re-open the library must be based on recommendations from the Township, health specialists and the Governments of Ontario and Canada. Relevant plans can be found in Appendix A.

Section 15: Adoption and review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Board every three years or at the beginning of a pandemic. Revisions will be made as necessary.

*Sources: Mississippi Mills Public Library
Perth & District Union Public Library
Centre Hastings Public Library*

Appendix A: Return to Work/Library Re-opening Plan

The Lanark Highlands Public Library understands that all plans to return to work and re-open the library must be based on recommendations from health specialists, the Township Office and the Governments of Ontario and Canada. The following is a guide for the most likely scenario, where the country/province is opened up in stages. This is a fluid document and will be revisited and revised regularly as more information is made available. The timeline will be set once the Government has issued further directives.

Phase 1: Preparation (Some staff in building, no public service)

- Custodial services return – thorough cleaning and sanitization focusing on external doors (handles, frames and windows) drop box, interior door handles, computer stations and surfaces
- CEO ensures all books set aside for quarantine are put away, necessary signage is posted, material quarantine space/protocol established
- CEO procures necessary equipment for re-opening based on government recommendations (plexiglass for front desk, hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, etc.)
- In consultation with staff, CEO develops a plan for social distancing and movement throughout the library
- Front-line staff continue to work from home.
- New materials are catalogued, processed and shelf-ready

Phase 2: Staff Return

- Remaining staff return to the library, following social distancing guidelines – limited in-library hours - online work can still be completed from home
- Computers and circulation systems updated
- Any work files/notes transferred back to library
- Processing work (returned books, new magazines entered) completed
- Interlibrary Loan services re-established so books can arrive in advance of opening (if it is being offered)
- Contact lending libraries regarding Interlibrary Loans that arrived just before the library closed to ask for extensions
- Training in new cleaning/service protocols completed
- Answer phone calls/reference
- Library furniture rearranged to fulfill social distancing guidelines
- Create all necessary signage
- Begin to inform the public that the library will re-open soon (tentatively)

Phase 3: Restoration of Some Public Service

- Staff work more in-library hours – streamline cleaning protocols and social distancing practices
- Planning for full service in place
- Curbside pick-up of materials completed outside of building at pre-arranged times following established protocols – patrons do not enter building
- Limited porch delivery available to patrons who cannot make it to the library??
- Hours will be limited to account for extra cleaning and time needed to select patron's materials

Phase 4: Increased Service

- Staff work in-library following a new regular schedule, however public hours will likely be decreased
- Patrons may enter library to borrow materials but the number of people entering at one time will be aligned with required guidelines
- Direct interaction with library staff limited to ensure social distancing protocol
- Patrons may engage in conversation with staff (ask for assistance finding books, reference questions, tech help, etc.) provided social distancing and hygiene protocols are followed (library staff member behind plexiglass or a minimum of 2 meters away)
- Staff will disinfect commonly touched surfaces throughout the day – a more thorough cleaning each day after closing

- Online programming only (TD Summer Program)
- Children's toys and craft table are not available
- One computer station available
- Printing/scanning/faxing services resume with cleaning protocols in place
- New Interlibrary Loan requests can be made (if other libraries are participating)
- Limited computer stations & seating available to maintain social distancing protocols

Phase 5: More Service

- Library is fully open to the public and all services are provided in an altered manner to allow enhanced cleaning and sanitization and social distancing (e.g. limit on people who can enter at one time, directional signage, computers sanitized between users, use of every other computer station, headphones removed, encourage use of own laptop or library Chromebook)
- In house programming offered for smaller groups that can be spaced out (e.g. movie nights with limited audience)

Phase 6: All Services Resumed

- Library is open to the public with no extra precautions in place
- Programming and services return to pre-pandemic norm

Appendix B: Personal Protective Equipment, Cleaning Supplies & Protocols

- Disposable gloves
- Masks
- Sanitizing wipes (TB Ovirir & Lysol)
- Public hand sanitizer
- Staff hand sanitizer
- Public/staff signage (hand-washing, symptoms of COVID-19, computer usage procedure)
- Procedures for staff (how to clean/prepare your work station, how to safely remove gloves, etc etc)
- Paper towel
- Disinfectant spray
- Enter/exiting protocols
- Sterilizing workstation protocols

