

DELAWARE COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY (DCDL)
PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLAN

PANDEMIC DISEASE:

The World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) monitor conditions that could lead to pandemic influenza, a worldwide outbreak of disease for which there is no immunity. If pandemic influenza occurs, it is estimated that it would move around the world in waves, each lasting from six to eight weeks. The entire pandemic could last twelve to eighteen months. Updated information is available at www.pandemicflu.gov.

When pandemic influenza occurs, employee absences could reach 30-40%. Essential community services such as power, communications, mail and deliveries could be disrupted. Library staff could be at special risk because our buildings are open to the public. During a pandemic, DCDL will follow all county, state, or federal directives to limit or close non-essential services. The following plan outlines the procedures in place to protect our staff and library patrons.

PURPOSE OF PLAN:

- Prevent and reduce loss of life. Protect staff and patrons from pandemic disease.
- Cooperate and coordinate with federal, state and local health agencies.
- Protect essential library services, facilities, equipment, materials, and records.
- Minimize damage to and loss of property.
- Ensure complete return to full library operation as quickly as possible.

PREPAREDNESS PLANNING TEAM:

Director, Deputy Director, Communications Manager, Facilities and Administrative Support Manager.

The Preparedness Planning Team will make decisions during a pandemic infectious disease outbreak regarding DCDL health protection supplies, communication about the pandemic with staff and public, curtailment of services and/or closing of libraries, and staffing assignments during the outbreak. The team will work closely with the Board of Trustees on policy decisions.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TOPICS:

- Hygiene
- Staffing and Services
- Communication
- Recovery

HYGIENE:

1. A list of good hygiene practices will be posted on all staff bulletin boards.
2. Hand sanitizers and tissues will be provided at all public service desks, at public computer reservation stations and all staff work areas.

3. Hand washing awareness signs will be posted in all restrooms.
4. Staff will be provided with disinfecting wipes and disposable gloves to assist in keeping work areas sanitized. Priorities include door handles, hand rails, telephones, and keyboards.
5. Disposable gloves will be provided for employees to use when needed when interacting with patrons or handling materials.
6. Staff is encouraged to use good personal infection measures (cover one's mouth and nose when coughing/sneezing, wash hands often, avoid touching one's eyes, nose or mouth, etc.)

STAFFING AND SERVICES:

During a pandemic every effort will be made to maintain library services. Due dates, renewals, and overdue policies may be relaxed during this time.

The Planning Team will authorize any needed service changes in consultation with the DCDL Board of Trustees and the Delaware General Health District.

Public meeting room use, public programs, and public use of library equipment may be curtailed or eliminated.

Staff may be re-assigned to a work area in a different area than usual, depending upon available personnel.

All staff will be asked to make sure their emergency contact information is up to date.

Staff that are ill will be strongly encouraged, and may be required, to stay home at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (less than 100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or free of signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

DCDL recognizes that employee absences during a pandemic might be due to personal illness, family illness, community containment measures and quarantines, school closures, and public transportation closures. An employee will use accumulated sick leave or vacation or unpaid leave for such an absence.

The Planning Team will determine any changes in library hours or library closings due to the number of employees off work or public health directives. Staff might be instructed to stay home.

Essential employees required to be on site in the event of an extended closure will be identified by the Planning Team and training will be provided in necessary tasks.

COMMUNICATION:

Information from public health authorities and referral information about the pandemic will be widely disseminated via Health Department and DCDL print and online resources. This will include awareness of symptoms, how the disease is spread, preventative measures, and how to care for someone who is ill.

The Planning Team will use the Crisis Communication Tree &/or the emergency text messaging system as found in the Disaster Response Plan if needed to alert staff to critical news affecting library services. Up-to-date information about the pandemic will also be provided to all staff via DCDL email, Intranet, and staff bulletin boards.

Changes in service and library hours necessitated by a pandemic will be publicized in print and online resources.

RECOVERY:

Full library services will be restored as conditions permit. Public programs and meeting room use will resume when recommended by public health authorities.

If libraries have been closed for the pandemic, infrastructure will be evaluated and cleaning may be necessitated before re-opening.

Staffing needs will be evaluated and a return to full staffing will be instituted as soon as possible, depending on staff health and building conditions.

3/2020