

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library
LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

Policy Type: Operational	Policy Number: OP-15
Policy Title: Epidemic/Pandemic	Policy Approval Date: 04/12/22
Chairperson: V. Duke	Policy Review Date: 03/26

Intent:

To establish a policy to guide the Muskoka Lakes Public Library (herein after referred to as the Library) in the event of an epidemic/pandemic or other public health emergency. Every effort will be made to ensure that the core business activities of the Library can be maintained with limited staff and reduced hours as determined by the Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board (herein after referred to as the Board) and CEO.

Regulations:

During any public health emergency, the Library may be required to take measures to help slow the spread of illness such as closing by order of township, district, local, provincial or federal health or government officials.

Procedures:

Section 1: Continuity of Operations Plan—Epidemic/Pandemic

With an emergency preparedness policy, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building or begin recovery work almost immediately after the event or crisis (i.e. fire or storm). With a serious infectious disease outbreak, recovery may be slow and limited staff, services and hours may be necessary for an extended period of time.

Section 2: Library Closure

The Library may temporarily close or limit services because of a public health emergency such as an epidemic/pandemic, if any of the following occur:

1. A mandate, order, or recommendation for closure is issued by the township, district, local, provincial or federal health or other government officials.
2. A Library employee has been diagnosed with the contagion.
3. The decision of the Board
4. The discretion of the CEO
5. There is insufficient staff to maintain basic service levels or to reduce the possible spread of the contagion.
6. The exterior book drop may be closed or kept open and cleared periodically.

The types of closure include:

1. *Complete Closure*: no staff in the building at any time.
2. *Library Closure with Essential Services Only*: Library employees may be required to work from home or on site during closures to perform necessary duties, as determined by the CEO.
3. *Library Closure with Reduced Services*:



Staff may :

- i. work inside the building, although the building is closed to the public
- ii. provide services to users in newly determined ways
- iii. provide outside pickup

Section 3: Communication

In the event of cancellation of services, programs, meeting room usage or library closures, Library staff, at the direction of the CEO (or designate) will:

1. Notify staff, board members, custodial staff and the public via email, social media and the Library website
2. Call or email scheduled program presenters, community room reservations, outreach sites, program attendees (if contact information is available)
3. Provide information regarding the epidemic/pandemic on the Library's website homepage
4. Post signage at the Library sites to update users.
5. Notify local media and other government entities as deemed necessary by the Board and/or CEO

Section 4: Human Resources

The Library's Human Resources Management Policy (OPHR-02) will continue to be followed in the event of an epidemic/pandemic or public health emergency while the Library remains operational. Pre-approved time off will be honoured unless voluntarily cancelled.

Section 5: Compensation in an Epidemic/Pandemic

In the event of an epidemic/pandemic, the CEO, with the support of the Board, will ensure that staff do not suffer loss of wages or benefits during a mandated quarantine period. The CEO will continue to be responsible for personnel matters.

Section 6: Staff with Child Care Concerns

In the event of school and day care closures due to an epidemic/pandemic, staff may use accrued leave or take unpaid time off to stay at home.

Section 7: Health and Safety

Employer: In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), the Board is responsible to ensure that reasonable precautions and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of staff.

CEO: The CEO is responsible for the development and enforcement of procedures related to providing service during an epidemic/pandemic and that staff are trained. Procedures may be required, but not limited to, outside pick-up, the handling of returned materials, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning and sanitizing materials and equipment, all surfaces and bathrooms. The CEO will also ensure that the required equipment for the health and safety of staff is provided – eg Personal Protective Equipment, keyboards.

Staff: All staff must follow the outlined procedures.

Section 8: Physical Distancing and Personal Protective Equipment

Based on recommendations by local, provincial or federal health officials, Library staff will implement and follow physical distancing within the Library building. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be



provided by the Library should it be deemed necessary for employees to wear such equipment when working in the library.

Section 9: Responsibility for Library Operations

The CEO, with the appropriate Township of Muskoka Lakes staff, will develop a process for addressing the critical needs of the Library if it is closed for an extended time (e.g. HVAC, plumbing, building checks, book drop, payroll and bill payment/banking considerations). If the CEO (or designate) is unable or unavailable to perform the requirements outlined in this policy, administrative authority for this policy and all Library operations shall be provided by the Board Chair.

Section 10: Disclaimer During Epidemic/Pandemic

- Outside pickup, staffing, phone hours and other services may change at any time during this closure. Updates will be posted on the Library's website and social media platforms as developments occur.
- Users are advised to wash hands before and after handling Library materials, avoid touching their face while reading and avoid sneezing or coughing onto items.
- It is recommended that for users who are immunosuppressed or otherwise susceptible to infection during the epidemic/pandemic to not borrow items from the library.

Related Documents

MLPL OP-17 Safety, Security and Emergencies in the Library

MLPL OPHR-02 Human Resource Management

Occupational Health and Safety Act

