



## **PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN**

### **PURPOSE**

The Howland Public Library has adopted this Pandemic Response Plan in compliance with New York State Labor Law §27-c to implement operational plans in the event of certain declared state disaster emergencies including, but not limited to, novel coronavirus (COVID-19) or other communicable disease or pandemic illness.

The primary goals of Howland Public Library's Pandemic Response Plan are to establish:

- The roles and responsibilities during all phases of a state disaster emergency
- Preparedness activities and response protocols
- Coordination and decision making for the continuation of operations

The Pandemic Response Plan is designed to ensure precautionary, response, and recovery measures to a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease threatening to impact or immediately impacting the library's staff, Trustees, volunteers, and/or community members.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The library Director, as authorized by the Board of Trustees, administers the Pandemic Response Plan. This includes activating the plan, establishing an internal communications network, and coordinating all response and recovery activities. If, for any reason, the Director is unable or unavailable to administer the plan, administrative authority shall be passed to Librarian II- Head of Reference.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following terms are hereby defined for the purposes of this policy:

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Equipment worn to minimize exposure to communicable disease or pandemic illness as mandated by local, state, or federal law and/or any Executive Orders related to the state disaster emergency or mandates issued by federal agencies including the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- **Employee:** Any person employed by the Howland Public Library regardless of job classification or title.
- **Essential:** Designation made to an employee whose duties require them to be physically present at the Howland Public Library to perform their job, OR tasks that are vital or necessary to the safety or operational needs of the library.
- **Non-essential:** Designation made to an employee whose duties do not require them to be physically present at the Howland Public Library, OR tasks that are not vital or necessary to the safety or operational needs of the library.
- **Communicable disease:** Illness caused by an infectious agent that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual.
- **Retaliatory Action:** The discharge, suspension, demotion, discrimination, or other adverse employment action taken against any employee.

## **ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES OR DUTIES**

In the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, the Director, Office Manager, and Facilities Manager shall be designated as Essential Employees and are permitted to be physically present at the Howland Public Library to perform tasks essential to their job or the operations of the library including, but not limited to, maintenance to the facilities that could otherwise threaten or pose a risk to the library's facilities if not performed; bookkeeping such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, and processing payroll; and/or accepting, sorting, and opening postal mail or packages. These essential tasks may be delegated to a specific employee at the discretion of the Director. These employees are permitted to be physically present at Howland Public Library to perform only the designated essential tasks as assigned.

Head of Technical Services, Head of Circulation, and all Librarians have limited responsibilities pertaining directly to the financial and physical operations of the Library. Each of these individuals may be designated by the Director as essential on a short term basis in order to use the library to obtain critical materials or perform core operations allowable by federal or state authorities.

## **TELECOMMUTE/WORK FROM HOME**

In the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, the Howland Public Library's Telecommuting Policy will be implemented. Each employee is responsible for ensuring they have access to an internet connection. If an employee does not have a computer suitable for completing work assignments they may borrow a laptop or computer owned by the library in accordance with the Telecommuting policy.

Director will provide assignments to hourly staff members working from home. If any employee encounters any other obstacle which prevents them from completing work remotely they must notify the Director immediately.

## **IN-PERSON REPORTING**

The Director will coordinate the schedule for employees reporting to the library in-person to perform essential tasks so that the Library remains in compliance with the state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce and allows staff to be socially distant. No employee is permitted to report to the Library without authorization from the Director. Work schedules will be sent on Friday of each week for the next week.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

PPE as required by local, state or federal laws or Executive Orders will be provided by the Howland Public Library. As per OSHA guidelines, employees are not financially responsible for mandated PPE. Employees may provide their own PPE if they desire and if it is in compliance with all local, state, or federal laws or Executive Orders and CDC and OSHA regulations.

The Howland Public Library will provide any necessary training for mandated PPE including proper use and disposal.

The Library will keep a supply of PPE in storage in the event a state disaster emergency is immediately declared. All employees will be aware of the storage location of PPE. The Office Manager will monitor PPE supply levels and replenish the supply as needed. The library will work with our established suppliers and government entities to procure PPE.

Failure to comply with PPE mandates may result in disciplinary action.

## **EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

If required by local, state or federal laws or Executive Orders, mandatory, continuous health screening practices will be implemented for all employees.

In the event an employee is exposed to a known case of the communicable disease that is the subject of the state disaster emergency, exhibits symptoms of such disease, or tests positive for such disease, the following procedures will be immediately implemented:

- The employee must not report to the library or they must leave the premises immediately, if already at work, and notify the Director.
- The Director will notify both local and state health departments and will follow guidance specific to workplaces with a suspected or positive case.
- The Director and the employee will determine which other staff members were in close contact and possibly exposed to the communicable disease.
- The Director and the employee will determine which areas of the library are now considered “contaminated” and need to be immediately closed.

### **Cleaning Contaminated Areas**

- The library will immediately close off contaminated area(s).
- The area(s) will be quarantined for a length of time determined by local or state health departments.
- After the determined length of time, the area(s) used by the employee will be cleaned, vacuumed, and disinfected including desks, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like computers, tablets, keyboards, and other office supplies.
- The area(s) will be cleaned by Facilities Manager using Enviro Solutions 64-H, or any other approved cleaner available and wearing appropriate PPE.
- Once an area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- The library will continue routine cleaning and disinfecting and logging these activities as recommended.

### **Contact Tracing**

The Director will adhere to local and state guidance regarding Contact Tracing which may include reporting or contacting other employees, contractors, visitors, and patrons who voluntarily supplied their information for the purpose of Contact Tracing who may have been in close contact with the employee suspected or confirmed to have the communicable disease.

The Office Manager, under the supervision of the Director, will maintain a record of hours and work locations, including off-site visits by staff and use these records to cooperate with Contact Tracing efforts. The Director and Office Manager will keep the health status of employees confidential.

### **Compensation**

The Howland Public Library will adhere to all local, state, or federal laws or Executive Orders regarding sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to this communicable disease.

### **Returning to Work**

- If an employee is exposed to the communicable disease or exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease, they must follow all local and state health department directives which may include being tested for that communicable disease and/or quarantining for a specified amount of time at home.
- If an employee has a suspected or confirmed case they must not report back to work until they have met all of the criteria in consultation with a healthcare provider and in accordance with local, state, and/or federal criteria specific to the communicable disease.
- All other employees will be provided instructions for returning to work dependent on the determination of risk of exposure by the local or state health department during Contact Tracing.

### **Mitigating Risk**

Reporting to work following a known-exposure to the communicable disease, having symptoms consistent with the communicable disease, or following a positive test without being medically cleared to return to work as defined above will be considered a violation of library policy and may result in disciplinary action.

The Howland Public Library will not take any retaliatory action for employees not reporting to work due to a suspected or confirmed case of the communicable disease. Employees must follow the established protocols outlined in the Personnel Policy for reporting an absence.

## **CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONS**

In the event of a declared state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease, the Director will address operations according to the following outline. Some circumstances will require deviation from this sequence in order to best serve the safety and health of the library staff and community.

- Assess the emergency declaration as it relates to the library's facilities, materials, staff, and/or community.
- Notify the appropriate persons, including employees and the Board of Trustees.
- Determine the next steps, with the information available, regarding:
  - Services or service points
  - Hours of operation
  - Personnel
- Draft a press release or statement to the public.
- Document in detail the sequence or timeline of events before, during, and after the declared state disaster emergency.
- Prepare for recovery.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The Library will comply with any other requirements determined by the department of health such as contact tracing or testing, social distancing, hand hygiene and disinfectant, or mask wearing.

## **EMERGENCY HOUSING**

If emergency housing is needed the Library will lodge essential employees on library property or at a local hotel.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Once approved by the Board of Trustees, this Pandemic Response Plan will be published in a clear and conspicuous location at the Howland Public Library and on the library's website. A copy will be provided to all employees.

## **ONGOING USE EVALUATION**

This Pandemic Response Plan was as required by law with the health and safety of the library's employees and community as the top priority.

The Pandemic Response Plan will be evaluated periodically by the Director and Board of Trustees and updated as needed.

Questions or concerns regarding Howland Public Library's Pandemic Response Plan should be directed to the Director.

ADOPTED by the Howland Public Library Board of Trustees 3/9/2021