

Emporia Public Library

Epidemic/Pandemic Policy

Approved by the board February 11, 2021

I: Purpose

To establish the protocol that will be used in the event of an epidemic or pandemic. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the library must plan for staff being unable to report to work. In addition, during an epidemic/pandemic, businesses, social organizations or schools may be required to take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness including closing down by order of local public health officials. Other public health measures may include limiting or canceling social and public gatherings, requiring quarantines and/or other social distancing measures. Recovery from an epidemic/pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or some 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 an epidemic/pandemic.

II: Library Closure

The Emporia Public Library will close due to an epidemic/pandemic in the event that a mandate order or recommendation for closure is issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.

At the discretion of the library Director, the Emporia Public Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily

In the event of closure, it is imperative that the Executive Director follow the communication procedures and submit accounts payable and payroll information to ensure timely payment.

Due dates and holds pickup dates for library materials will be adjusted as necessary and the exterior book drops will be closed until appropriate arrangements are in place to receive and process materials in line with state or national health agency guidelines.

III: Minimum Staffing Level

Minimum staffing levels as determined by the Executive Director must be met for the library to open safely. The level of excused absences of library staff will determine the ability to carry out services and maintain open hours.

Operational adjustments may include:

1. Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations.
2. Staff the library at a minimum level for a temporary period of time; employees may be reallocated and have shifts reassigned and lengthened to provide coverage during open hours.
3. Reduce open hours if number of employees falls below temporary minimum level.
4. Close the library for one or more days if number of employees further declines or only minimum level can be met for five or more days.

If the library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences. Healthy library employees sent home because of library closure shall be expected to work remotely and will be compensated for their regularly scheduled work hours.

IV: Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by an epidemic or pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours is of the utmost importance. The Executive Director, with help from library staff, will communicate the library status on the library website, the library social media, and information will be sent to the Emporia Gazette and KVOE. The library board, city of Emporia city manager and the head of maintenance, and the Friends of the Library president will also be notified.

V: Prioritization of Services

In the event of closure or reduced operations, the Executive Director and staff will set priorities and procedures for service and the Executive Director will assign the employees necessary to accomplish this task.

VI: Responsibility for Library Operations

If, for any reason, the Executive Director is unable or unavailable to perform the responsibilities and decisions outlined in this policy, administrative authority for this policy and all library operations will be placed with the Assistant Director.