



There is much to report about the library's COVID-19 situation this month! The library did have 1 positive case this past month on staff, but with no close contacts at the workplace requiring quarantining.

On May 10th, Michigan announced that the requirement that work that can be done from home must be done from home would be lifted on May 24th. Library staff working from home will be fully back in the office by the 24th.

Following the latest science and CDC guidance, on Thursday, May 13th, MCLS stopped requiring that we quarantine items before sending them out for MeLCat delivery. At BDL, we have also stopped quarantining our items for local use and have reverted back to our traditional check-in and reshelving practices. This allows us to resume using the Coldwater Branch meeting room as a meeting room once again, though with occupancy reductions due to distancing requirements.

On Thursday, May 13th, the CDC released updated guidance recommending "fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance."

Thursday night BDL announced the following on our web site and social media: "Yes, for now BDL still requires masks. Today's CDC guidance on masks for those vaccinated has certainly caused a buzz. As state and local public health guidelines change, we will update our procedures accordingly. Thanks for your patience as we give our state and local health professionals time to react to today's announcements."

On Friday, May 14th, Governor Whitmer announced the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is updating the Gatherings and Mask Order to align with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest guidance on face coverings. The new order will effect on Saturday, May 15 at 9am.

Under the updated MDHHS Gatherings and Mask Order, Michiganders who are outdoors will no longer need to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. While indoors, fully vaccinated Michiganders will no longer need to wear a mask, but residents who are not vaccinated, or have not completed their vaccinations, must continue to wear a mask or face covering to protect themselves and others. After July 1, the broad indoor mask mandate will expire.

As an employer, MIOSHA workplace rules have not changed, though we expect them to change soon. So for now, staff protocols will be unchanged.

As for our patron services, starting the morning of Saturday, May 15, masks will be required only for those not fully vaccinated. Signs will be replaced by that time and announcements will go out Friday afternoon.

Once we have updated directives from MIOSHA and MDHHS, BDL will modify its COVID-19 Response and Reopening Policy accordingly.

Submitted by John Rucker