

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND REOPENING POLICY

Adopted: May 26, 2020

Last Revised: June 4, 2021

Rescinded: April 15, 2024

- I. **Purpose:** Michigan public libraries have been closed to the public pursuant to a series of executive orders. The Branch District Library (BDL) anticipates that those restrictions will be lifted and the Library will once again resume public library service. This Policy establishes the steps the Library will take and the protocols the Library will put in place to protect the Library, staff, and patrons when the Library reopens.
- II. **Resuming Library Service:** Before reopening to the public or non-essential staff, and during the term of the Reopening Plan, the Library will establish regulations and implement the following:
 - A. ***Cleaning Protocols:*** The Library Director will establish and follow reasonable cleaning protocols, including the regular cleaning of objects and areas that are frequently used, such as bathrooms, public computers, breakrooms, conference rooms, door handles, and railings. This may include removing objects and material from public areas and wiping down surfaces. The cleaning protocols may change as the health and safety issues evolve or as the Library moves through the stages of reopening.
 - B. ***Returned Material:*** The Library Director will also develop a protocol for addressing returned material. This may include quarantining returned materials for specific periods of time.
 - C. ***Assess Needs:*** The Library Director and Department heads will meet to assess the condition of the Library and the tasks that need to occur prior to opening the Library to the public. This includes making sure the Library has



the proper protection equipment such as hand sanitizer, gloves, masks, or other similar equipment.

- D. *Social Distancing*: The Library Director will take steps to implement social distancing protocols if required by law or the Reopening Plan. This may include removing or rearranging chairs and computer terminals, blocking areas/furniture, installing plastic screens, marking waiting areas to show the 6-foot spacing, or providing "traffic control" designations, such as arrows showing one-way travel in certain areas of the Library in order to maintain social distancing. The Social Distancing protocols will be established in the Reopening Plan for each stage.
- E. *Notice to Patrons*: The Library Director shall post notices on the doors of the Library branches, on the Library's website, via social media, and via local advertising, media interviews, and press releases, etc., to inform patrons of the particular regulations of patron conduct for the current stage of the Reopening Plan.

III. **Reopening Stages**: The BDL Board of Trustees adopts the reopening plan attached as Exhibit A ("Reopening Plan") to this Policy as the basic structure for the reopening stages for public library service. Pursuant to Section IV, the Library Director has authority to modify the Reopening Plan. The Reopening Plan, including any modification by the Library Director, shall govern the use of the Library. Violations of the Reopening Plan may result in suspension of library privileges.

IV. **Director's Role; Authority**: The Library Director will monitor and coordinate events surrounding the reopening. The Library Director has the authority over the following:

- A. *Modifications; Reopening Stages*: The Library Director may modify in writing any services, safety protocols or other part of the Reopening Plan. The Library Director also may determine when it is an appropriate time to move on to the next stage either in whole or in part.
- B. *Staffing Levels*: The Library Director has the authority to address and determine appropriate staffing levels for each stage and whether staff can work from home or must work in-person.
- C. *Cancel or Limit Services*: Even after the Library reopens and the Board of Trustees approves a Reopening Plan, the Library Director may cancel or limit programs or services to ensure the safety and security of staff and patrons. This includes canceling scheduled meetings held in any Library meeting

rooms. The Library Director will use reasonable efforts to post notices of the program changes and cancellations, including posting notices at the Library, on the Library's website, via social media, and via local advertising, media interviews, press releases, etc.

- D. ***Library Closure:*** The Library Director has the authority to close a Library branch or the entire Library temporarily for a maximum of fourteen (14) days without prior approval from the Board of Trustees. The Library Director will inform the President of the determination to close and the proposed duration of the closure. If the Library has not been reopened, the Board may meet to determine whether the Library Director's decision to close will be extended or whether the Library will be reopened before the time set forth in the Library Director's determination. This closure may be due to a specific incident or reoccurrence of an infectious disease in the Library's Service Area. The Library Director will use reasonable efforts to post notices of the closure, including posting notices at the Library, on the Library's website, via social media, and via local advertising, media interviews, press releases, etc. This Policy assumes the staff will be paid based on their "normal" schedule during the Library's closure under this paragraph.
- E. ***Consultation:*** The decision to cancel or limit services, move through the stages of the Reopening Plan, close the Library, or adopt additional protocols may be based on recommendations made regarding the outbreak by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), state and local health officials, the Michigan Library Association, the American Library Association, the BDL Board of Trustees, or other reputable sources.
- V. **Enforcement:** Patrons may not enter the Library, or may be required to leave, if they are not in compliance with any safety protocols or requirements in the Policy, Reopening Plan, or any condition or modification established in writing by the Library Director pursuant to this Policy. Only the Library Director, or the Library Director's designee, has the authority to suspend or limit privileges pursuant to this Policy. If any patron receives a warning or has privileges suspended or limited, the Library shall fill out an incident report and shall provide written notice of the violation when possible. If the Library does not have the ability to provide written notice, the Incident Report shall identify when verbal notice was provided. The Library may provide additional suspension periods for subsequent violations of the same rule or requirement.
- VI. **Right of Appeal:** Patrons may appeal a decision to remove a patron or deny entry to the Library by sending a written appeal to the Board of Trustees within ten (10)

business days after the date the privileges were revoked, denied, or limited. The appeal must be sent to the President of the Library Board, c/o Branch District Library, 10 E. Chicago St., Coldwater MI 49036. The decision of the Library Board is final.

- VII. Applicability:** Unless specifically addressed by this Policy, this Policy is not intended to govern or regulate specific employment issues or policies involved with staff returning to work. All existing Library policies regarding patrons or staff remain in effect unless in conflict with this Policy. In case of a conflict, this Policy shall govern.

EXHIBIT A

REOPENING PLAN

The following is the reopening plan approved by the BDL Board of Trustees ("Reopening Plan"). If an order is in effect from the Governor, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency (BHSJ), or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders, all elements of the order(s) will be followed and the order(s) will control if there is a conflict. The Reopening Plan applies only if permitted by law, by executive order, or by order of MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders.

Library workers are considered at medium risk under OSHA classifications, having frequent and/or close contact (for example, within six feet) with people who may be infected with the novel coronavirus, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

Note that it is possible to move backwards along this plan if risk increases.

All staff and volunteers returning to work are required to acknowledge in writing that they have read and understand this Reopening Plan.

Requirements During All Stages

- A. Per the CDC guidelines, patrons with an infectious illness such as the flu must not enter the Library until at least twenty-four (24) hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- B. Patrons should not enter the Library with symptoms of an infectious disease.
- C. The Library shall provide notice on the Library doors, and website of the patron responsibility requirements currently in effect. The Library Director has authority to approve the requirements and notices.
- D. Any requirements for staff safety precautions will be adopted separately and the staff will be informed.
- E. The Library Director shall determine the cleaning protocols for all stages. The Assistant Director will ensure that protocols are being followed.
- F. The Library can continue providing WiFi in the parking lot areas.

- G. The Assistant Director will coordinate required recordkeeping and ensure compliance with all such requirements, including those specified in the most recent order from the Governor, MDHHS, or BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders.

The following records are required to be maintained:

1. Required training:
 - a. Routes by which the virus causing COVID-19 is transmitted from person to person.
 - b. Distance that the virus can travel in the air, as well as the time it remains viable in the air and on environmental surfaces.
 - c. Symptoms of COVID-19.
 - d. Steps the worker must take to notify the business or operation of any symptoms of COVID-19 or a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.
 - e. Measures that the facility is taking to prevent worker exposure to the virus, as described in the COVID-19 preparedness and response plan required under the most recent order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders.
 - f. Rules that the worker must follow in order to prevent exposure to and spread of the virus.
 - g. The use of personal protective equipment, including the proper steps for putting it on and taking it off.
2. A record of daily entry self-screening protocol for all employees or contractors entering the workplace, including, at a minimum, a questionnaire covering symptoms and suspected or confirmed exposure to people with possible COVID-19.
3. When an employee is identified with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

H. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in one of our buildings:

1. The Library Director may close the Library, as provided by the Reopening Policy, so that a disinfection protocol may be completed.

2. Notice of the infection will be provided to staff consistent with HIPAA requirements.
3. If the Library was open, notice of the closure will be provided to the public.
4. The Library will comply with Michigan Contact Tracing protocols consistent with the Michigan Library Privacy Act.

Stage 1 • Closed to the Public

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library will be closed to the public either by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders; by motion of the Library Board; or by the Library Director pursuant to the Reopening Policy.

Due dates of materials will be adjusted to a date in the future when the Library might be expected to be open again. Patrons will be encouraged to keep materials rather than return them.

The Library will focus on its “Digital Branch” (website, social media, digital materials collections, etc.) as a means of providing library services.

- B. Employees: Only essential staff may return to the library to conduct essential business of the library. The Library Director will provide a written notice to staff who are deemed essential.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted: Essential functions only.

1. Processing payroll, and accounts payable/receivable.
2. Working on information technology (IT) infrastructure to facilitate employees’ ability to work remotely.
3. Checking our mail boxes and drop boxes.
4. Caring for and feeding of animals.
5. Responding to mechanical emergencies on Library premises.

6. Maintaining the physical security of Library premises.

- D. Hours of Operation: The Library will not have any public hours of operation at its physical locations.
- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: Essential staff present at the library are required to wear a face mask or covering, which will be provided by the Library, unless alone at a private office/desk or during a meal break in a designated area. Exemptions to wearing a mask require medical documentation.

Stage 2 • Closed to the Public

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library will be closed to the public either by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders; by motion of the Library Board; or by the Library Director pursuant to the Reopening Policy.

Due dates of materials will be adjusted to a date in the future when the Library might be expected to be open again. Patrons will be encouraged to keep materials rather than return them.

The Library will focus on its "Digital Branch" as a means of providing library services.

- B. Employees: Some non-essential staff may return to the Library, as determined by the Library Director and according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted:

1. Continuing essential functions.
2. Landscaping and other outside maintenance activities may resume, if permitted by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders.
3. Inside maintenance activities may also resume, if permitted by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders.

4. Assessing whether the Library has adequate PPE and disinfecting supplies to serve the public and staff.
 5. Erecting physical safety barriers at public service points and staff workstations as needed.
- D. Hours of Operation: The Library will not have any public hours of operation at its physical locations.
- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: The protocols from Stage 1 will remain in place.

Stage 3 • Closed to the Public, Staff Reporting

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library will be closed to the public either by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOASHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders; by motion of the Library Board; or by the Library Director pursuant to the Reopening Policy.

Due dates of materials will be adjusted to a date in the future when the Library might be expected to be open again. Patrons will be notified that they can now resume returning books to our drop boxes. The Library's circulation system will be prepared for an eventual reopening to the public.

The Library will focus on its "Digital Branch" as a means of providing library services.

Staff will begin returning to the library to work and will be preparing to resume in-person services to the public.

This stage may be reached only when any state stay-at-home orders have been lifted.

- B. Employees: All staff are permitted to return to work according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director. This schedule may result in a reduction of hours for some staff. Per the BDL Employment Handbook, at least two weeks' notice will be provided to affected staff before any reductions.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted:

1. Continuing essential services.
 2. Landscaping and maintenance activities as described in Stage 2 above.
 3. Updating collections.
 4. Updating patron databases.
 5. Shelving books.
 6. Answering phones and responding to patrons' reference questions.
 7. Reviewing upcoming programs that may need to be canceled or modified and reviewing any contracts related to such programs.
 8. Resuming the interlibrary loan process (if practical or possible), getting books back to the branches where they belong.
- D. Hours of Operation: The Library will not have any public hours of operation at its physical locations.
- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: the protocols from Stage 1 will remain in place. In addition:
1. Temperature checks will be conducted at the start of each shift by the Branch Manager or most senior staff present, following HIPAA requirements. Any employee showing a fever of at least 100 degrees F, or other symptoms of COVID-19, will be asked to leave the workplace and will not be allowed to return until symptom free for a minimum of three consecutive days or until the employee can document that they are experiencing a non-contagious medical condition.
 2. Staff are required to wear a face mask or covering, which will be provided by the Library, unless alone at a private office/desk or during a meal break in a designated area. Exemptions to wearing a mask require medical documentation.
 3. Staff will be trained on correct handwashing and personal protective equipment (PPE) usage and practices, following CDC and OSHA guidance.
 4. Staff workspaces shall be configured to maintain social distancing requirements of 6 feet if possible.

5. Appropriate handwashing procedure signage will be posted in all restrooms and at sinks, following CDC guidance.
6. The Library will begin to implement social distancing protocols in the Library in anticipation of patrons returning which may include:
 - a. Removing or rearranging chairs and tables.
 - b. Assessing what computer terminals may be used.
 - c. Removing toys, puzzles, or other often-touched items.
 - d. Blocking off areas/furniture.
 - e. Marking waiting areas to show the 6-foot spacing.
 - f. Providing "traffic control" designations in certain areas of the Library as necessary in order to maintain social distancing.

F. Sanitation:

1. Clean and sanitize the Library, especially common surfaces, high-traffic areas, bathrooms and break/kitchen. Hourly checklists will be filled out by staff. After-hours janitorial staff will continue to perform all required disinfection and cleaning.
2. Library materials that are checked in will be quarantined for 24 hours before reshelving or delivering to the next patron.
3. Staff will regularly wash their hands, and use hand sanitizer in between hand washings.
4. Building water systems will be flushed according to CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>
5. Staff will clean personal work spaces on a regular basis, and will avoid using other employee's supplies, equipment, phones, etc. If it is necessary to share equipment, clean before and after each use. Specifically, the following surface areas should be cleaned at least daily, and at least hourly if shared: phones, computer keyboards and mice, desk surfaces and drawers, and chairs. For employees with their own offices: light switches, doors, and door handles.

Stage 4 • Curbside Pickup Begins

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library's physical spaces will be closed to the public either by order from the Governor, MDHHS, MIOSHA, BHSJ, or another governmental body in Branch County authorized to issue public health orders; by motion of the Library Board; or by the Library Director pursuant to the Reopening Policy.

The pickup of Library materials may begin at some or all branch locations.

The Library will continue to focus on its "Digital Branch" as a means of providing library services.

- B. Employees: All staff are permitted to return to work according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director. This schedule may result in a reduction of hours for some staff. Per the BDL Employment Handbook, at least two weeks' notice will be provided to affected staff before any reductions.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted: In addition to previously authorized activities, the Library may include the following activities:

1. Curbside pickup of library materials by patrons is permitted.
2. Patrons are permitted to return Library materials to library drop boxes. The Library Director will establish safety and disinfection protocols for returned material.

- D. Hours of Operation: The Library Director will set hours of operation for curbside pickup by patrons and inform the public through postings on the doors, on the Library's website, via social media, and via local advertising, media interviews, press releases, etc.

- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: The protocols from Stage 3 will remain in place. In addition:

1. Patrons and staff shall remain 6 feet apart.
2. Patrons shall be required to wear a mask when engaging in curbside pickup.
3. The Library shall mark waiting areas for cars and other curbside pickup issues.

- F. Sanitation: The protocols from Stage 3 will remain in place.

Stage 5 • Limited Opening

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library's physical spaces will be reopened to the public in a limited fashion, while curbside pickup continues.

The Library will continue to focus on its "Digital Branch" as a means of providing library programming, since in-person programming will remain canceled.

- B. Employees/Volunteers: All staff are permitted to return to work according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director. This schedule may result in a reduction of hours for some staff. Per the BDL Employment Handbook, at least two weeks' notice will be provided to affected staff before any reductions.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

Volunteers may return to the Library as need, as determined by the Branch Managers and Volunteer Coordinators.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted: In addition to previously authorized activities, the Library may include the following activities:

1. Patrons may enter the Library to acquire materials, use computers, and request assistance from Library staff, provided that social distancing and safety protocols are followed.
2. The Library will provide access to computers. Computer session time may be limited further than typical limits.
3. Offices of the Branch County Literacy Council may resume consultations at the Coldwater Branch library.

- D. Hours of Operation: The Library Director will set hours of operation for the limited opening to the public and inform the public through postings on the doors, on the Library's website, via social media, and via local advertising, media interviews, press releases, etc.

- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: The protocols from Stage 4 will remain in place. In addition:

1. Patrons aged two years and older must wear a face covering if they are medically able to do so; the Library will provide a face covering if supplies are available.
2. Patrons must stay 6 feet away from all staff and other patrons. Social distancing rules apply. The Library will provide barriers for in-person discussions.
3. The Library will mark places where people are likely to gather in line to identify the proper social distancing, including identifying traffic lanes.
4. Patrons will use their best efforts to come to the Library with the least number of people.
5. Computer terminals will be located as far from each other as possible from any other computer or workstation. The Library Director may suspend service on any computers that cannot be relocated to a safe distance. The Library will use its best efforts to clean computer terminals between uses.

F. Sanitation: The protocols from Stage 3 will remain in place.

Stage 6 • Library Open to Public with Some In-Person Programming

- A. Overview: During this stage, the Library's physical spaces will be reopened further to the public, while curbside pickup continues.

The Library will continue to focus on its "Digital Branch" as a means of providing library programming, since in-person programming for large groups will continue to be canceled.

- B. Employees: All staff are permitted to return to work according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director. This schedule may result in reduced hours for some staff. Per the BDL Employment Handbook, at least two weeks' notice will be provided to affected staff before any reductions.

Some staff who are able to do so may work from home with permission from the Library Director.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted: In addition to previously authorized activities, the Library may open for additional activities:

1. Programming that is in-person, but will be limited to 10 or fewer attendees.
 2. The Library Director may open up additional parts of Library branches for public use, such as returning seating to normal.
- D. Hours of Operation: normal hours of operation resume at all Library branches.
- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: The protocols from Stage 5 will remain in place.
- F. Sanitation: The protocols from Stage 3 will remain in place.

Stage 7 • Library Open to Public with Some In-Person Programming, Protocols Relaxed

- A. Overview: During this stage, as the pandemic wanes, the Library's physical spaces will be reopened further to the public while curbside pickup continues.

The Library will increase in-person programming, within the bounds set by occupancy limits and state or local health department orders. Safety and sanitation protocols will be relaxed as permitted by state or local health departments.

- B. Employees: All staff are permitted to return to work according to the schedule adopted by the Library Director. This schedule may result in reduced hours for some staff. Per the BDL Employment Handbook, at least two weeks' notice will be provided to affected staff before any reductions.

Regular work-from-home schedules for staff will end and all staff will return to work in person at the Library.

- C. In-Person Activities Permitted: In addition to previously authorized activities, the Library may open for additional activities:
1. Programming that is in-person, but will be limited to the maximum attendance currently allowed by state or local health department orders.
 2. The Library Director may open up additional parts of Library branches for public use, such as returning seating to normal or reopening computer labs.
- D. Hours of Operation: normal hours of operation resume at all Library branches.
- E. Social Distancing and/or Safety Protocols: Protocols from Stage 6 will be relaxed as permitted by current occupancy limits and state or local health department orders.

- F. Sanitation: Most protocols from Stage 3 will remain in place, with the following exceptions: extra cleaning will go from hourly to once at midday, and quarantining of materials will cease.

Stage 8 • Library Open for Regular Business

At this stage, the Library can resume normal, pre-pandemic operations. All Library services and programming can resume without restrictions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, _____, have read and understand this Reopening Policy and Reopening Plan.

Signed

Date