PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

PURPOSE

The Mahopac Public Library has adopted this Pandemic Response Plan in compliance with New York State Labor Law §27-c to establish protocols that will be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a serious infectious disease outbreak, the Library must plan for staff being unable to report to work. In addition, other public health measures may require limiting or cancelling social and public gatherings, quarantines and/or other social distancing measures which can impact Library hours and services. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, and it is important to ensure that the core business activities of the Library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours.

The primary goals of Mahopac Public Library’s Pandemic Response Plan are to establish:

- The roles and responsibilities during all phases of a public health 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 public health emergency involving a communicable disease threatening to impact or immediately impacting the Library’s employees, trustees, volunteers, and/or community members.

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of Board approval.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of Library employees, patrons, contractors, and their families are of utmost importance.
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact Library operations.
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for the Library to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety.
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment [PPE] and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement.
If any part of the plan conflicts with the Executive Orders governing an epidemic issued at the local, county, state, or federal level, the Library will follow the Executive Orders rather than the written plan. During each public health emergency, the Library will determine phased closure and re-opening protocols based on the best available information and legal requirements pertinent to the emergency.

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 the Assistant Library Director.

DEFINITIONS

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

- **Communicable disease**: Illness caused by an infectious agent that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its byproducts or via inanimate environment or object to a susceptible person or persons.
- **Contractor**: Any individual performing paid services for the library but not an employee of Mahopac Public Library.
- **Employee**: Any person employed by Mahopac Public Library regardless of job classification or title.
- **Essential**: Designation made to an employee or contractor whose duties require them to be physically present at Mahopac Public Library to perform their job, OR tasks that are vital or necessary to the safety or operational needs of the Library.
- **Exposure**: Having come into contact with a cause of, or possessing a characteristic that is determinant of, a particular health problem.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**: Equipment worn to minimize exposure to communicable disease or pandemic illness, including gloves, masks, face shields, and disposable gowns, as mandated by local, state, or federal law and/or any Executive Orders related to the public health emergency or mandates issued by federal agencies including the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- **Retaliatory Action**: The discharge, suspension, demotion, penalization, discrimination, or other adverse employment action taken against any staff member.
ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- Director and Administrative team
- Human Resources/Finance
  - Benefits and Leave Administration
  - Accounts Payable/Received
  - Payroll
- Community Relations
  - Media Relations
  - Public Education
- Procurement
  - Library/Office Supplies
  - Building Maintenance Supplies
  - PPE
- Facilities
  - Safety and Security
  - Building and Grounds
- Technology
  - Network operations
  - Web Services

TELECOMMUTE/WORK FROM HOME

Telecommuting

The Mahopac Public Library acknowledges telecommuting to be a viable and necessary alternative work arrangement during a pandemic where current job duties and assignments are capable of being accomplished in such an arrangement. Telecommuting allows employees to work at home or in a satellite location for all or part of their regular workweek. This arrangement in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the library.

Procedure

Either an employee or a supervisor may suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement. In the event an employee suggests telecommuting, it must be approved by his/her supervisor. The hours of work and the location of such work shall be determined by the Library, with input from the employee.

During this time, telecommuting will be informal, such as working from a home worksite/office or satellite location for a few hours, a day, or a short-term project. All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing on safety of staff and patrons and the business needs of the organization.
Home worksite/office is a set aside defined space to conduct Library work. Appropriate equipment, software, and phone and Internet access is required. A staff member’s phone extension may be forwarded to their home or cell phone.

The Library Director will determine, with information supplied by the employee and their supervisor, the appropriate equipment and software needs for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. Employee supplied equipment and/or software may be used if deemed appropriate by the Director, subject to change at any time. Equipment and/or software supplied by the Library will be maintained by the Library. Equipment and/or software supplied by the employee will be maintained by the employee. The Library accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment and/or software. Equipment and/or software supplied by the Library is to be used for business purposes only.

Consistent with the Library’s expectations of information security for employees working in the Library, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of confidential information accessible from their home office. Steps include use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

All injuries occurring while working from home should be reported to the Library as soon as possible. The Library will report to Chubb Insurance who will conduct a thorough investigation and advise on the compensability of the claim. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the Library Director of such injuries as soon as possible. Failure to notify the Library within 30 days after the accident can result in denial of benefits in accordance with NY State requirements. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to their home worksite. The Library is not responsible for any incident that may occur in the employee’s home.

The Library will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies for successful completion of job responsibilities.

**IN-PERSON REPORTING**

The Director, working with the appropriate Department Heads, will coordinate the schedule for employees reporting to the Library in-person to perform essential tasks so that Mahopac Public Library remains in compliance with the state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce. The Library Director will coordinate the schedules of any contractors required to report to the Library in-person. No employee or contractor is permitted to report to the Mahopac Public Library without authorization from the Director. Any employee or contractor reporting to the Library in person may be required to fill out a health log each day they are on-site.

Each Department Head will maintain their department’s schedule on the Google staff calendar and stagger work shifts to ensure employee workspaces do not become overcrowded. In the event that this occurs, the Department Head will create the opportunity for one or more simultaneously scheduled employees to work from a socially distant or remote workstation.
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] as required by local, state or federal laws or Executive Orders will be provided by Mahopac Public Library to every employee for every onsite shift. 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.

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

Mahopac Public Library will keep a supply of PPE in storage in the event a public health emergency is immediately declared. PPE will be stored in a location chosen to permit immediate access by all employees and all employees will be aware of the storage location of PPE. The staff member in charge of procurement, in conjunction with the Director or Assistant Library Director, will monitor PPE supply levels and replenish the supply as needed in accordance with the Library’s Procurement Policy.

If for any reason the Library is unable to provide adequate PPE for any given shift, no employee will be permitted to work onsite until sufficient PPE can be provided.

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

EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The Library will take precautions to limit the possible exposure of its employees, volunteers, essential visitors, contractors and patrons. If required by local, state or federal laws or executive orders, mandatory, continuous health screening practices will be implemented for all required parties.

We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. Mahopac Public Library will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

DAILY INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES

- Wash your hands frequently throughout the day for at least 20 seconds each time with hot water and soap.
- Drink plenty of fluids and get sufficient rest.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands after you cough or sneeze.
- Use an alcohol-based hand cleaner if you do not have access to soap and water. Gels should be rubbed into the hands until they are dry.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes or mouth as germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Regularly disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as counters, desks, tables, doorknobs, railings, keyboards, mice, telephone handsets and drinking fountains.

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for the cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas.

**Employee and Contractor Leave**

Mahopac 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 the communicable disease.

Additional provisions may be enacted based upon the need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of Mahopac Public Library and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the Library unless required by law.

Mahopac 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 Mahopac Public Library Personnel Manual for reporting an absence.

**DOCUMENTATION OF WORK HOURS AND LOCATIONS**

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations include on-site work and off-site visits. This information may be used by Mahopac Public Library to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Employee and contractor schedules are tracked on both the ACE Payroll application and the Google staff calendar. The staff calendar indicates the department in which the individual is working, their daily hours, time off, and offsite visits. The ACE Payroll application is used for staff to punch in at the beginning and out at the end of their shift. ACE also takes a snapshot of the location from which the punch is made. Each Department Head is responsible for making sure their department’s schedule is
accurate on the Google calendar. The Business Office Manager monitors ACE payroll to ensure the punches match the staff calendar.

CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONS

In the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease, the Director will address operations according to the Mahopac Public Library Continuation of Service Plan. Some circumstances may require deviation from the plan in order to best serve the safety and health of the Library staff and community.

COMMUNICATION

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

ONGOING USE EVALUATION

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

Questions or concerns regarding Mahopac Public Library’s Pandemic Response Plan should be directed to Michele Capozzella, Library Director at director@mahopaclibrary.org or [845] 628-2009 X 107.

ADOPTED by the Mahopac Public Library Board of Trustees March 31, 2021.
REVISED May 26, 2021; September 22, 2021; February 17, 2022; November 17, 2022