

North Greenbush Public Library Pandemic Operations Plan

Approved by the Board of Trustees on February 25, 2021

Purpose:

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c. This law requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing. <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/LAB/27-C>

History:

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the operations of North Greenbush Public Library have been reduced. This includes a period of shut down of physical operations and moving to an entirely virtual service model. The initial closure started March 14, 2020. The library remained closed as part of NYS On Pause until reopening at reduced hours for limited circulation of materials on June 8th, 2020. A Continuation of Service Plan (COSP) was approved on May 28, 2020 (for Steps 1 through 3) and June 25, 2020 for Step 4. The CUSP was folded into the Pandemic Operations Plan on February 25, 2021. North Greenbush Public Library has remained in Step 4 (Limited Opening to the public for transactional purposes) since June 25, 2020.

Scope:

The COSP, now known as this Pandemic Operation Plan (POP), was developed exclusively for and is applicable to North Greenbush Public Library. This POP is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this POP.

Essential Positions:

The Library Director is the staff member that is deemed “essential” and requires regular access to the building in the event that a stay at home order is put in place. The Library Director will need access to the building to do billing, payroll, collect the mail and to check the condition of the library and its collection. The Chair of the Finance Committee will also need occasional access to the library for financial matters.

Remote Work Protocols:

In the event of a stay at home order due to the communicable disease, library staff will be allowed to perform assigned duties and work remotely. Staff may work on a variety of projects at home including (but not limited to):

- processing collections to prepare them to be added to the database
- completing online training and webinars offered by the library system or other

similar organizations.

- working with the library director to create online programming including storytime, craft videos, STEM projects and other virtual options for our patrons

While working from home, staff will need to maintain their time sheets and submit them to the library director by Monday of the pay week. The library director will work with each staff member to develop their remote work tasks and if necessary shall provide them with a wireless hotspot to borrow. It is possible to combine remote work with in-person library work (see Scheduling Protocols) to fulfil an employee's schedule. Ideally, the majority of the employees work will take place within the library. Once the need for the POP passes, all library staff will return to in-person library schedules.

Scheduling Protocols:

When the POP is in effect, the library will be staffed by two people who will work together to form a team. Each team of two will work together on the same schedule. This will allow for ease in social distance within the work space, create ease in contact tracing and lessen the likelihood of library hours being affected if staff become ill or are forced to quarantine due to exposure. If library staff need to change their hours, they must inform the library director before any changes are made to the schedule. All staff must note their arrival and departure times in the Employee Log maintained at the circulation desk.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

PPE including masks, gloves and face shields will be available to all staff. Employees are required to wear masks during their work hours. Masks and gloves are required to be worn whenever the outside book drop is emptied. Employees may wear their own fabric masks if they prefer. An ample supply of PPE will be stored behind the circulation desk where all staff have access to it. The library will use their normal office supply distributor to purchase and maintain their PPE supply.

Documentation of Works Hours and Locations:

When the POP is in effect, all staff will log the date and time of their arrival/departure from the library. This log will be maintained by the library director in order to aid in contact tracing. Any contractors or others entering the library to work will also be noted in this log. This log is not for library patrons. In the event that contact tracing is required, the library director will contact the affected staff members. Any staff scheduling changes must be cleared by the library director.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning and and Disinfection:

Staff Exposures:

If a library employee exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that has triggered the POP:

1. The employee will immediately be sent home from the workplace with a recommendation to contact their physician.
2. Employees who exhibit symptoms outside of the library should notify the library director and remain at home and contact their physician.
3. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation (per the CDC) and have consulted their physician.
4. If an employee has tested positive for the communicable disease all areas occupied for a prolonged period of time by the person should be closed off for a period of 24 hours (per CDC guidance.) After the 24 hours have elapsed, any common surfaces and equipment shall be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
5. In the event that an employee tests positive, the library director will notify any other employees of their possible exposure and recommend that they contact their physician. The other staff member may have to self isolate as well and miss work.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

During the period the POP is in effect, a cleaning log will also be maintained. The log includes a list of high-traffic and high-touch surfaces that require routine disinfecting during a pandemic. A cleaning schedule will be put in place and followed using the cleaning log. Completed cleaning logs will be stored by the library director. An appropriate amount of CDC approved cleaners, sanitizing wipes and paper towels will be maintained by the library. Staff will know where excess cleaning products are stored. Signage will also be posted encouraging proper handwashing. Hand sanitizer will also be available.

Documentation of Work Hours:

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. Staff and contractors will note the date and hours in the library on the Staff Log maintained at the circulation desk. The Staff Log will be stored by the library director and may be used to support contract tracing within the library. It may be shared with public health officials. All staff are also expected to complete and sign the health questionnaire at the beginning of each shift. The questionnaires will be stored by the library director.

Housing for Essential Employees:

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread

of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of North Greenbush Public Library's essential operations. If such a need arises, hotel rooms are expected to be the most viable option. If hotel rooms are for some reason deemed not practical or ideal, or if there are no hotel rooms available, North Greenbush Public Library will coordinate with Rensselaer County to help identify and arrange for these housing needs. The Library Director is responsible for coordinating this.

Administration Succession Plan:

There may be cases where members of the administration may not be able to carry out their duties in relation to their position in North Greenbush Public Library. This is the established line of succession for the administration.

If the Director is unable to fulfill the duties of their office, the longest tenured employee will temporarily take the duties of Director. They will fulfill these duties until the Director returns from their leave of absence or the Board of Trustees appoints an interim director.

North Greenbush Public Library State of Emergency Policy

In a state of emergency, the library director will have authority to restrict services and/or implement immediate procedures as deemed necessary to preserve and ensure the safety of library Staff and Patrons. This policy will take precedence and override conflicting policies during a state of emergency. Restriction of services will be determined in accordance with any applicable Executive Orders from the State and Local Government and will be executed by the Library Director in coordination with the Library Board of Trustees. Pertinent changes will be communicated to the library community as quickly as possible, and as safety allows.

North Greenbush Public Library
Continuation of Service Plan
Phased Reopening Plan

Steps 1 through 3 approved by Board on May 28, 2020

Step 4 approved by Board on June 25, 2020

Due to COVID-19, North Greenbush Public Library's operations have been drastically reduced. The initial closure of our building took place March 16, 2020. The purpose of this plan is to create a phased in process to make sure the library reopening is done with care and with the safety of both the library staff and the patrons in mind. It has been created in accordance with information from federal, state and local authorities.

The seven steps of this plan are described in this document. The library will move through the steps as:

Step 1: The library is closed to the public--online/virtual services available

Step 2: Limited staff allowed to return to the building but the building remains closed.

Step 3: Limited circulation of materials begins. Building remains closed to the public

Step 4: Limited opening to the public for transactional purposes

Step 5: Open to the public with limits to seating. (DRAFT)

Step 6: Open to the public for normal hours. Limited programming (DRAFT)

Step 7: Return to routine operation once COVID-19 is mitigated (DRAFT)

Step 1: The library is closed to the public and staff. The library book drop is locked but the AV box needs periodic emptying. Library Director has access to the library and visits the library regularly for administrative purposes.

Step 1 Tasks

- Library Director works remotely while routinely visiting the library for administrative purposes
- Library staff works to increase social media presence and to create virtual programming.
- Library board meetings are held virtually and recorded.
- Director begins prepping for reopening including:
 - Begin mapping out social distance requirements for safe reopening (areas to consider--staff area behind circ desk, the area where patrons line up to check in or check out, the patron computers and the patron seating areas.

- Get quotes for cleaning services for a “deep” clean prior to reopening. Schedule and have the cleaning completed.
- Research and discuss the need for a plexi shield for the circulation desk
- In conjunction with other UHLS member libraries, make a plan to isolate all returned library materials.
- Create a plan for safe contact-less material pick up
- Create a mask policy for Board review and approval.
- Create a state of emergency plan for Board review and approval.

Step 2 The library remains closed to the public but limited staff are allowed access to begin the pre-opening process. Staff not working their normal scheduled hours. Only two staff are allowed in the library at one time. Social distancing must be maintained and masks are required for staff. Schedules must be saved for contact tracing purposes. Staff should only return at this point, IF they feel safe doing so.

Step 2 Tasks

- Staff will work reduced hours. Staff will have the opportunity to work on some projects from home. The library director may work partially from home.
- Library staff are required to wear masks and practice social distancing around each other. The library will supply non medical grade masks for staff. Staff may also choose to wear their own masks.
- Training for the proper use of masks and gloves will be given to staff
- Cleaning protocols will also be reviewed regularly with the staff.
- Staff will be trained to execute contact less pick up.
- Staff will be trained on how to handle returned library materials and how to put them into isolation.
- If plexi shield is warranted and approved, shields should be installed during this step.
- Library staff will work on their normal jobs--shelving, new book processing, processing magazines, weeding as well as any other necessary tasks.
- Put in place the plan to isolate books (if that is the direction advised by UHLS)
- Make a plan for reduced hours that will begin in Step 3
- Begin to store chairs and move public computers in anticipation of opening to the public.
- Once decisions have been made about reopening plans, they need to be advertised on the library webpage, Facebook page and in the Advertiser if possible.
- The library will continue to maintain a strong virtual presence on Facebook and look to create a YouTube channel

Step 3 The library remains closed to the public but begins to offer contactless pick up of library items. Staff is allowed to return but shifts will include only 2 people on at a time. Library Director can be a third but will work primarily in the small office. No volunteers allowed at this time. No in person programming or meetings allowed.

Step 3 Tasks

- Library begins operating for the hours chosen in Step 2.
- Staff and library director may periodically work from home
- Staff continue to wear masks
- Cleaning protocols continue including all flat surfaces. They will need sanitizing 2x a day as well as doorknobs, telephones, keyboards, mice and photocopier
- Contactless pick up service begins. It will remain as an option for patrons through subsequent steps. The parameters may be altered in future steps.
- The outside dropbox will be unlocked during this period. The dropbox will be carefully emptied on a specific schedule. Staff will wear gloves during the emptying of the dropbox. Books will initially be put into isolation for 72 hours prior to being checked in. Bins will be labeled with the date and time. Gloves should be correctly discarded and hands should be washed immediately after completing this process. The isolation procedure will be continued through subsequent steps.
- No late fees will accumulate at this time
- After the 72 hours is completed, items may be checked in and shelved or routed to their next destination.

Step 4 Approved by Board on June 25th.

Step 4 The library opens to the public *by appointment* with reduced hours for transactions only. Staff will continue to work two person shifts to allow easier contact tracing.

Step 4 Tasks

- Staff hours and schedules continue to be reduced.
- Staff will continue to work in shifts of two.
- All staff will wear masks while in the library.
- The Library Director will continue to work from home occasionally.
- Library will open by appointment for transactional services only (check out materials, copy/fax/print, reference questions). There will be no meetings, tutoring or newspaper reading allowed. Chairs will be removed from tables during this step to discourage patrons from lingering.
- Patrons entering the building must be wearing masks. Anyone unable to wear a mask can be served via Grab N Go pickup. Signage will be posted noting this new requirement and to encourage patrons to practice social distancing.
- Patrons will call the library to make appointments for 20 minute slots. One patron per 20 minute appointment slot for a total of 3 patrons per hour. Patrons will be asked to leave their phone number upon making the appointment to aid in contact tracing. No walk-ins will be permitted. One appointment per patron per day.

- Based on advice from CDC, NYS DOH, and local officials and the close configuration of the space, the library will limit the number of patrons permitted in the library at one time.
- Fees for copy/print/fax will be waived in order to limit cash handling. Such fees will continue to be waived through Step 5. A donation jar will be put out for patrons wishing to pay for their copies. Gloved staff will empty it at the end of each day and put it in the cash drawer.
- The library will have one patron computer available by appointment for printing purposes only. It will be set up near the window at the standing desk. Patrons will need to make an appointment to use this computer for 20 minute increments. One appointment per patron per day. The computer and table top area will be sanitized after each use by staff.
- There will be no OPAC computers available during this time
- Patron use of the library phone is not allowed during this step and subsequent steps.
- Temporary signs on the floor will be used to show patrons where to stand to maintain social distance while waiting at the circulation desk.
- All returned library items will be returned in the outside dropbox. Book drops will be emptied on a schedule through the day. The books will continue to be placed directly into courier bins PRIOR to check in for a 72 hour period of isolation. The bins will be labeled with the date/time. All staff handling book drop items will wear gloves and will wash their hands immediately after completing the task.
- The Grab N Go lobby pick up service will continue.
- Patrons will be required to wear masks.

Continuation of Service-Phased Reopening Plan (Steps 1-3 approved on May 28, 2020 and Step 4, approved on June 25, 2020.) This Plan was incorporated into the Pandemic Operations Plan on February 25, 2021.

NYS Safety Plan:

New York State required all entities, including those that have been designated as essential under Empire State Development's Essential Business Guidance, to develop a written Safety Plan outlining how its workplace will prevent the spread of COVID-19. Attached is the NYS State Safety Plan template for North Greenbush Public Library. It was submitted on June 5, 2020. A copy of the safety plan is available at the library.