



Lyme Free Library Disaster Policy Emergency Closure, Pandemic Response and Recovery

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The Purpose of the Disaster Policy is to provide the staff and trustees of the Lyme Free Library the guidance needed in order to effectively prepare and respond to a disaster or pandemic while ensuring the safety of staff, trustees and patrons.

CLOSING CRITERIA

The library board may close the library when mandated by New York State, Jefferson County, The Town of Lyme or The Village of Chaumont. If the Board deems that emergency closure is necessary despite a lack of action by a government agency or it is an emergency that only affects the health and safety of the library staff and patrons, they may take the necessary steps to close the library. Decisions about the suspension and continuation of services will be made based on guidance from local health officials. The library may completely close the building to the public and suspend all in-person programs, services, and events. The library board will approve a closure through a formal vote of the board.

Reasons for closing may include, but are not limited to:

- Safety of employees or patrons is at risk.
- Employees are too ill to work, have self-quarantined, or are under mandatory quarantine by Health officials.
- Employees are under a stay-at-home order by government agencies.
- Recommendations by recognized library organizations such as the New York Library Association (NYLA) and/or the American Library Association (ALA).
- Recommendations or mandates by local, county, state, or federal agencies.

PROCEDURES FOR CLOSING

- Special Meeting of the board – The meeting shall be open to the public, advertised and recorded.
- The meeting will be advertised on our website, on our Facebook page and in the local paper when possible.
- Discussion and resolution by the library board will take place.
- Public posting of closure by the Director - website, Facebook, local papers, emails.
- Notification will be sent to the Town of Lyme Superintendent, Village Mayor, and The North Country Library System.

EMERGENCY CLOSING - POLICIES

The library board has the authority to make temporary changes to the library's policies during emergency closure to enhance services to the public without having to adopt a new policy. Due dates, card expiration dates, number of check out and holds allowed are examples of the changes to the circulation policy that may be made to help our patrons during emergency situations. The requirement that patrons have to wear masks can be added to the patron behavior policy is another example.

EMERGENCY/PANDEMIC COMMITTEE

In the event of an emergency closure due to a pandemic, an Emergency or Pandemic Recovery & Response Committee will be formed consisting of two Board Members and the Director. They will be responsible for reviewing mandates on closure of the library and informing staff and the board of mandates of interest to the library:

- New York State: Governor's Office: www.governor.ny.gov
- Federal Government: www.whitehouse.gov
- Jefferson County: www.co.jefferson.ny.us
- Town of Lyme: www.townoflyme.com
- Federal Emergency Management Agency - FEMA: www.FEMA.gov

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

If deemed necessary, the board will form a Health & Safety Committee. They will be responsible for reviewing mandates on health and safety and disinfecting the library building and materials during closure from:

- New York State Health Department - health.ny.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC - cdc.gov
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration - OSHA - osha.gov
- Institute of Museum and Library Services - IMLS - imls.gov

COMMUNICATION

The library director will continue to monitor the library email accounts. Email will be forwarded to the bookkeeper, treasurer and board members. The director will stay in weekly contact with The North Country Library System and report updates to the board. The director and board president will stay in weekly contact to monitor the crisis. The board president will continue to communicate with the board. The director will communicate with the public at the board's direction.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The director will continue to post updates on the library's website, Facebook, in emails and through the local paper The Lyme Light. Links will be provided to all online services available through Lyme Free Library and The North Country Library System. This information will include updates on digital reference materials, online materials, downloading reading materials, and access and expansion of other online resources and virtual programs. The community will be reminded of Internet service being available 24/7 on the front porch.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

QUARANTINE LEAVE POLICY

Adopted _____ 2020

If a full or part-time employee who is not personally ill is required to remain absent because of quarantine imposed by a governing authority, or if during a declared emergency an employee determines to self-quarantine and such employee presents a written statement of the attending physician or local health officer proving the necessity of such absence, such employee shall be granted leave with pay for the period of the required absence. Such pay shall cover the employee's routine hours (part-time hours will be based on an average of the most recent three pay periods, or as set by the board). Prior to return to duty, such employee may be required to submit a written statement, from the local health officer having jurisdiction, that return to duty will not jeopardize the health of other employees. To be eligible for compensation during quarantine leave, employees must be ready, willing and able to work remotely on projects identified by library leadership during their regularly scheduled working hours and must complete such duties as assigned. When performing tasks remotely, employees should note the time worked through the usual process for logging hours.

FAMILY LEAVE - All employees may apply for family leave while caring for themselves or sick family members and unable to work due to high risk exposure.

LYME FREE LIBRARY PAID LEAVE DURING EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY

When the library temporarily closes due to a declared state of emergency, and all or some employees are instructed not to come in to work, upon a vote of the board, compensation shall

continue as follows: Full-time and part-time staff shall be paid at their regular rate of pay. To be eligible for compensation during a time of emergency closure or reduced hours, employees must be ready, willing and able to work remotely on projects identified by library leadership during their regularly scheduled working hours, and must complete such duties as assigned. When performing tasks remotely, employees should note the time worked through the usual process for logging hours. Adopted: March 24, 2020.

WORKING REMOTELY

Working remotely is an arrangement whereby, during a crisis or emergency situation an employee works from home because his or her job responsibilities must still be fulfilled to provide for continuity of operations. The director may at times enter the library for minimum basic operations.

MINIMUM BASIC OPERATIONS

“Minimum Basic Operations” include the following, provided that employees comply with social distancing requirements while carrying out such operations:

- The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business’s inventory, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions.
- The minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.

PROTOCOL FOR STAFF EXPOSED TO A CONTAGIOUS VIRUS/ILLNESS

Employees who have been exposed to a contagious virus or illness should inform the director and quarantine at home until their doctor allows them to return to work. The director will notify all staff that they may have been exposed to a virus or contagious illness. All details including the name of the exposed employee will be kept confidential by the director as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The board president will be informed that the director has taken this action.

WHAT TO DO IF AN EMPLOYEE TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 should: Inform the director and quarantine at home until their doctor allows them to return to work. The director will notify all staff that they have been exposed to an employee that has tested positive for COVID-19. The board president will be informed that the director has taken this action. If a worker tests positive for COVID-19, the director will immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.

EMPLOYEES THAT BECOME ILL WHILE WORKING

Employees that become ill while working at the library will notify the director. The employee will be asked to close the library immediately and leave the building as soon as possible. The building will remain closed for 72 hours or until cleaning and disinfection of the library has been completed. The library will be cleaned and disinfected as per recommendations that The Health & Safety Committee have identified in CDC, OSHA, IMLS and NYS Department of Health regulations. High touch surfaces such as railings, light switches, door knobs, telephones, keyboards, counters, circulation desk, and workstations will be given special attention. Waste

baskets will be emptied. The Health & Safety Committee will determine what products will be used and train cleaning staff in using them.

FINANCIAL

Payroll - The director shall continue to submit payroll hours for all employees at the direction of the board president. The treasurer will continue to take care of all banking/financial issues in conjunction with the bookkeeper. The treasurer will pick up the mail and contact the director as needed. The treasurer will research and apply for grants to reimburse the library for payroll, cleaning personnel, cleaning supplies, and building update expenses for reopening when available.

CROSS TRAINING OF STAFF

All staff will be instructed in necessary procedures used in the running of the library on a day to day basis. This will enable staff to work for one another as needed during times of illness and quarantine.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Building checks will be conducted by the Building & Grounds Committee while the library is closed.

BOOK DROP

The book drop will be closed during closure due to illness/pandemic. Patrons will be asked to hold all materials until the library reopens. No fines will be charged for any library's materials.

CHILDREN'S PLAYROOM

The children's playroom will remain closed until it is determined that it is safe to reopen. Opening will be determined using the standards set forth by New York State on social distancing and cleaning. All toys, puzzles and stuffed animals will be moved into storage until it is deemed safe to allow our patrons to come into contact with them.

OUTDOOR PLAY SHIP

The ship will be closed until it is determined that it is safe to reopen. Opening will be determined using the standards set forth by New York State on social distancing.

PUZZLES

All puzzles will be moved into storage until it is deemed safe to loan them again.

PROGRAMS

All programs will be cancelled and or postponed until it is determined by federal, state, county guidelines that it is safe to hold them again. The board will make the final decision as to when they are satisfied it is safe to resume programming

CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Fines, expiration dates and due dates will be reset by The North Country Library System to ensure that patrons accounts stay active. No fines shall accrue during shutdown as per our circulation policy. Due dates and card expiration dates will be reset until after NCLS reopens the circulation system. Patrons will not be able to place holds during the time we are closed if the system has shut down.

WIFI

The Wi-Fi connection at the Library will continue to be available to community members during closures. Community members can access the Wi-Fi on our porch or in our parking lot 24/7. We ask that anyone using the porch to comply with social distancing rules and wear a mask. Notice of this requirement will be posted on the library porch.

ONLINE SERVICES AVAILABLE

Free online services will remain available at lymefreelibrary.org and catalog@ncls.org:

- Register for a library card.
- Read the *Watertown Daily Times*.
- Read *Consumer Reports*.
- OverDrive: Patrons can enjoy access to free downloadable books, magazines, and audio books in the NCLS OverDrive collection, with curated collections for children and teens.
- Universal Class: Learners have access to over 500 different self-guided courses, including subjects in general education, teacher resources, office skills, and hobbies.
- ArtistWorks: Learn a musical instrument online! Each instrument has a lesson library that covers the fundamentals, advanced techniques, and key learning strategies. Lessons are accessible anywhere, from any device.
- Transparent Language: Explore a new language using any Internet-connected device. Available in 110+ languages, including ESL, learners have the flexibility they need to learn a new language anytime, anywhere.
- Fold3: Features premier collections of original military records. These records include the stories, photos, and personal documents of the men and women who served in the military. Many of the records come from the U.S. National archives, The National Archives of the U.K. and other international records.
- ReferenceUSA: Offers the most up-to-date data available in the market for small business owners and marketing professionals.
- Cypress Resume: Jobseekers can build a resume with an easy-to-use template that provides concise, professional language to describe core tasks of a multitude of professions.
- TumbleBooks: Free e-books, videos, and games for children.
- Educational and research databases.

REOPENING

TIMELINE

Depending on the reason for closure, the library board will decide on the timeline as to when and how the library will reopen. The library board will contact their local public health officials, insurance provider, and their attorney about steps they should take to mitigate risk and liability to staff and the general public before reopening library buildings or offering front porch or curbside pickup. We will notify The North Country Library System of our plans to reopen to ensure all necessary services are available to the library and our patrons.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The library will not open until all necessary masks, gloves, and other personal protective equipment is available for staff and patron use. All personal protective equipment will be supplied by the library board to ensure the library is ready to open. The Health & Safety Committee will work with the treasurer to obtain necessary personal protective equipment.

TRAINING

Staff will be trained by the Health & Safety Committee as to the proper use of all personal protective equipment and cleaning procedures according to OSHA & CDC recommendations for use, removal and disposal.

REOPENING

If returning to normal operations is deemed unsafe by the library board or the board needs

more time for cleaning, disinfecting, and building improvements the board may recommend the following measures for opening in phases that require different levels of service. The Board will determine when we move from one phase to another. The board will determine if all phases are needed. We may move forward or backwards through the phases as the situation dictates.

Phase 1 – “Front Porch Pickup” - Patrons will be asked to order books online or to call the library for help in ordering books. When materials are ready for checkout, staff will call patrons and set up a time for pick up. Staff will checkout items, place them in a plastic bag that has been tape closed, and place them in a locker on the porch for pickup at the designated pickup time. Pick up times will be scheduled every fifteen minutes to ensure patrons can enter the porch one at a time. To comply with ADA requirements, accommodations will be made for patrons that cannot climb the stairs. Items for these patrons will be left on the side door steps for easy accessibility. Hand sanitizer will be available on the porch for patrons use. The book drop will be closed during this phase. Patrons may return materials to the library by placing them in a bin on the porch. Patrons may not enter the building during this phase. Patrons will be asked to practice social distancing and wear masks as deemed necessary by the board with guidelines presented by New York State. Staff will remain in the building when patrons are on the porch. Staff will use a cart to bring the returned book bins into the library and place in our “disinfection” area at the end of each day. Each bin will be marked with the date the materials have been returned. Staff will have all safety and cleaning supplies at their disposal. Staff will work at different times so only one employee is in the library at a time. Staff will continue working on inventory, grants, policies... as time allows. No copies will be made for the public during this time. Cash will not be handled by staff during Phase 1. All payments should be mailed to the library. All in library programs will remain cancelled. No volunteers will be allowed in the library during phase one. Computers and bathroom facilities will be closed to the public. Cleaning of the library will take place each evening after we close. Returned materials will be handled in a manner consistent with CDC/OSHA/IMLS guidelines. Patrons will be informed of these changes on our website and Facebook, in our local paper *The Lyme Light* as well as our monthly newsletter. Signs will be placed outside of the building to inform patrons of the current regulations.

Phase 2 – Phase 2 will begin when the board is satisfied that it is safe to allow patrons in the library building. The library board may limit the number of patrons allowed in the building at one time. Patrons will only be allowed in the circulation desk area. All other areas will be blocked. Patrons will be asked to order materials online, or call the library for help in ordering materials. When materials are ready for checkout, staff will call patrons to let them know their items are in and advise them they can pick up their items during regular business hours. Patrons will enter through the side door by the parking lot. There will be stickers on the floor advising patrons to stay 6 feet apart to comply with social distancing. Patrons will be asked to set returned items in a bin on a return table. Patrons will then proceed to the circulation desk to check out materials. Staff will not touch library cards. Patrons will be asked to hold their library card up for scanning by the staff. Patrons will leave by the front door to keep the flow of traffic going in one direction. Patrons will be asked to practice social distancing and wear masks as deemed necessary by the

board with guidelines presented by New York State. Hand sanitizer will be available for patron use. The staff will limit the number of patrons allowed in at one time if needed. Patrons will be asked to wait on the outdoor ramp when necessary. Cash will not be handled by the staff during Phase 2. All payments should be mailed to the library. Staff would work at different times to ensure that only 1 employee is in the library at a time. Staff can continue working on inventory, grants, policies... as time allows. No

volunteers would be allowed in the library during this phase. All in library programs will remain cancelled. Computers and bathroom facilities will be closed to the public. Computers will be covered to protect them from being exposed to bacteria. A circulation desk gate and a sneeze guards have been installed and a plastic curtain has been hung in the circulation desk area. Personal protective equipment including masks and gloves will be available for staff. Cleaning of the library will take place each evening after we close. Returned materials will be handled in a manner consistent with CDC/OSHA/IMLS guidelines. Patrons will be informed of these changes on our website and Facebook, in our local paper The Lyme Light as well as our monthly newsletter. Signs will be placed inside and outside of the building to inform patrons of the current regulations.

Phase 3 – Fully open the library to the public with restrictions in place. Stacks will be open to the public. Patrons and staff will observe social distancing, traffic flow rules and wear masks as deemed necessary by the board. Patrons will enter through the side door and will leave by the front door to keep the flow of traffic going in one direction. There will be stickers on the floor advising patrons to stay 6 feet apart to comply with social distancing. There will be directional arrows on the floor to ensure that patrons follow a path through the stacks that allows the least amount of contact between patrons. Patrons will be asked to practice social distancing and wear masks as deemed necessary by the board with guidelines presented by New York State. The staff will limit the number of patrons allowed in at one time if needed. Patrons will be asked to wait on the outdoor ramp or porch when necessary. Staff will not touch library cards. Patrons will be asked to hold their library card up for scanning by the staff. The number of computers available will be limited to comply with social distancing regulations. Patrons will be asked to clean computer keyboards with disinfecting wipes before and after use. Computer use time may be limited. Patrons will be asked to wipe all surfaces touched before leaving; this includes tables, chairs... Furniture will be moved to discourage social gathering. Hand sanitizer will be available for use. Sneeze guards and barriers will be in place around the circulation desk. Outside groups may be limited or prohibited from using the library at this time. The children’s playroom and the outside boat will remain closed to the public. All programs remain cancelled. No volunteers would be allowed in the library during this phase. Cleaning of the library will take place each evening after we close. Returned materials will be handled in a manner consistent with CDC and/or OSHA regulations when appropriate. Patrons will be informed of these changes on our website and Facebook posts as well as our monthly newsletter. Signs will be placed inside and outside of the building to inform patrons of the current regulations.

Phase 4 – When deemed prudent by the Library Board, library operations will return to normal. The public will have access to all library rooms. Staff will not touch library cards. Patrons will be asked to hold their library card up for scanning by the staff. Programs will be rescheduled and groups may meet. Social distancing will be observed and masks may be required. The number of patrons at programs may be limited. Hand sanitizer will be available for patrons to use. Computers will be available for use with social distancing as needed. Patrons will be asked to clean computer keyboards with disinfecting wipes before and after use. Computer use time may

be limited. The number of computers available may be limited to comply with social distancing. Volunteers may begin working again. The Children's room will be available for use. Cleaning of the library will take place each evening after we close. The circulation desk gate will remain in place. Returned materials will be handled in a manner consistent with current CDC and/or OSHA regulations when appropriate. Patrons will be informed of these changes on our website and Facebook posts as well as our monthly newsletter. Signs will be placed inside and outside of the building to inform patrons of the current regulations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

The library will provide personal protective equipment (PPE) as recommended or mandated by law and as each situation warrants. This may include gloves, masks, and/or other appropriate health and safety equipment. Employees must wear appropriate health and safety equipment according to library policy, when required by health and safety officials, or when mandated by local, state, or federal regulations or laws. Face coverings must be cleaned or replaced after use or when damaged or soiled, may not be shared, and should be properly stored or discarded. Cloth face covering should be taken home and washed by employees after each shift.

MASKS - PATRONS

Individuals may be asked to wear masks while in the library during all 4 phases of reopening. Individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition (including children under the age of 2 years per CDC guidance) may enter the premises and are not required to provide documentation of such medical condition. If a patron enters the library without a mask, the staff will offer him/her one that the library has on hand. If the patron refuses to use the mask, staff will expedite the patron's transaction for the protection of the other patrons and staff. The patron will be asked to step out onto the porch to receive their materials. Staff will ask the patron to please wear a mask the next time they enter the library.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The number of people allowed in the library at one time will be limited according to the current guidelines set forth by the State of New York. Changes will be made as needed to stay in accordance with New York State requirements as needed. If a patron refuses to socially distance, they will be asked to leave the library.

COMPUTER USE

Patrons that would like to use the public access computers will be asked to clean the keyboard and buttons on the computer before and after use. Disinfectant wipes will be supplied at every computer, including staff computers.

STAFF AND PATRON EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

If the Library gets a call from the Jefferson County Department of Health saying that a patron or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 and was in the library while contagious the library will be closed for 72 hours, cleaned and disinfected. The library director will work with the Health Department to ensure that all patrons and staff that were exposed are notified. The library will contact patrons to get their permission to give their contact information to the Department of Health.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION AFTER STAFF/PATRONS SUSPECTED/CONFIRMED TO HAVE COVID-19 HAVE BEEN IN THE FACILITY

The library will follow CDC recommendations - Close off areas visited by the ill persons. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait

24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection. Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

HOURS

During all phases the library will offer services during our regular business hours: Monday 10 to 4, Tuesday 10 to 8, Wednesday 10 to 6, Friday 10 to 8 & Saturday 10 to 4. Staff will work their regularly assigned hours.

RENEWALS

During all phases, loan times can be extended by patrons through their online account or by calling the library.

FINES

As per our circulation policy, no fines will be collected for materials that are overdue.

PAYMENTS

During phases 1, 2, and 3, payments for lost books donations... must be mailed to the library. The staff will not be able to handle cash or checks during this time.

DAILY CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OF THE LIBRARY BUILDING

The library will be cleaned and disinfected at the conclusion of each day we are in operation as per recommendations that The Health & Safety Committee have identified in CDC, OSHA and NYS Department of Health regulations. High touch surfaces such as railings, light switches, door knobs, telephones, keyboards, counters, circulation desk, and workstations will be given special attention. Waste baskets will be emptied at the conclusion of each day. The Health & Safety Committee will determine what products will be used and train staff in using them. CDC guidelines will be posted in the library.

SOCIAL DISTANCING/USE OF CIRCULATION DESK AREA BY STAFF

Only one staff member will be working at any given time. The circulation computer and all other items touched will be cleaned with disinfecting wipes by each employee at the end of every shift.

HANDLING INCOMING MATERIALS

Determining a safe and effective way to handle library materials is of the highest priority for resuming library service during all phases of reopening. According to the most recent research by the National Institute of Health, the virus that causes COVID-19 can last up to three days on plastic, and for a lesser amount of time on cardboard and other materials. For this reason, a 72-hour quarantine of library materials is considered the simplest and most cost-effective way to disinfect them at this time.

QUARANTINING INCOMING MATERIALS

All incoming materials – new, returned (book drop and porch) and ILL items will be put into bins marked with the date they came to the library. Bins will be placed in the quarantine area for 72 hours. After 72 hours items will be wiped down with a solution of bleach and water as recommended by the CDC. When materials are removed from the bins, the bins will be wiped down with a bleach and water solution.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING MATERIALS

After 72 hours in the quarantine area, materials will be taken to the cleaning table to be wiped down with a bleach and water solution as per CDC guidelines. Items will then be taken to the drying table. Once dry items will either be checked in and shelved, put into the circulation closet to be barcoded or put into bins for NCLS pickup. Both the cleaning and drying tables will be cleaned and disinfected with a bleach and water solution after each use. Map of the cleaning/disinfecting area is attached.

OUTGOING MATERIALS

Items that are pulled from the shelves will be quarantined, cleaned and disinfected in the same manner as incoming materials. After 72 hours, they will be put in NCLS bins or loaned to patrons.

NCLS DELIVERY BINS

Incoming NCLS delivery bins will be placed under a table marked NCLS Incoming in the designated quarantine area by NCLS delivery employees. Outgoing bins will be placed under a table marked NCLS Outgoing in the designated quarantine area. NCLS delivery employees will be notified of proper placement of the bins.

Adopted: June 3, 2020