

**Verona Public Library  
Epidemic & Library Health Emergency Policy**

**I: Purpose**

This policy establishes a protocol that will be used in the event of an epidemic or declared public health emergency. The library should plan for staff being unable to report to work in the event of a serious infectious disease outbreak. In addition, during an epidemic or health emergency organizations may be required to take measures to help slow the spread of illness such as closing by order of Dane County public health officials. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained with limited staff and reduced hours as determined by the Library Director.

**II: Definitions**

**Epidemic** – A disease affecting many persons in a specific locality at the same time, and spreading from person to person in a locality where the disease is not permanently prevalent.

**Library health emergency** – The state of affairs in which there are not enough healthy library staff to maintain normal hours of operation.

**Employees and staffing level** – Permanent part-time and permanent full-time library staff as defined in the City of Verona Personnel Policy. This does not include library volunteers.

**III: Library Closure**

The Verona Public Library may temporarily close because of an epidemic or library health emergency in the event that any of the following occur:

- A. The City of Verona facilities or offices close because of a health emergency.
- B. The Verona Area School District (VASD) closes schools because of an epidemic.
- C. A mandate, order, or recommendation for closure is issued by public health or other government officials.

At the discretion of the Library Director, the Verona Public Library may temporarily close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services in the event that there is insufficient staff to maintain basic service levels.

In the event of closure, due dates and holds pickup dates for library materials will be adjusted so that no lost charges are assessed and holds do not expire on dates in which the library is closed. The exterior book drop will be kept open and cleared periodically if possible.

The library may reopen to the public even if VASD schools remain closed if cleared to do so by the Public Health Madison & Dane County and the City of Verona.

**IV: Minimum Staffing Levels**

If Dane County public health officials allow public facilities to remain open during or reopen following a public health emergency, the library must maintain a minimal level of staff in order

to be open to the public. Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as four staff members available to work during all open hours with a maximum 8 hour workday and 40 hour workweek per employee. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the City of Verona's sick leave policy. In the event of sudden closure and library employees are sent home from work, eligible employees may work from home where possible under the guidelines of the City of Verona Telecommuting Policy and Procedure. Staff may also be voluntarily temporarily reassigned to work in other city departments.

#### **V: Communication**

The library director will notify the library board of any changes in services or hours related to an epidemic or health emergency. Any changes in the library's open hours to the public will be communicated via the library's website, social media accounts, and phone messages.

#### **VI: Prioritization of Services**

If reduced staffing, hours, or services are required, employees shall perform priority responsibilities that most directly impact patrons prior to any other work tasks.

Priority responsibilities shall follow this order, with safety being a priority:

1. Direct patron assistance, e.g. check out, issuing library cards, computer and information assistance.
2. Processing incoming holds, check in, incoming delivery returns, shelving.
3. Processing holds
4. Submission of payroll, processing bills for payment.
5. Preparing for and holding Library Board meetings.

Staffing levels will determine the ability to carry out regular services. At the Library Director's discretion, this may include cancelling programs, special events, and meeting room reservations and reassigning employee duties and shifts.

#### **VII: Employee Absences**

The City of Verona's Personnel Policy outlines the sick leave policy. This policy shall continue to be followed in the event of an epidemic or library health emergency.

#### **VIII: Responsibility for Library Operations**

If, for any reason, the Library Director is unable or unavailable to perform the responsibilities and decisions outlined in this policy, administrative authority for this policy and all library operations shall fall to the Assistant Director.

Library Board approved June 3, 2020

Revised and approved July 10, 2024