Policy Type: Human Resources **Policy Number: HR-13**

Policy Title: COVID-19 Pandemic Policy **Initial Approval Date: November 2020**
Last Review/Revision Date: March 2022
Review Date: 2026

This policy establishes guidelines for safe work procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic situation for all staff and volunteers of the Township of Madawaska Valley Public Library (the Library).

Recognizing that this is an evolving situation, staff and volunteers are asked to review the following information to minimize risk and help ensure a safe and healthy workplace. *See also Policy Number OP-02: Safety, Security and Emergency, Appendix A: COVID-19 Emergency.*

Section 1: COVID-19 Prevention

1. Staff are encouraged to follow the preventative measures recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) and regularly self-assess using the available online tool at https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/

2. As instructed by the RCDHU, employees with symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their local health unit at 1-613-735-8654 ext. 577 or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 for further guidance. The RCDHU has additional COVID-19 information available at https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/

3. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, staff are encouraged to:
   a) wear masks whenever possible throughout the Library;
   b) stay behind the plexiglass divider at the check out desk;
   c) implement social distancing of 2 metres (6.5 feet);
   d) wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer (i.e., an alcohol-based hand-rub);
   e) cough and sneeze in your arm or sleeve, not your hand(s);
   f) avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
   g) keep workstation, common surfaces and items clean;
   h) wear masks in public;
   i) limit travel;
   j) if you get sick, stay home until your symptoms are gone; and
   k) use the online self-assessment tool to determine next steps.

4. Please remember the importance of social distancing and practice it both at the Library and outside of the Library.

Section 2: What to do if you exhibit COVID-19 symptoms

For the health and safety of our staff and clients, all staff have a responsibility to protect themselves and others by understanding the early symptoms of COVID-19 and staying home when you exhibit symptoms. *Appendix A* is a Self-Declaration Form for staff information; please use it if you or a member of your family develop symptoms. Staff are asked to complete the COVID-questionnaire prior to each shift.

1. **Procedure if a staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive and is fully vaccinated:**
   a) A staff member with symptoms of COVID-19 should notify the CEO/Librarian, arrange for a COVID-19 test, and self-isolate for five (5) days.
   b) Isolation can end after five (5) days if the staff member is free of symptoms for at least 24 hours. *Refer to Public Health guidelines for current advice.*
   c) Public Health safety measures, such as distancing and masking should be followed.
   d) The Library will remain open. The CEO/Librarian will arrange for a volunteer(s) to work with the CEO/Librarian and staff to cover missed shifts. Should a volunteer not be available, staff will be asked to work any shifts not covered by volunteers.
   e) If two staff members are isolating, the second individual working a shift would have to be a volunteer. Should we not be able to staff a significant number of open hours, we may need to close the Library until we can staff sufficient hours again.

2. **Procedure if a staff member tests positive for COVID-19:**
   a) All staff will will take a COIVD-19 Rapid Antigen Test.
   b) The Library closes until all staff have been tested and their results are negative.
   c) The CEO/Librarian will report to the Public Health unit, as applicable.
   d) The CEO/Librarian will determine at their discretion if the Library can reopen, based on staffing availability, etc.

3. **Procedure for Staff in Self-Isolation:**
   a) Staff are asked to self-isolate for five 5 days
   b) For 10 days after exposure,
      i) Self-monitor for symptoms
      ii) Wear a mask and avoid activities where mask removal would be necessary
      iii) Do not visit anyone who is considered in a high risk category
      iv) Do not visit or attend work in high risk settings

c) The following household members do not need to self-isolate but should follow the above precautions for 10 days:
   i) Household members that have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days
   ii) Household members that are 18+ and have received a booster dose
   iii) Household members that are under 18 and are fully vaccinated
   iv) Household members that do not meet the above criteria must self-isolate as per current requirements.

d) Part-time Staff who are required to self-isolate in accordance with these recommendations can draw from their banked hours, sick time, or vacation time during the isolation period. Staff that can work from home and be available for telephone calls if they are well enough to do so, will receive regular pay.

e) Full time staff get three days paid infectious disease emergency leave.

Section 3: Sick Leave, Leave and Vacation Requests

1. In accordance with direction provided by the Province of Ontario, staff diagnosed with COVID-19 will not be required to provide a doctor's note to receive certified sick leave. Those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should self-assess using Ontario's online tool. When required, testing for COVID-19 can be done with a COVID-19 Rapid Antigen home test kit. If a staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 they are to immediately advise the CEO/Librarian. All Staff are asked to self test. (See Section 2.)
2. Staff are asked to complete a sick leave application form to support extended staff absences.

3. Permanent Part-time Staff:

a) Staff that exhibit signs of COVID-19 and need to be self-tested could miss 1 to 12 days of lost work.

b) Permanent Part-time Staff who miss *up to two days of work* will make up the missed hours.

c) Permanent Part-time Staff who miss *up to 10 or 12 days of work:*
   i) If an individual must self-isolate for 5 days, they are eligible for the federal Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) until May 7, 2022. See https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/recovery-sickness-benefit/crsb-who-apply.html
   ii) Staff may also be eligible for the Ontario Worker Income Protection Benefit program, until July 31, 2022. See https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-worker-income-protection-benefit

iii) If an employee becomes very ill with COVID-19 and cannot return to work for an extended period of time, the CEO/Librarian will determine if their job can be posted as an interim position. The employee will be eligible for EI Sickness Benefits, and their job will be held until they are able to return to work. See https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/qualify.html

4. Full Time - CEO/Librarian:

a) As per the Township of Madawaska Valley Corporate Policies and Procedures, the CEO/Librarian is credited 1 day of sick leave for each full calendar month of full-time service.
b) Should long term leave be required, the CEO/Librarian would access benefits from the extended health care plan.
c) Many aspects of the CEO/Librarian job can be done from home; however, we would need to invest in some software or additional licensing for some programs.

5. Vacation Requests

a) Vacation requests submitted at this time will be considered on a case-by-case, operational requirement basis as we continue to work towards maintaining a healthy work place and service to clients.
b) Non-essential travel within Canada is strongly discouraged.
c) Any travel outside of Canada for personal reasons is strongly discouraged. If personal travel is cancelled, the Library cannot provide reimbursement for related costs.

Section 4: Missed Work for Parents/Caregivers

The Library recognizes that parents and/or caregivers will be away from the workplace pending the results of a COVID-19 test for their child(ren) or others in their care, and would like to outline the options available to staff:

1. Vacation and banked overtime can be utilized pending COVID-19 results when caring for immediate family members. Further direction will be provided depending on the outcome of the COVID-19 test.
2. Sick leave can be utilized, pending self-testing results. Further direction will be provided depending on the outcome of the COVID-19 test.
3. The option to work from home, if operationally feasible, will only be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. Long-term leave, sick benefits through Employment Insurance or CRSB-related programs may be an option.

Section 5: Work from Home or Shift Work

1. Opportunities for working from home can be explored but are limited. The determination on who can work from home will be the responsibility of the CEO/Librarian. The CEO/Librarian will consider how to best ensure service delivery. Library policy requires two staff persons, or a staff person and a volunteer during open hours for safety reasons.

2. The CEO/Librarian may determine that there is not enough work that can be done from home in the current position and other project-related duties need to be assigned to other staff. When that happens, the CEO/Librarian expects everyone's cooperation. A staff member's rate of pay would be continued regardless of the task assignment under these conditions.

3. Working from home is all about trust: we trust that while working from home the Library will provide a fair's day pay for a fair day's work.

4. As the situation evolves, should the provincial order change to reduce our staffing, the Library will be closed.

5. New work arrangements could also be considered such as staggered hours, a rotation cycle of work (3 days out of the office two days in) or any combination of hours that minimizes a staff member to be physically in the workplace.

6. In setting up the arrangements for working from home, the parties need to consider:
   a) How will hours, leave, vacation, etc be verified?
   b) The CEO/Librarian and staff member will agree to set hours of work, and the staff member will ensure they are available during those agreed upon hours. It is recommended that the CEO/Librarian and staff member communicate and collaborate on a regular or daily basis.
   c) The CEO/Librarian and staff member will discuss performance expectations, schedules and performance goals.
   d) Staff are reminded to ensure they protect confidential information at all times, both electronic and paper copies (e.g., bringing files home, etc)
   e) Staff working from home are expected to allocate a designated working space with consideration to their personal safety.
   f) While working from home, staff are covered under WSIB. Staff are obligated to ensure their designated work area is free from clutter and any hazards. The CEO/Librarian reserves the right to access the property in the event of an injury or if assistance is required is establishing a proper safe work area. Staff are obligated to report any work-related injuries immediately.
   g) Working from home is a temporary privilege. The CEO/Librarian reserves the right to alter, modify, or change these arrangements with very little notice.

Section 6: Training

1. Work-related training, including in-house and external training seminars/workshops, will be determined on a case-by-case basis until further notice.
2. Webinars can proceed as planned.

Section 7: Board Meetings

Boarding meetings will be conducted remotely unless they can be held in a space that allows for social distancing or can be held outdoors. *See Policy BL-05 Meetings of the Board* for remote meeting procedures.

The current situation remains very dynamic. As new information becomes available, guidance and decisions are subject to change. These temporary and extraordinary measures represent a temporary suspension of regular policies and procedures, and do not constitute a new precedent.

Related Documents:

Policy Number **HR-04: Vacation, Public Holidays and Leave (Section 8:Infectious Disease Emergency Leave)**
Policy Number **HR-09: Health and Safety**
Policy Number **OP-02: Safety, Security and Emergency**
Policy Number **BL-05 Meetings of the Board**

Appendix A

Township of Madawaska Valley Public Library Self Declaration

Disclosure of exposure or illness is ***required*** in order to safeguard the health and safety and restrict the outbreak in the community. Information collected will be kept safely and any personal information will not be disclosed unless as required by law or with the employee's express consent.

_____ _____
Name of Employee Home Phone #

1. Have you experienced any of the following symptoms?

Fever	Yes	No
New or worsening Cough	Yes	No
Difficulty breathing	Yes	No

Date the symptoms first appeared: _____

2. Have you been in close contact with a person diagnosed with, or suspected (showing symptoms) of being infected by, COVID-19? Yes No

Do you live in the same home: Yes No

If no, what was the last date of contact: _____

For how long? _____

In what setting was the contact: _____

3. If you have answered yes to any of the above-mentioned questions, you may have to self-isolate for 14 days from the last date of contact with a person diagnosed with, or suspected of being infected by, COVID-19 or the date you first experienced symptoms.

Have you contacted Renfrew County District Health Unit ? (613) 735-8654 Yes No

If yes, has it been recommended you and/or family members get tested Yes No

Please indicate below their recommendations. *If you have not contacted the RCDHU, note that the Library will be seeking RCDHU advice on each case.*

I confirm that the above information is accurate

_____ _____
Employee Signature Date

Library Instructions

Self-Quarantine recommended YES NO

Date Quarantine Started _____ Expected End Date of Quarantine _____

_____ _____
CEO/Librarian Chair, MVPL Board