

Town of Indian Lake Public Library Pandemic Safety Plan, Revised February 28, 2022

The Town of Indian Lake Public Library is committed to serving its entire community. The years 2020-2022 have brought unprecedented challenges that have necessitated use of many safety measures to ensure the Library and its Staff can continue to be open to serve its patrons and visitors.

To continue serving our patrons during this difficult time, while placing the health and safety of our community at the forefront, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted this Pandemic Safety Plan. The safety measures in this policy follow CDC recommendations, but also take into consideration COVID-19 transmission in this community. This plan is subject to change if CDC or Hamilton County Public Health guidance changes.

The board's authority to adopt these measures is found in our charter, bylaws, New York Education Law Sections 255, 260, 226, 8 NYCRR 90.2, and Article 2 of the Not-for-profit corporation law. We also consider it our duty to develop these measures to keep our services accessible at this time.

Staff at the Indian Lake Library have the authority to enforce these measures like any other of the Library's Rules. Concerns about this policy should be directed to the Library Director. Thank you for honoring these measures, which are designed to keep our community safe, while allowing access to the library.

Scope of Pandemic Safety Measures

The Indian Lake Library operates per relevant law and Executive Orders, including those pertaining to mandatory workforce reductions. Therefore, the temporary practices in this Policy may be further modified as needed to conform with relevant Orders. This document is to be considered a "living document" and its details may change as the Covid-19 pandemic evolves. The goal is to protect our library staff and our community.

Safety Practices

Until the Board of Trustees votes to revoke this policy, the Library will require all people on the premises to abide by the following safety practices:

1. Mask wearing will be optional for Library Visitors, effective 3/2/22. Library staff will continue to mask in shared and public spaces in the building.
2. Patrons and staff will practice Social Distancing (6 feet from others) while using the library and while on library grounds.
3. Library materials will be disinfected upon check in and prior to re-shelving and handling.

ADA

In the event any safety requirement is not practicable on the basis of a disability, please contact the Library Director to explore a reasonable accommodation.

Code of Conduct

Adherence to these practices shall be enforced as a requirement of the Library's Code of Conduct until such time as this policy is revoked by the Library Board of Trustees.

Communication

To aid the community in honoring these requirements, the Library will transmit this policy through social media, and use a variety of health authority-approved, age-appropriate, multi-lingual and visual means to transmit this message in a manner consistent with our mission and our identity as a welcoming and accessible resource to the community.

Indian Lake Library Pandemic Safety Protocol

Protocols for Library Visitors:

- Effective March 2, 2022 members of the public are encouraged to wear a protective mask that covers their nose and mouth, but is optional to do so.
- Those members of the public that do not have a protective mask, but want to wear one, will be offered a free mask to wear while in the Library.
- If patrons may continue to request curbside delivery of materials. Patrons will alert Library Staff of their arrival to allow time for staff to place materials outside the library door on a table for pick up.
- All members of the public should maintain Social Distancing protocols and will be courteously reminded to do so.
- Library visitors should make use of the numerous hand sanitizing stations throughout the Library prior to handling materials.
- The above measures are considered part of the patron code of conduct, and Library Staff are expected to ensure Library visitors adhere to them.
- Any member of the public who refuse to follow these guidelines will be asked to leave the Library and possibly incur a suspension of privileges.

Protocols for Library Staff:

- Library Staff members will wear masks in all public and shared spaces within the library.
- Library Staff will practice frequent hand washing both before and after handling materials.
- Library Staff will remind patrons of safety protocols as necessary.
- Circulation desks have physical barriers in place to protect Library Staff.
- All returned Library materials will be disinfected prior to being re-shelved.
- Library Staff will disinfect the following areas as follows:
 1. Their personal work stations at the end of their shift.
 2. Shared areas such as kitchen, lunch room, other common areas they use them.
 3. Computer stations after users vacate stations.
 4. Light disinfection of public and staff restrooms at end of day, or as needed.
- Library Staff will accurately complete a daily health screening prior to daily shift.
- Library staff will stay home and use sick time if exhibiting any current COVID-19 symptoms, or symptoms of other communicable disease. Testing is encouraged if COVID-19 symptoms persist.
- If tested positive for COVID-19, Library Staff will follow current quarantine protocol set by the CDC. A positive test should be reported to the Hamilton County Health Department.
- Quarantined Staff members need to provide a note from the Hamilton Co. Health Dept. or their healthcare provider clearing them to return to work.

Protocols for Library Services:

- Building Access for Public
 - ✓ Currently all areas of the Library are open to visitors for browsing, computer use, and scheduled programs.
 - ✓ Patrons may sit in the building to work, but are encouraged to maintain social distance from other patrons not in their party, and from Library Staff.
- Public Computers
 - ✓ The Library reserves the right to limit computer access to 30 minutes, as needed, if there are patrons waiting to use the equipment.
 - ✓ Library Staff will tally computer use at the circulation desk for the annual report to NYS.

- ✓ Computers will be spaced to allow for Social Distancing measures and will have hand sanitizer available at each station.
- ✓ Station components will be sanitized as they are vacated by patrons: keyboards, mouse, chairs, counters, etc.
- Equipment Use
 - ✓ Additional services to the public will include: faxing, copying, scanning, and printing services via e-print. Staff only will operate machines for patrons.
 - ✓ Currently plush toys, puzzles, games, and other manipulatives are in storage.
- Programs
 - ✓ Limited in-person programming will take place at the discretion of the Library Director.
 - ✓ Program participants are expected to follow safety protocols during the course of the programs.
 - ✓ Equipment and work surfaces used in programs are sanitized by staff prior to being put away.
 - ✓ Virtual programming may continue to expand and will be sustained to some degree in the event of another possible closing, regardless of whether pandemic rated or not.

Background to Recent Changes in the Library Safety Policy:

On February 25, the CDC issued new Community Level Covid-19 guidance, that expands on prior guidance, and conflicts with its continuing masking guidance based on Community Transmission levels.

The new Community Level guidance groups communities into **High**, **Medium**, and **Low** categories, based on three indicators, two of which pertain to hospitalization metrics, and one to transmission rates:

- new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days,
- the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and
- total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days

Guidance for all three of the Community Levels includes: ***“At all levels, people can wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by personal level of risk. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.”***

It is only at the **High** community level that the guidance specifically states: ***“Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status (including in K-12 schools and other indoor community settings).”***

The Community Transmission guidance groups communities into four categories: **Low**, **Moderate**, **Substantial** and **High**. At the Substantial and High levels of community transmission, the guidance states *“everyone... should wear a mask in public, indoor settings.”*

As of February 28 2022, Hamilton County falls into the **Low** Community Level category.

Effective March 2, masks will be optional for Library Patrons, and encouraged for all, particularly those who have not been vaccinated.

Masks will continue to be required for Library Staff in all public and shared indoor library spaces.

These policies are subject to change if there is a change in status, or clarification of or update to the guidance.