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**COVID-19 Safety Plan**

**Approved by the Sawyer Free Library Board August 25, 2020**

In compliance with Massachusetts Safety Standards, this COVID-19 Safety Plan outlines the preventative measures and controls to be put in place so that the Sawyer Free Library (SFL) can offer public services in the building while operating in a safe environment. SFL is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff and the public. The preventative measures and controls mitigate the risk of exposure and potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. All staff must follow the guidelines and procedures to mitigate the risk of exposure to, and potential spread of, the COVID-19 virus. SFL adheres to the guidelines and mandatory workplace safety standards in the Reopening Massachusetts Plan and best practices of Gloucester’s Department of Health.

Sawyer Free Library’s COVID-19 Safety Plan is expected to be in place at least through the end of 2020 given the current predictions of the CDC and that Phase 4 of the Reopening Plan will not be scheduled without a coronavirus treatment or vaccine. The CDC is currently projecting a second wave of COVID-19 in the fall in conjunction with the regular flu season.

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**Risk Identification and Assessment**

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways. It is spread mainly from person-to-person by people who are in close contact with another (within 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. It can also spread when people touch a contaminated surface and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer people are to one another, the more time spent close together, and the more people that individuals come in contact with. The risk of surface transmission increases when many infected people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

For the purpose of this COVID-19 Safety Plan, SFL considers the following symptoms indicative of potential exposure:

Most common: Fever, chills, dry cough, tiredness

Less common: muscle aches, sore throat, diarrhea, headache, loss of taste or smell, rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes.

Serious symptoms: Difficulty breathing; shortness of breath; chest pain or pressure; loss of speech

***Risk Assessment***

SFL has assessed the risk of transmission from social interaction between staff and the public in our facility by considering:

• Contact intensity – the proximity and duration of contact

• Number of contacts – the number of people present in the space at the same time

Potential risks in our worksite include:

• Risk of transmission among staff due to proximity in interior spaces and length of time spent together

• Risk arising from number and proximity of public visitors using the facility

• Risk arising from extended use of the facility by the public

• Risk arising from face-to-face public service, especially prolonged one-to-one support and instruction

• Risk based on shared use of tools, equipment and library materials by staff and the public

**Risk Mitigation**

In accordance with Workplace Mandatory Safety Standards, SFL uses four levels – elimination, engineering controls, administrative controls and PPE – to reduce the risk of the virus spreading through droplets in the air, in addition to enhanced cleaning and hygiene procedures to reduce surface transmission.

Different preventative measures and controls offer different levels of protection. Where possible, SFL uses preventative measures and controls that offer the highest (first) level of protection, then considers additional levels if the first level isn’t practicable.

***Physical distancing (elimination)*** – mechanisms to minimize face-to-face contact, and keep people at a safe distance from one another.

***Engineering controls*** – physical barriers where it is not possible to maintain physical distancing.

***Administrative controls*** – rules and guidelines for staff and the public to reduce risk, including personal hygiene practices and cleaning protocols.

***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE*)** – where the first three levels of protection aren’t enough to control the risks.

These preventative measures and controls are defined in safe work procedures and are reinforced through education and training.

**Physical Distancing**

***Public Areas***

*Operating hours*

The following public operating hours allow for in depth on-going cleaning, set reasonable expectations for the duration of modified in-person public services, and allow for the continuation of virtual and contactless services, curbside delivery and online programming. The total number of public service hours is 42.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10 a.m.—5 p.m.

Thursday 12:00 p.m.--7:00 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m.- 5 p.m.

*Entrances, exits, stairwells and elevator*

Public entrances and exits will be as follows:

Ground floor: entrance and exit from the parking lot for the Children’s Room and people using accessibility devices to reach the 1st and 2nd Floors;

1st and 2nd floors: entrance and exit through main doors on Dale Avenue.

Distancing for lines at the entrances will be designated by markers on the ground.

Stairwells will be one way only and the elevator will be restricted to one person or family unit at a time.

*Space capacity limits*

The Phase 3 of Reopening Massachusetts stipulates gathering sizes for indoor and outdoor spaces.

Indoor spaces: eight people per 1,000 square feet and not more than 25 people in one enclosed space.

Outdoor spaces: 25 percent occupancy up to a maximum of 50 people.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indoor Spaces | Sq. Ft. | Phase 3 Maximum Occupancy |  |
| Children’s Room | 2,090 | 16 |  |
| 1st Floor | 5,063 | 25 |  |
| Wellspring Room | 720 | 5 |  |
| 2nd Floor | 5,063 | 25 |  |

A security guard will be stationed at each entrance door for the initial reopening of the Library and reassessed once compliance with preventative measures and controls is normalized.

Public access will not be allowed to the 1913 wing, given the close proximity of the stacks and that a one directional pathway back to the two building exits is not possible. Display space for the Friends and the DVDs will be relocated onto the 1st floor.

Public access for library services will not be permitted in the Saunders House since the capacity limits for the Saunders House rooms result in insufficient community benefit in proportion to increased risk to staff and the challenge of monitoring the capacity. Wellspring staff may use the Wellspring space and escort clients for intake interviews up to a maximum of five people.

*Directional pathways*

Pathways between stacks and for stairwells will be designated one way only. Browsing capacity per ranges will be limited to two people at a time.

*Service points*

Distancing for lines at public service counters and self-checkout stations will be designated by markers on the floor.

*Public work stations*

Public work stations will be set up and spaced out to be 6 feet apart.

*Public seating*

Indoor public seating will not be available other than for public work stations.

*Contactless service*

Curbside service will continue at hours commensurate with demand.

*Materials quarantine*

All materials that have circulated will be placed in marked containers and subject to quarantine timeframes based on industry standards before being returned to shelves by library workers. Materials used in the Library will be placed on re-shelving carts and also quarantined.

Physical magazines and newspapers will not be available for in-Library use since no public seating for reading will be available.

***Staff Areas***

Staff will continue to work remotely when operationally feasible.

Phase 3 of Reopening Massachusetts for indoor gathering spaces will be observed.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Indoor Space | Sq. Ft. | Phase 3 Occupancy |
| Saunders House Staff Kitchen | 241 | 1 |
| Saunders House staff room | 736 | 6 |
| Saunders House Jenny’s office | 306 | 2 |

**Engineering Controls**

Where it is not always possible to maintain safe distance between people, SFL uses additional measures to provide physical separation.

Clear barriers will be installed at public service counters and staff desks between staff workspace and the public.

Where possible, windows will be opened to increase circulation of natural air.

Water fountains will have signs that they are only to be used as refill stations for water bottles.

**Administrative Controls**

SFL will put in place procedures and guidelines to reduce risk for the public and staff. Ensuring compliance with the procedures and guidelines is a shared responsibility between employers, employees and the public.

***Rules and Guidelines for the Public***

*Signage*

Signagewill be posted at entrances and other key points to inform the public about occupancy limits, handwashing, hygiene practices and physical distancing. Signage will also be in place to advise those who are recently ill, recently arrived from outside the North East, or recently in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 that they should not enter.

The rules and guidelines for the public will also be available on the Library’s website.

*Contact Tracing*

Personal information (name, phone # and email) will be collected at both entrances for the purposes of contact tracing. Staff or security guards will record the information on a Contact Tracing Log.

*Hygiene*

At the entrances, visitors will be asked to use hand sanitizer before proceeding into the building. Hand sanitizers will be available throughout the building and visitors will be encouraged to use dispensers before and after transactions at service points with staff contact.

*Cleaning*

Cleaning procedures and schedules for custodial staff have been established to ensure:

* Thorough daily cleaning of the facility
* Routine disinfecting of hard, frequently-touched surfaces like door handles, elevator buttons, counters, tabletops, light switches and bathroom fixtures

Cleaning procedures and schedules will be enhanced based on changing circumstances, as recommended by the CDC.

Public washrooms will be checked by custodial staff daily to ensure they are well-stocked with soap, toilet paper and paper towels. Hand sanitizing stations in public and staff areas will be monitored daily to ensure sufficient supply.

Supplies will also be available for the public or staff to use to clean equipment shared by people (ex. shopping baskets, computer keyboards) between uses. Shared close-contact equipment, including earphones and toys for public use and dishes, glassware and utensils for staff will be removed or put away.

All public computers and other shared technology and equipment accessible to multiple users will be wiped down by the public between uses. Disinfecting wipes and instructions will be available at each work station.

***Rules and Guidelines for Staff***

Staff administrative guidelines, procedures and training have been developed for:

* Attendance in the library facility
* Handwashing and hygiene etiquette (sneezing into your elbow, disposing of tissues)
* Entering, exiting and passing through staff work areas
* Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols, including safe use and disposal of supplies
* Correct use of personal protective equipment
* Specific safe work procedures.

In addition, guidelines for working from home are in place.

Staff education and training will take place to ensure staff are familiar with the rules and guidelines. Front line staff will also be trained on speaking points for responding to questions from the public about the rules and guidelines.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Face coverings for the public will be required in the building. For those who cannot wear face coverings due to medical condition or disability, alternative service is provided through curbside and online. Security guards will ensure compliance prior to the public entering the building. Masks will be provided to those who do not have their own.

Face coverings will be required for staff when in proximity to other staff or the public.

**COVID-19 Exposure Response**

In the event of a COVID-19 workplace exposure, SFL will perform the following actions:

* Instruct the exposed staff member to self-isolate and get tested
* Inform the Gloucester Health Department and the City of Gloucester Human Resources Department
* Follow the Public Health Nurse’s advice regarding potential exposure to other staff
* Request DPW to perform appropriate deep cleaning measures

**Ongoing Risk Monitoring and Safety Plan Updates**

All staff are responsible for supporting a safe workplace. Staff who identify a safety concern should notify the Assistant Director immediately so that policies and procedures can be adjusted or updated.

**Resources:**

Safety Standards and Checklist: Libraries (Mass.gov)

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/phase-iii-step-1-libraries-checklist/download>

Reopening Massachusetts Libraries: Guidelines and Recommendations for Resuming Full Services

<https://guides.masslibsystem.org/ld.php?content_id=55814326>

Safety Standards and Checklist: Theaters and Performance Venues (Mass.gov)

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/phase-iii-step-1-theaters-and-performance-venues-checklist/download>

Reopening Massachusetts Libraries Roadmap

<https://guides.masslibsystem.org/ld.php?content_id=55812126>

Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting

Public Spaces, Workplaces, businesses, Schools and Homes

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/cleaning-disinfecting-decision-tool.html>

ABCPLD Bests Practices for Restoration of Public Library Services During Covid-19

<https://abcpld.ca/abc-bestpractices-covid>