

Fort Edward Free Library Temporary Safety Practices Policy in Response to COVID--19

The Fort Edward Free Library is committed to serving its community during hard times and good. The year 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges to our nation, state, and area of service. 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 the below Temporary Safety Practices Policy.

The safety measures in this policy have been confirmed with the Washington County Health Department.

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 Fort Edward Free 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.

Fort Edward Free Library Temporary Safety Practices

Scope of Temporary Safety Measures

The Fort Edward Free 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.

Until the board votes to revoke this temporary policy, the following activities will be allowed and safety practices required during the phased reopening plan:

Phase 1 Staff Only: No public allowed in building

Following the guidance of SALS (the Southern Adirondack Library System), the precedence of member libraries and government and public health recommendations, the Library Director will establish a re-opening date for the Fort Edward Free Library, in coordination with the Board of Trustees. To prepare for this opening date, all staff will report to the library building to work a schedule to be determined by the Library Director (this may be a modified schedule or a decreased number/percentage of normally scheduled hours). Any remaining normally scheduled hours will be completed at home during this time. While working in the building, staff will clean surfaces, process returns, establish quarantine system for returns, answer calls and messages from the public, handle administrative tasks, reorganize furnishings and prepare the building for public access, and continue planning exercises and collection development.

Every effort will be made to maintain social distance while at work and additional workspaces will be set up. Face masks and gloves will be provided to staff. Barriers such as

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plexiglass shields will not be needed yet since the public will not be allowed in the building during this time.

The public will be allowed and encouraged to return materials to the outdoor book return box during this time. All returned items will be brought inside the library by staff wearing PPE and the items will be quarantined for a length of time to be determined by SALS.

Phase 2 Curbside Service: Some public services restored, no public allowed in building. Timing to be determined by the Fort Edward Free Library Board of Trustees working to set a consistent opening date for our library in conjunction with SALS start-up committee.

At this stage, services will be provided at curbside only, as no public will be allowed in the building yet. Members can request items either through the catalog or the phone as per usual, and all patrons will be called once their holds arrive (even those patrons who normally receive email notices) so that we can arrange a pickup date and time. Every effort will be made to contact the patron to arrange a convenient pickup time. Pickup dates and times will be handwritten on hold slips and stored with items.

Once the patron arrives at their specified pickup time, they will be instructed to call the library to alert us of their presence and staff will bring checked out items to their vehicle and request to view ID. If they don't have a car or are walking they can call or knock and we will bring the items out to them on the front porch. Hours will be publicly announced for curbside delivery and calling hours and all voice messages will be checked within one business day. Curbside and phone hours will be Noon-4 pm & 6-8 Pm Mon, Tuesday Weds, Thursday and Friday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.

It will be requested that all returns be made to the outdoor book return box. All returned items will be brought inside the library by staff wearing PPE and quarantined for a length of time to be determined by SALS.

Staff will be masked when dealing with the public. They can wear provided gloves to deliver items and/or wash their hands after the delivery is made. It is hoped that members of the public will also be masked. Every effort will be made to keep contact very limited. Plexiglass barriers are not needed yet.

A modified staff schedule is still recommended here, but may be adjusted from the earlier schedule based on the need for curbside pickup hours and availability of staff.

Phase 3 Open to Public, Limited: Public allowed in the building, Closed stacks

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Public access will be through the main door only and patrons will be asked to remain in the area between the main door and circulation desk only, but also including the public restroom. Pick up of materials will continue and be done either inside or at the curbside. Additional services now available are: faxing, coping, printouts via eprint, all done by staff to limit contact on machines. Public will have access to the PC catalog to place requests. Prohibited areas may be marked off. All patrons will be asked to wear a mask or some form of protective face covering for the nose and mouth but the Library will not provide these. Patrons inside the building will be asked to maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and others whenever possible to follow social distancing guidelines. Due to the small size of the library and recommendations from government concerning capacity limits, some patrons may be temporarily asked to queue outdoors on the sidewalk.

Open Hours will be Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday Noon -5 and 6-8pm. Thursday 10:00 am – 3:00 pm and Friday 1:00 -5:00 pm. **Those who are immune-compromised or elderly are encouraged to use curbside service or contact the library for a special arrangement.** Staff schedules will be determined by the Library Director but will include some work from home to fulfill staff's regularly scheduled hours while the library's open hours are limited. Staff will be provided masks and gloves and social distancing guidelines will be followed to the best of our ability.

It will be requested that all returns continue to be made to the outdoor book return box. Quarantine of materials will still be required.

Hand sanitizer will be available on the desk. Floor decals will be used to highlight restricted areas and suggested social distancing spaces. Plexiglass barriers will be needed in this phase to ensure the safety of both staff and patrons interacting in close proximity at the desk.

Public meeting space will not be available. All library events will be held virtually.

Phase 4 Open to Public with Precautions: Library open to public with precautions in place to enforce social distancing. Normal operating hours and staff schedules in affect. **Closed stacks possible if quarantine of materials is ongoing**

In this phase, the public will be allowed entrance to all areas of the Library while limiting length of time in browsing collections. There may still be a state mandate on the number of people allowed in the building based on local codes or size. If this is the case, public access to the building will only be through the main door. Staff will monitor the number of people in the building at all times and may ask patrons to queue outdoors for a time. Computer use will be limited to ½ hour to compensate for increased demand. Library seating will be limited and set up to encourage social distancing. The idea will be to encourage library use, but not lingering. Masks and distancing will still be strongly encouraged for all patrons. Disinfecting wipes and/or keyboard covers will be provided depending on availability.

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Any in-person programs will by necessity be very limited in participants or take place outside (while still maintaining social distancing) or continue virtually online. In-house access to magazines and newspapers will depend on current recommendations regarding viability of the virus on paper. Public will not be able to reserve the Reading Room space during this time.

No toys or children's non-circulating items will be out for use until there is a vaccine available or public health officials give the all-clear on resuming normal activities.

It will be requested that all returns be made to the outdoor book return box. Quarantine of materials may still be required, therefore browsing will not be allowed and all items must be requested prior to check out. Curbside service will still be available by appointment.

Staff will continue to be masked for all interactions with the public. Floor decals may need to be adjusted or removed at this stage. Plexiglass barriers will still be needed at this stage.

Phase 5 Normal Operations: all normal operations resume

**All plans are dependent on adequate supplies, PPE and staffing capabilities. Cleaning will be increased during phases 1-4.*

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 temporary policy is revoked.