



Jackson County Public Library

INFLUENZA PANDEMIC POLICY

What is a PANDEMIC?

A pandemic may occur when three conditions have been met:

1. A new influenza virus subtype emerges;
2. It infects humans causing serious illness;
3. And it spreads easily and sustainably among humans.

The World Health Organization (W.H.O.) has 6 phases for tracking a potential pandemic:

Inter-pandemic Phase – New virus in animals, no human cases

1. Low risk of human cases
2. Higher risk of human cases

Pandemic Alert – New virus causes human cases

3. No or very limited human-to-human transmission
4. Evidence of increased human-to-human transmission
5. Evidence of significant human-to-human transmission

Pandemic

6. Efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission

In most cases, those infected with an influenza virus will be contagious for up to two days before symptoms develop. These persons will typically be ill for 5 to 8 days (without complications) and contagious for 7 days or more after symptoms go away. Thus, a person could potentially be contagious for up to 17 days.

It is worth noting that an influenza virus is active for up to 2 hours after being transmitted to hard surfaces.

The following JCPL policy is appropriate for most influenza virus outbreaks but may be changed or adjusted for a specific influenza virus.

A. Preventive Steps Based Upon W.H.O. Pandemic Alert Phase Recommendations:

Complete prevention of an influenza virus becoming a major health problem is outside the control of individual organizations. The conventional wisdom being shared is that common sense measures may be the only course of action to help lessen the severity of a pandemic.

Since person-to-person contact and airborne pathogens are the major modes of contracting an influenza virus, simple precautionary measures such as cleansing hands; observing “respiratory etiquette” by maintaining a personal space/separation of at least 3 feet; and sneezing or coughing into a tissue or into the elbow instead of the hand are ways to reduce the spread of germs.

Non-latex protective gloves will be made available to all employees at all phases. The wearing of gloves when handling materials is recommended at phases 4 and below but not required. Should the phase level be raised to 5, the wearing of gloves may be required based on local outbreak conditions. In the event of a Pandemic (phase 6), gloves will be required of all employees in public areas and those areas handling materials. Other situations may be included, *based on local outbreak conditions*. Masks are not provided during Pandemic Alert (phases 3 – 5). Masks may be required of public service employees at Pandemic (phase 6) based on local outbreak conditions. Masks are only a deterrent if properly fitted and changed frequently; fittings and training will be conducted if masks are required.

The use of disinfecting cleaners on common work surfaces is helpful in killing viruses. Staff in all areas may be called upon to assist in this process, using disposable cleaning gloves and disinfecting wipes or cleaner to clean surfaces.

B. Communication:

Information will be provided to employees throughout any incident of Inter-pandemic (phases 1-2) or Pandemic Alert (phases 4-5), usually via e-mail. Employees may also get updates and information from the following sources, although these will not necessarily provide local outbreak conditions:

Center for Disease Control (CDC) - <http://www.cdc.gov>

US Health and Human Services Department (HHS) - <http://www.hhs.gov>

Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) - <http://www.in.gov/isdh>

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) - <http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>

JCPL will have open communication with the City of Seymour and the Jackson County Health Department. If the phase is upgraded to Pandemic (phase 6) *and our area is sited as included in the Pandemic*, local government officials from the city and county, most notably the Mayor's office and public health department, will make the decision to close public buildings. JCPL administration and the Board of Directors will make the determination to close the library system based on recommendations from and/or the actions of the Mayor's office, public health offices, and other public entities. This decision will be based on local outbreak conditions. It is possible that JCPL will be ordered to close by public health officials.

C. JCPL Sick Time Policy During Pandemic Alert or Pandemic:

To encourage employees affected by the influenza virus to stay home, sick time policies may be modified during a Pandemic Alert (phases 4-5) or Pandemic phase (phase 6) for those employees diagnosed (substantiated) with the influenza virus or for those caring for a family member diagnosed (substantiated) with the influenza virus. Should this be the case, full-time employees with less than 120 hours (3 weeks) of sick time accumulated or part-time employees with less than 3 pro-rated weeks of sick time accumulated may choose to either use accrued sick time or to go to unpaid pay status without prejudice. Employees will be required to use accumulated sick time until there is a balance of 3 pro-rated weeks.

JCPL supervisors and managers will require employees to leave work should they exhibit symptoms of a Pandemic influenza.

If the library should close to the public: The closing of public meeting places may become part of the Pandemic Alert or Pandemic strategy. Public libraries are considered high-risk areas because they are public gathering places and because of the age groups that tend to frequent libraries.

Should the public areas of the library be closed for the purpose of discouragement of the public from assembling, work may be provided to staff not directly affected by the influenza virus. All employees, with the exception of shelvers, should report to their respective work locations per instructions provided by their supervisor or acting supervisor.

Hours of work may be modified at the discretion of management/administration. It is expected, during times of severe staff shortages, that all staff will go above and beyond usual standards to be accommodating to schedule changes, including additional work hours and flexible scheduling needs.

Should the library(ies) be forced to close completely: No employees should report for work with the exception of certain key employees. All main library telephones will be forwarded to Information Services. Certain key employees such as information services employees to answer phone questions, maintenance, IT and administration will receive direction from their supervisor or acting supervisor. Part-time employees will not receive pay, but will be allowed to use accrued personal or vacation time if they choose or hours missed may be “made-up” at a later time based on the Library’s need and with approval from the director (this is not guaranteed). Attendance policies will be suspended during this time. Full-time employees who are not key employees will be paid for time missed during the days the JCPL was *forcibly closed only*, based on what the employee would normally have been scheduled. This time will not count against any paid time off policy, even if diagnosed with an influenza virus.

Some employees may be asked, or required, to perform necessary work from a remote location or from home. Library administration will make any determination in this circumstance.

D. Library Public Service Policies:

If a Pandemic (phase 6) is announced and is in force in the Jackson County area, circulation due dates may be suspended and customers may be encouraged to retain materials until this phase has passed. Administration will make and communicate all decisions and instructions.

Other policies, such as computer use, meeting room and study room use, and program schedules may be modified appropriately. Administration will make and communicate all decisions and instructions.

Meetings scheduled at affected library locations that are open to the public and/or non-library personnel may be cancelled. Administration will make and communicate all decisions and instructions.

E. Responsibilities:

All Staff:

(Based on Pandemic phase for the Jackson County area)

At all phases:

- Frequently cleanse hands with antibacterial soap or alcohol based hand sanitizer making sure to do a thorough job.
- Observe proper respiratory etiquette by maintaining a distance of three feet from customers or fellow employees; cough into your sleeve or elbow (not your hand); and always cover your mouth and nose when coughing.

At phases 4 & 5:

- Frequently cleanse hard surfaces such as desks and countertops.
- Have an increased awareness of “hot spots” such as elevator buttons, door knobs, railings, telephone handsets, etc.
- Keyboard and mouse on public or shared computers should be cleansed frequently using anti-bacterial wipes.
- Wear protective gloves at Pandemic Phase 5, or as required by Administration. Employees may wear protective gloves at their discretion at Phases 1 – 4.

At phase 6:

- Wear protective gloves and face masks at Pandemic Phase 6, or as required by Administration.

Maintenance:

(Based on Pandemic phase for the Jackson County area)

At all phases:

- Maintain stock of non-latex protective gloves in all sizes.
- Maintain stock of protective face masks at the direction of Administration.
- Maintain stock of antibacterial hand soap and alcohol based hand sanitizer.

At phases 5 & 6:

- Maintain appropriate cleaning supplies, including antibacterial wipes, to clean hard surfaces and “hot spots.”
- Conduct frequent cleaning of “hot spots” such as elevator buttons, door knobs, railing, telephone handsets, toilet and faucet handles, water fountains, etc. *However, all staff members should be involved in helping to minimize the potential dangers.*

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