



Policy Type:	Human Resources	Policy Number:	HR - 14
Policy Title:	Communicable Diseases Risk Management Policy	Initial Policy Approval Date:	June 2020
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HR14.1 Declared Emergency – Infectious Diseases

A State of Emergency can be declared at various levels of government and allows the government extraordinary powers with the goal of quickly and appropriately reacting to the emergency at hand. One such example of a declared emergency is in the event of a disease outbreak.

If an Infectious Disease State of Emergency is declared, the Trent Lakes Public Library will adhere to any restrictions and regulations implemented by the government to ensure the safety of all employees. To help mitigate the potential impact of a disease outbreak on our employees and on the population at large, the Trent Lakes Public Library will strictly adhere to all public health advice and related restrictions.

We recognize that the individual health practices of our employees can have a significant impact our organization, just as our organizational practices may impact their health. This policy applies to all staff and will serve as a guideline, informed by public health best practices and government requirements, to help staff remain or return to work under safe conditions

HR14.2 Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all employees and is designed to ensure that all members of our team are fully aware of routine infection control precautions and procedures. This policy also confirms the authority of management to enforce these control precautions.

HR14.3 Definitions

Communicable Disease - a disease that is spread from one person to another through a variety of ways that include but are not limited to: contact with blood and bodily fluids, breathing in an airborne virus; or being bitten by an insect.

Pandemic - an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population.

Outbreak - A higher-than-expected occurrence of a particular communicable illness, within a specific geographic area.

Epidemic - When an infectious disease spreads rapidly and affects many people.

HR14.4 Personal Responsibility

Employees are expected to reduce or prevent the spread of communicable disease in the workplace by engaging in the following actions to protect themselves, co-workers and the public.

Day-to-day required personal practices for Employees and Management:

- When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with your elbow. If using a tissue, immediately throw the tissue out and wash hands thoroughly.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible, ensuring you wash your hands first.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:
 - Immediately after using the restroom
 - Before and after you eat
 - Immediately after coughing, sneezing, using a tissue or smoking
 - At regular intervals throughout the day (e.g. on an hourly basis)
- If soap and water are not available or practical, use enough alcohol-based hand sanitizer to completely cover hands, and rub until dry.
- Avoid close contact with others and maintain physical distancing of two (2) meters at all times. Refrain from physical contact with others including shaking hands.
- Utilize all provided PPE as directed.
- Where possible, wear gloves when interacting with high-touch areas. Do not touch your face with gloved hands and take care when removing your gloves. Ensure you wash your hands after removing them.
- If you choose to wear additional PPE such as masks and/or gloves as an extra precaution, you must change these often in order for them to be effective. The wearing of masks and/or gloves must still be combined with the same hygiene measures noted above.
- Appropriately dispose of used gloves and masks in the garbage.
- Stay home if you are exhibiting symptoms of the disease (depending on the situation, this may require a doctor's note). Seek medical attention if symptoms have progressed beyond a state that can be managed with self-care at home.

HR14.5 Management Actions to Ensure Workplace Safety

- Include information on disease prevention in employee orientation and thereafter through ongoing education opportunities.
- Stay informed on current and potential disease outbreaks that may affect the community and/or the workplace. Communicate this information to employees as required.
- Ensure that all employees have access to proper handwashing amenities. Consider placing hand-sanitizer stations at regular intervals throughout the workplace.
- Ensure the regular and thorough sanitation of work surfaces including doorknobs, hand railings, tables, eating areas, shared telephones, keyboards, tools and other commonly touched surfaces areas.
- Ensure the regular and thorough cleaning of all washroom facilities.
- Monitor cleaning, hygiene and PPE supplies and ensure they are refilled regularly.
- Provide individually assigned work materials wherever possible (e.g. pens, keyboards, hand tools etc.) and encourage the use of technology to reduce physical meetings or handling paperwork where possible.
- Support physical distancing with a variety of strategies which may include separating work stations, staggering shifts or breaks, holding meetings outside, restricting the number of people on-site, controlling movement through the workplace with signage and floor markings and eliminating areas where people may gather (e.g. location of coffee machine).

- Conduct regular risk assessments to remain aware of potential hazards and prioritize and minimize risk in accordance with public health advice and regulations.
- Enforce the contents of this policy at all times with all members of staff up to and including sending staff home who are exhibiting symptoms which pose a potential risk to the workplace.
- Post hygiene instructions throughout the workplace for staff and visitors in majority workplace languages so everyone understands how to do their part.

HR14.6 Specific Workplace Sector Considerations

- Minimize physical contact with visitors. Maintain a safe distance while handling goods and exchanging information.
- Consider the use of barriers to protect staff and visitors where distancing is not possible.
- Add floor markings and barriers to manage traffic flow and encourage physical distancing.
- Do not accept re-usable bags or containers to be handled by staff.
- Replace dry dusting with vacuuming or wet wiping and consider the sanitation of footwear with boot sanitizing trays.
- Consider a captive boot/personal protective equipment program to limit the outside use of production/processing equipment.
- Track employees with scheduling information so that you can report which employees may have had contact with a positive infection case, should the situation arise.
- Consider ways to introduce more fresh air by increasing ventilation system's air intake or opening doors and windows. Avoid central recirculation where possible.

HR14.7 Absence Due to a Communicable Disease

The Trent Lakes Public Library encourages employees to stay home from work if they develop a contagious illness. In some instances, a note from a certified medical professional may be required (this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis). In some instances, employees may be able to work from home, at the discretion of management. Employees are encouraged to review the organization's illness, sick leave and leave of absence policies for additional detail on time off due to illness. Please be aware that employees who report to work but who exhibit symptoms which may pose a risk to their coworkers or the public will be sent home to fully recover before returning to work.

HR14.8 Closure due to a Pandemic

In very rare instances, the library may be asked to participate in a temporary shut-down in order to help mitigate the spread of a disease. In this situation, the Trent Lakes Public Library reserves the right to temporarily lay off employees with minimal notice to comply with these requirements while complying with the Public Libraries Act. If practical, working from home may be considered depending on the job functions in question. The Trent Lakes Public Library cannot guarantee any employee that working remotely will be feasible but will consider such an arrangement on a case-by-case basis.

If it is necessary for the Trent Lakes Public Library to close temporarily, the CEO will communicate this to employees and patrons as soon as possible. The Trent Lakes Public Library will provide staff with regular updates related to the closure. It is expected that all staff who are recalled to work following a re-opening will return to their position within three (3) days of being given notice by the CEO that the workplace has been deemed safe to re-open.

Sector specific guidelines from the Ministry of Labour will be referenced and incorporated into this guideline.