

# Buffalo & Erie County Public Library

## PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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**SUBJECT: Protective Measures to Reduce Risk of Exposure to COVID-19**

**CHAPTER: VIII**

**SECTION: 14**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: May 26, 2020**

*The policies set forth are applicable to all libraries in the B&ECPL System. Each individual library shall establish its own set of procedures to effectuate this Policy.*

### I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

As New York State, Erie County and local governments phase out their stay-at-home orders enacted in response to COVID-19, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) will be faced with new challenges regarding the safety of workers. To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, the B&ECPL has developed and implemented proactive prevention measures, in addition to existing standards, and a plan to communicate these measures, policies and procedures to all staff System-wide prior to re-entry to the workplace. All practices and policies shall comply with federal, state and local laws and executive orders.

### II. BUSINESS PRECAUTIONS

The B&ECPL will adhere to all “Business Precautions” set forth in Governor Cuomo’s NY Forward Plan prior to reopening libraries. Each business and industry must have a plan to protect employees and consumers, make the physical work space safer and implement processes that lower risk of infection in the business:

- Adjust workplace hours and shift design as necessary to reduce density in the workplace;
- Enact social distancing protocols;
- Restrict non-essential travel for employees;
- Require all employees and customers to wear masks if in frequent contact with others;
- Implement strict cleaning and sanitation standards;

- Enact a continuous health screening process for individuals to enter the workplace;
- Continue tracing, tracking and reporting of cases;
- Develop liability processes.

### III. COVID 19 RELATED INQUIRIES

#### A. Report of Symptoms at Work or Calling In Sick

1. During the declared pandemic, employers may ask employees who report feeling ill at work, or who call in sick, questions about their symptoms to determine if they have or may have COVID-19.
2. Pursuant to CDC guidance, these symptoms currently include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, and sore throat.
3. Employers also may measure employees' body temperature before they enter the workplace.
4. All information pertaining to an employee reporting a fever or other symptoms should be treated as confidential medical information.

#### B. Pre-Shift Screening

1. During the current pandemic, employers may ask employees if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
2. This may be done at the beginning of each shift.
3. Employers may require employees, before they enter the workplace, to complete a simple questionnaire that lists each of the symptoms.
4. All information or records maintained about these COVID-related inquiries must be treated as confidential medical information.

#### C. Taking Temperatures

1. Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher is a symptom of COVID-19.
2. It is permissible and recommended for employers to take the temperatures of employees before the beginning of the work shift (before entering the workplace if practicable).
3. Any record or log of temperatures must be treated as confidential medical information.

### IV. RETURN TO WORK PRECAUTIONS

#### A. Daily Wellness Checks

1. All B&ECPL employees who enter the workplace will be screened each day upon entry to all B&ECPL libraries.
2. Screening shall include taking temperature and completing health questionnaire daily. A privacy notice and copy of this policy will be provided at the first screening.

3. All screening will be conducted on a nondiscriminatory basis.
  - a. The B&ECPL will adhere to the guidance of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued to employers regarding best practices for balancing obligations under the ADA while still complying with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
  - b. The EEOC reminds employers that "[t]he ADA and the Rehabilitation Act do not interfere with employers following advice from the CDC and other public health authorities on appropriate steps to take relating to the workplace" regarding COVID-19.
4. Records for employees shall be maintained in their medical file, separate from their personnel file, in the Human Resources Department. Contract libraries shall forward records to HR weekly and shall not maintain copies.

B. Screening Results

1. Temperature 100.4 or above
  - a. Employee will not be allowed entry.
  - b. Employee will be instructed to contact Health Care Provider.
  - c. Employee may utilize sick leave, or other applicable COVID-19 related paid leave.
  - d. Employee should follow-up with HR after contacting Health Care Provider.
  - e. The B&ECPL will follow CDC guidelines for return to work.
2. Affirmative response to inquiries in questionnaire will be discussed with employee; screener may request additional information in a confidential manner (ie. not in front of other employees) to determine if employee should be allowed entry. Employees denied entry based on responses will:
  - a. Employee will be instructed to contact Health Care Provider.
  - b. Employee may utilize sick leave, or other applicable COVID-19 related paid leave.
  - c. Employee should follow-up with HR after contacting Health Care Provider.
  - d. The B&ECPL will follow CDC guidelines for return to work.

C. Process for Screening

1. Each Library shall designate an entrance for all employees, vendors, partners, contract workers to enter the workplace in order to facilitate screening.
  - a. Employees may not report more than 15 minutes prior to the start of their shift.

- b. Libraries must make efforts to avoid large numbers of employees waiting for testing and shall employ appropriate social distancing measure while waiting.
    - c. Where practicable, supervisors are advised to stagger shift start times.
  2. Multiple screeners may be required in locations open more than a regular 8 hour shift.
    - a. The screeners will be trained by Human Resources in use of the screening equipment and manufacture instructions, protocol for screening, proper PPE, confidentiality, and on how to handle the information they receive from employees.

#### D. Compensation

Employees will be compensated for time spent undergoing daily temperature checks and for completion of health questionnaire completion. This includes time waiting in line. However, employees are directed to report to work at their scheduled times. Employees will not be compensated for tardiness not related to testing.

#### E. Refusal

1. Any employee refusing either or both parts of the screening shall not be allowed entry to the library.
  - a. Employees refusing screening will be charged the time.
  - b. Sick leave cannot be used for a refusal.
  - c. Non-compliance with screening will result in disciplinary action.
2. Employees refusing testing on religious grounds should not be allowed entry to the library. They will be charged the time for the day, and asked to contact Human Resources via telephone.

#### F. Re-entry during work day

1. If an employee leaves their office area for a break, lunch or appointment, the employee does not have to have their temperature screened again for entry.
2. The employee must however perform precautionary measures such as hand cleaning hygiene upon re-entry to the building.

### V. WORK DAY PREVENTION MEASURES

#### A. Personal Protective Equipment

1. Employees will be provided PPE upon arrival on their first day returned to work.

2. Employees must wear a mask when working in public areas of the library, or when unable to socially distance a minimum of 6 feet from others during the workday.
3. Employees shall be responsible for bringing their mask to work daily, as well as other PPE provided.

#### B. Sanitary Practices

1. To help stop the spread of germs employees must:
  - a. Wash hands frequently throughout the day, and after blowing nose, coughing, sneezing or touching surfaces or objects that are frequently touched by others;
  - b. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
  - c. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands
  - d. Avoid touching their face with unwashed hands after touching contaminated surfaces or object;
  - e. Throw used tissues in the trash right away;
  - f. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands
2. Employees should not bring in food or other items for sharing with co-workers.

#### C. Employer Responsibilities

1. The B&ECPL will ensure access to PPE upon return to work and will provide hand sanitizer, tissues and other supplies, as set forth herein.
2. The B&ECPL will provide additional supplies upon notice from library director, branch manager, or department head.

#### D. Employee Responsibilities

1. It is the employee's responsibilities to comply with these prevention measures, whether in public or employee only areas of the library, and whether on work time, break, or before/after shift.
2. Failure to comply with these sanitary practices may result in disciplinary action.