

### **Purpose**

West Perth Public Library is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all Library users. The Board will review every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the health and safety of visitors from COVID-19. This policy is to ensure that current provincial public health guidelines are implemented to provide the safest environment possible for all Library users.

### **Responsibility**

West Perth Public Library works with other agencies responsible for health and safety and emergency preparedness. During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, the Library responded to specific requirements under provincial legislation, including regulations as well as to requirements of the local public health unit.

As an organization that is permitted to open per *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA) Ontario Regulation 263/20, our Library is responsible for implementing mandatory mask use.

1. Under O. Reg 263/20 s.4(2), no member of the public is permitted to enter or remain in the public areas of the Library unless they are wearing a mask<sup>1</sup> in a manner that covers their nose, mouth and chin.
2. The exceptions to this requirement under sub-section (1) are:
  - a) Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
  - b) Individuals with medical conditions rendering them unable to wear a mask safely, including breathing difficulties or cognitive difficulties;
  - c) Individuals who are unable to apply or remove a mask without assistance, including those who are accommodated under the *Accessibility for Ontarians*

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<sup>1</sup> "Mask" means: a cloth (non-medical) mask, medical mask or other face coverings, (e.g., bandana, a scarf or cloth), for filtering respiratory droplets that securely covers the nose, mouth, and chin and is in contact with the surrounding face without gapping.

*with Disabilities Act (AODA), or who have protections under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19, as amended.*

3. No person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in sub-section (2).
4. Individuals are permitted to remove their mask temporarily when necessary for the purpose of:
  - a) consuming food or drink;
  - b) for any emergency or medical purpose.
5. Those individuals removing their masks for extended periods of time and outside of the temporary exemptions outlined in sub-section 4 will receive a verbal reminder from our staff of the requirement to wear a mask as a result of this policy.
6. The Library will post information at every public entrance using prominent and clearly visible signage regarding mask-wearing.
7. In addition to the face mask requirement, the Library will have alcohol-based hand sanitizer at all entrances and exits for the use of persons entering or exiting the building.

In accordance with the *Reopening Ontario Act, 2020* Regulation 364/20 amendment, the Library is also verifying COVID-19 proof of vaccinations in meeting spaces. Proof of COVID-19 vaccinations is required for all indoor program presenters and attendees, as well as all indoor meeting space users prior to entering the space for the scheduled event. Completion of Visitor COVID-19 Screening Forms will also be required for those using public computer terminals and indoor meeting spaces.

### **Monitoring and Assessment of COVID-19 Safety Measures**

The West Perth Public Library Board will continue to monitor risk mitigation closely, and the evolving public health information and context, to ensure the health and safety of employees in the workplace and the public they serve. If it is determined that additional precautions are necessary, the Board may decide to deploy new measures to protect employees and the public from COVID-19, and may amend this policy accordingly.

### **Consequences of Non-Compliance with Policy**

Library users who do not comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the premises.

**Related Documents:**

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Health and Safety.*

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Safety, Security and Emergencies.*

Municipality of West Perth. *Health and Safety Manual.*

Government of Ontario. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.*

Government of Ontario. *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.*

Government of Ontario. *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990.*

Government of Ontario. *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act.*

Government of Ontario. *Public Libraries Act, R.R.O. 1990.*

Government of Ontario. *Reopening Ontario Act, 2020. Reg. 364/20*

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