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Park Ridge Public Library

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**A Special Meeting of the Library Board**  
will be held virtually on  
**Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/761968496>

Or Telephone:

+1 312 626 6799  
+1 646 558 8656  
+1 253 215 8782  
+1 301 715 8592  
+1 346 248 7799  
+1 669 900 9128

When prompted, dial Webinar ID: 761 968 496

International numbers available: <https://zoom.us/u/a0OXKqlt7>

## AGENDA

1. Approve emergency staffing plan including compensation

Meetings of the Library Board are open to the public under provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Please contact the Library Director at 847-720-3203 with questions or comments.

THE PARK RIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY will provide reasonable auxiliary aids or services necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs and facilities. Persons requiring assistance are requested to notify the Library of their needs well in advance to provide sufficient time for the Library to make an accommodation. Requests for accommodation should be made to Library Director Heidi Smith at 847-720-3203.



# Memorandum

**Memo Date:** March 18, 2019  
**From:** Heidi Smith  
**Meeting Type:** Special Board Meeting  
**Meeting Date:** March 19, 2020  
**Action Requested:** For Approval  
**Subject:** Staff Compensation During Emergency Closings

## Background:

As public libraries across the nation close in compliance with guidelines put in place by the Federal and State governments due to the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), local library governing boards are considering the question of whether or not to pay library staff during the period of closure.

While some staff are unable to work remotely for any or all of their typical hours due to technological restrictions, family obligations, or other circumstances, many of the team members have been teleworking this week. The sense of dedication to meeting the needs of our community remotely is palpable in our new Slack telework space. The team is answering patron emails, researching remote services to enhance our current “virtual library” of e-resources, evaluating tools and best practices for remote programming, answering phone calls, setting up online chat services and more. They are also continuing as best they can with their typical responsibilities such as materials selection, program planning for the summer and fall, and completing training where applicable. We’ve encouraged the team to think outside the box and get creative.

We welcome suggestions from our Board and community; please feel free to send them to us at [hsmith@prpl.org](mailto:hsmith@prpl.org)

Per the Library's Employee Manual: Library Appendix on Emergency Closings:

When it is necessary to close the library in an emergency situation (e.g. snow, power failure, etc.) fulltime employees will be paid for the hours they normally would have worked that day. Part-time employees present at the time of closing will be paid for the hours they normally would have worked to the end of their scheduled shift or one hour beyond the time of emergency closing, whichever is less. Other part-time employees will be notified not to report to work and will not be paid.

## Recommendation from American Library Association (ALA)

"Additionally, and in alignment with our companion organization, the ALA Allied Professional Association (APA), we encourage libraries to ensure that all library workers receive fully paid leave, including health coverage, while libraries are closed." (full statement attached)

## Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) Member Survey (data captured at 12 p.m. 3/18/2020; updating daily)

How are you compensating employees?	Total	% of Total
All employees will receive standard compensation for time not worked	121	77%
Not sure	15	9%
Other	10	6%
Employees will not be paid for time not worked	9	6%
Employees will use paid benefit time	2	1%
Employees will receive partial compensation for time not worked	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100%</b>

Local Libraries not compensating employees:

- None within the same geographic area as those mentioned below and to the right.

Local Libraries not yet reporting:

- Niles
- Eisenhower
- Glenview
- Franklin Park
- Bensenville



# Memorandum

Local Libraries reporting “all employees will receive standard compensation for time not worked”:

- Morton Grove
- Des Plaines
- Lincolnwood
- Skokie
- Mt. Prospect
- Prospect Heights
- Arlington Heights
- Northbrook
- Elk Grove

## **City of Park Ridge**

I understand that City staff are currently operating as normal with access to facilities restricted to the public. I understand discussions about what may come next are in progress.

## **Considerations**

**DEDICATION:** Our staff is our biggest and best resource. I can conservatively say that a majority of the team work at PRPL because they are passionate about the impacts libraries have on people and communities; that's not easy to build or replace should this situation cause turnover and hardship.

**RETENTION:** If 2 out of 3 employees are part-time, how much would it cost to replace/train them once we reopen? It's widely understood that recruiting and retraining is a business' largest expense. There would be a long-term cost for a short-term gain.

**COST:** Overall, do reduced hours end up costing just as much to taxpayers? There would likely be the state's investment to process unemployment for lost wages, the library's contribution to unemployment, in addition to previously mentioned potential turnover costs.

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** Not paying some staff could add to the economic burden on our country by putting more people on unemployment when we have the resources to pay them.

**REOPENING:** When our doors open again there will be an overwhelming amount of work to make up for the closure period. We will expect our staff to provide excellent customer service, reassurance to the community, and traditional library services at 150%.

**BIG PICTURE:** We are not losing revenue over this, and we are protecting our entire community. Staff is not benefitting from the quarantine other than hopefully staying healthy; our community sees the most benefit.

## **Recommendation:**

I recommend the Board compensate all staff for hours they would have worked if the library had been open. We're working as much as possible remotely, we're doing a good job with what we currently have, and we're working on enhancements to do our very best for Park Ridge. Another goal is that we will retain our great staff and be ready to hit the ground running when we reopen. It is hard to say at this time whether or not this may cost taxpayers more or less money in the long run, but I think it is clear that potential unemployment, recruiting, and training costs would apply. **Bottom line, what is our primary obligation to our community? I believe it is being prepared to reopen with the impactful services they need. To do that, we need two things to remain constant: 1) our team is steady and ready and 2) we're here for Park Ridge with the strongest force possible.** I also think it's the right thing to do.

## **Suggested motion:**

To approve full compensation and benefits for all library staff until social distancing instructions are lifted to the extent that the Library can safely re-open to the public OR April 18, 2020, whichever comes first.

*Note: The Board can discuss whether or not to extend at an April 14<sup>th</sup> Personnel Committee Meeting with a possible special board meeting to follow for approval of next steps.*

**Attached:** “ALA Executive Board recommend closing libraries to public” press release



(/news/)

## ALA Executive Board recommends closing libraries to public

For Immediate Release

Tue, 03/17/2020

**Contact:**

Macey Morales

Deputy Director

Communications and Marketing Office, ALA

[mmorales@ala.org](mailto:mmorales@ala.org) (<mailto:mmorales@ala.org>)

CHICAGO – The American Library Association (ALA) Executive Board released the following statement in support of libraries and library workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

"The ALA Executive Board unequivocally stands in support of the safety and well-being of library workers and the communities we serve," stated the board. "To protect library workers and their communities from exposure to COVID-19 in these unprecedented times, we strongly recommend that academic, public and school library leaders and their trustees and governing bodies evaluate closing libraries to the public and only reopening when guidance from public health officials indicates the risk from COVID-19 has significantly subsided.

"It is very difficult for us to put forward this recommendation. Libraries pride themselves on being there during critical times for our communities. We are often the only institutions to remain open during times of crisis. Service and stewardship to our communities are core to our profession.

"We have weighed the situation of our country and what has happened in other countries around the world. The health of our library workers and the communities we serve is of utmost and equal importance. Libraries are by design unable to practice social distancing to the degree recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other health authorities. Keeping libraries open at this time has the potential to harm communities more than help. We underscore the importance and need to come together in this crisis and commit to ensuring our libraries, which provide so many important services to our communities, do not serve as vectors for a fast-moving pandemic.

"Libraries are responding creatively and proactively to this crisis. School libraries in many states have closed along with schools and many have plans to provide online classes to students. Public libraries are making virtual resources available and considering other ways they can help during the crisis. Academic libraries are providing online services and access to resources. All libraries are working with their school administrators, governments, boards, and university administrations to determine critical services and closures following local directives.

"Additionally, and in alignment with our companion organization, the ALA Allied Professional Association (APA), we encourage libraries to ensure that all library workers receive fully paid leave, including health coverage, while libraries are closed.

"Although closing a library is a local decision, we urge library administrators, local boards and governments to close library facilities until such time as library workers and our communities are no longer at risk of contracting or spreading the COVID-19 coronavirus.

"The ALA Executive Board is committed to supporting our library workers, ALA members, and the communities we serve during these challenging and uncertain times."

For more information about ALA resources on COVID-19, visit <http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/pandemic-preparedness> (<http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/pandemic-preparedness>)

About the American Library Association:

ALA is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, ALA has been the trusted voice of libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all. For more information, visit [ala.org](http://ala.org).

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