



**COVID-19 MICRO-CLUSTER PLAN**  
*Continuation of Operations for the Boston Free Library*  
*Adopted 1/04/2021*

NAME of BUSINESS: Boston Free Library (BFL)  
INDUSTRY: Public Library  
ADDRESS: 9475 Boston State Road  
Boston, NY 14025  
CONTACT: Lydia Herren, Director  
OWNER/MANAGER: Boston Free Library Association Board of Trustees  
HUMAN RESOURCES: Judy Fachko, Human Resources Manager

**I. STATEMENT OF PLAN**

**A. Purpose**

In an effort to identify small geographic areas where the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has reached levels requiring additional State action, the State of New York (NYS) has put in place a *Micro-Cluster Strategy (Strategy)*. This *Strategy* contains five key processes: Monitor Data; Identify Area of Concern & Create Specific Geographic Focus Areas; Implement Cluster Zone Focus Area to Control the Virus; Review Data; and Adjust Restrictions.

Further, NYS has developed a *Micro-Cluster Approach*, whereby cluster identification is more targeted and identifies data in a small geographic area where COVID-19 spread has reached levels requiring additional State action. This approach is based on a variety of factors including: Testing, Hospitalizations, Geographic Considerations, and Other Epidemiological Factors as defined by the NYS Department of Health.

Areas experiencing a concerning increase in COVID-19 spread may be designated as requiring placement into a *Micro-Cluster Focus Zone*: Red Zone, Orange Zone, or Yellow Zone.

The Boston Free Library (BFL) recognizes its responsibility to have a COVID-19 MICRO-CLUSTER PLAN to address library operations if its service area becomes a designated *Micro-Cluster Focus Zone*.

Due to modifications of the *Micro-Cluster Approach* from NYS, and at the request of Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, the Boston Free Library reviewed and modified the original micro-cluster response plan to allow for in-house

operations if the library is located in a designated Orange Zone. Working with the County Executive, a new metric has been developed whereby data provided by the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) by zip code will be used to inform levels of library services.

The Boston Free Library's Micro-Cluster Plan has therefore been modified to reflect the changes in the NYS *Strategy* through the development of this metric-based approach, using data provided by the ECDOH, further defining levels of library services to be provided within Zones based on the data associated with the library's service area zip codes 14025 and 14033.

This PLAN has been reviewed and approved by the Boston Free Library Association Board of Trustees on January 4, 2021.

B. Applicability

This PLAN is applicable the Boston Free Library only.

C. BFL PLAN

If the BFL, as set forth in Section B of this document, falls within a *Micro-Cluster Focus Zone*, the BFL will respond accordingly. For the purposes of implementing this PLAN, BFL shall be identified as a *Business* under the *Micro-Cluster Type of Activity*.

The BFL COVID-19 REOPENING SAFETY PLAN shall continue to be enforced under all *Micro-Cluster Focus Zone* levels.

The BFL will cooperate with New York State, Erie County and local government officials.

The BFL shall implement the following:

**RED ZONE:**

1. If located in a Red Zone, the BFL shall be closed.
  - a. Staff may, as determined by the Library Director, be assigned to work remotely; staff deemed essential will continue to report for designated duties and schedules
  - b. Material "holds" will be redirected.
  - c. Due dates for materials checked out at the BFL while it is a designated Red Zone will be extended.

- d. Drop box will remain open and be emptied as necessary by essential staff following proper *Handling Materials During COVID-19 Procedures*;
  - e. Signage will be placed on doors.
  - f. Website will be modified to reflect changes.
  - g. Media will be notified.
2. Maintenance staff will report to a library in a designated Red Zone only to conduct essential cleaning and disinfecting and required maintenance.
  3. Shipping department will cease deliveries to the BFL while it is a designated Red Zone.

### **ORANGE ZONE/YELLOW ZONE:**

Service operations of the BFL in a designated Orange or Yellow Zone shall be determined on a continuous basis. Efforts will be made to maintain services to the public at the highest level as well as protecting the safety of patrons and staff. The 7-day equalized rate of COVID-19 cases shall be determined by the ECDOH and distributed to the BFL on a weekly basis. The BFL shall determine operations (Level I or Level II) based on the trends observed from the metrics on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis.

*The BFL recognizes that its chartered service area population is small leading to the appearance of large fluctuations in the 7-day equalized rate of COVID-19 cases while the actual number of cases per week may not vary significantly. Due to this limitation, the 7-day equalized rate will be utilized to inform the BFL of trends in the community that could lead to a change in operations and service levels.*

1. LEVEL I Operations – When the 7-day equalized average of new daily cases per 100,000 is trending less than or equal to ( $\leq$ ) 70, the library shall operate under the guidelines for services set forth below.
2. LEVEL II Operations – When the 7-day equalized average of new daily cases per 100,000 is trending greater than ( $>$ ) 70, the library shall operate under the guidelines set forth below.

#### **LEVEL I Operating Guidelines:**

1. Library operations and in-house services shall continue under the following restrictions:
  - a. Computer sessions will be limited to 30 minutes with the possibility of extension based on demand and building capacity.
  - b. Facial coverings (fully covering the nose and mouth) must be worn at all times.

- i. A patron will not be allowed entry to the BFL or be allowed to remain in the library if they do not comply with facial covering regulations.
  - ii. Social distancing will be strictly enforced at all times and in all areas – public and staff. Staff is authorized to limit service if social distancing is not maintained.
  - iii. No Meeting Room Use
  - iv. 1:1 tutoring is permitted for limited appointments – no more than 1 hour.
- c. No food or beverages may be consumed in public areas.
  - i. Staff will be limited to food/beverages at their personal workstations/offices.
- d. Drop box will remain open.
- 2. Walk-up/curbside services will continue.
- 3. Hours of operation may be modified, if deemed necessary. If hours are modified:
  - a. Signage will be placed on doors.
  - b. Website will be modified to reflect changes.
  - c. Media will be notified.
- 4. Guidelines are subject to change.

#### LEVEL II Operating Guidelines:

- 1. In-house operations shall cease.
- 2. Walk-up and/or curbside service will continue.
  - a. Staff may report to the library or may, as determined by the Library Director, be assigned to work remotely.
  - b. Library Services will be offered as per the BFL's COVID-19 MICRO-CLUSTER WALK-UP AND CURBSIDE SERVICE PLAN.
  - c. Drop box will remain open.
  - d. Signage will be placed on doors.
  - e. Website will be modified to reflect changes.
  - f. Media will be notified.
- 3. Hours of operation may be modified if deemed necessary.
- 4. Guidelines are subject to change.

All parts of this PLAN are subject to change and will reflect the State of New York, Erie County Department of Health and B&ECPL Administration's guidelines and recommendations.