

## **Pandemic Policy of the MHLS Directors Association**

### **Purpose:**

The MHLS Directors Association strives to maintain a safe meeting environment to protect the health and wellness of our fellow directors and MHLS staff. To ensure the continuity of business operations in the event of a severe pandemic, efforts for an effective response will be guided by, and in accordance with, all applicable federal, state and local laws and guidelines issued by public health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other governmental agencies.

### **Definition:**

- I. "Pandemic" A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. It differs from an outbreak or epidemic because it:
  - a. affects a wider geographical area, often worldwide.
  - b. infects a greater number of people than an epidemic.
  - c. is often caused by a new virus or a strain of virus that has not circulated among people for a long time. Humans usually have little to no immunity against it. The virus spreads quickly from person-to-person worldwide.
  - d. causes much higher numbers of deaths than epidemics.
  - e. often creates social disruption, economic loss, and general hardship.(Source: Association for Professionals in Infection control and Epidemiology)
  
- II. "State of Emergency"
  - a. As per New York State Executive Law Article 2-B, a "state disaster emergency" means a period beginning with a declaration by the governor that a disaster exists and ending upon the termination thereof.

### **Process**

- I. In the case of a declared pandemic-related State of Emergency whereby travel to an in person meeting is prohibited, the chair of the Directors Association, in consultation with members of the System Services Advisory Committee and the MHLS Executive Director may declare this policy in effect until such time the Governor terminates the declaration of a state of emergency related to a pandemic.
  
- II. While this policy is in effect, all members of the association will commit to checking their email at least twice a day at or around 11:00 am and 3:00 pm.
  
- III. In the case of a declared pandemic as described above, the Association shall conduct its business online. This will apply to regularly scheduled meetings; special meetings; and, under the conditions described in item "c" below, a call for an online vote on a singular issue that is related to the pandemic.
  - a. Regularly scheduled meetings will be conducted electronically whereby remote participation is provided for members of the Association, in accordance with established meeting protocols. These meetings will follow Section 2 and Section 3 of Article 5 of the "Bylaws of the Directors Association of the Mid-Hudson Library System" with the exception that issues that arise at a meeting that are both time-sensitive and related to the situation caused by the pandemic can be voted on at that meeting. All votes will be done by roll call by the DA secretary.
  
  - b. Special Meetings may be called by the Chair of the Directors Association in collaboration with other members of the System Services Advisory Committee and the Executive Director for issues that, due to the

pandemic, cannot wait until next scheduled meeting. Special meetings will follow Section 2 and Section 3 of Article 5 of the "Bylaws of the Directors Association of the Mid-Hudson Library System" with the exception that issues that arise at a special meeting that is both time-sensitive and related to the situation caused by the pandemic can be voted on at that meeting. All votes will be done by roll call by the DA secretary.

- c. Online votes for time sensitive issues outside of a meeting setting may be called at the discretion of the chair of the Directors Association upon the affirmative vote of the members of the System Services Advisory Committee as permitted by Article IV, Section 6 of the By-Laws and agreement by the MHLS Executive Director.
  - a. A vote may be called by the Chair of the Directors Association in collaboration with other members of the System Services Advisory Committee and the Executive Director.
  - b. A poll will be created by MHLS staff to manage the vote.
  - c. The poll will be posted to the MHLS Directors listserv maintained by MHLS and will be open for 48 hours.
  - d. All votes taken online or electronically will be ratified at the next in-person meeting of the Director's Association.

IV. This policy will be in effect until December 31, 2021 or until such time an amendment to the Directors Association Bylaws can be approved in accordance with the amendment procedures provided in the By-Laws.

*Approved by electronic vote of the MHLS Directors Association on March 27, 2020.*