



APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY
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**TO: Members of the Appleton Public Library Board of Trustees
Members of the City of Appleton Common Council**
FROM: Colleen Rortvedt, Library Director
DATE: August 4, 2021
RE: CDC Guidance and Library Mask Rules

Starting August 5, in conjunction with all City facilities, masks will be required inside the library in conjunction with the new CDC mask guidance.

A public library is a particularly complicated space when it comes to concerns regarding transmission of the COVID virus.

From the ability to maintain critical services to our community, a library is an interior setting that is unable to provide contact tracing for the public in the event of an in-house exposure. We serve everyone, including large volumes of children who can't get vaccinated, as well as vulnerable populations including those experiencing homelessness. The urgency of instituting these changes is important with the kickoff of Mile of Music as the library is located in the heart of this event and will be a destination for people seeking a place to cool off, access water or use the restroom facilities.

It is important to note that access to the library is essential, and we are not denying anyone access to our services. Masks are provided to anyone who needs them, and we will make accommodations for individuals with disabilities who are unable to wear a mask. In addition, since the start of the pandemic we have developed new services including curbside pickup, virtual programming, and outdoor outreach. We offer many digital services available for patrons for free with their library cards.

This is not a decision that anyone wanted to make but while Appleton remains in the substantial or high transmission rate categories, APL will be following CDC guidance in order to maintain critical services to our community.