



PLNZ and LIANZA Joint Statement of Position on COVID-19.

February 2022

This statement has been developed by PLNZ and LIANZA to support and guide the way the library and information sector undertakes activities in a pandemic environment.

This statement is underpinned by the following purposes:

- To support and promote the provision of quality library and information services that deliver positive economic, social, and cultural outcomes for communities in Aotearoa New Zealand through equitable and free access to information, opportunities for lifelong learning, literacies, and creativity and through democratic engagement and participation.
- To support the work of library and information services to contribute to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG Goal 16 - Access to information.

Our sector has a responsibility to protect and support people working in library and information services, customers, and communities, including the most vulnerable in society; whilst continuing to provide access to information, services and resources to all users.

This means our sector:

- maintains COVID-safe practices, policies, and other arrangements in accordance with relevant central and local government health directives and advice
- promotes accurate information and works against the spread of mis- and disinformation
- continues to provide for and develop innovative services and programmes
- requires all customers and staff to treat each other with respect and courtesy when using library and information services
- puts the health, safety and hauora of staff and customers first.

Library and information service workers do this by:

- understanding and following appropriate COVID-safe guidelines and recommendations including capacity limits, record keeping, localised restrictions and protections required by central and local government
- supporting their community with access to accurate information about the pandemic
- supporting people who are unable or reluctant to come into the physical library building with online access to resources and continued access to the physical collections through innovative outreach programmes and services.

Libraries provide essential services to many in our communities, and with that in mind we encourage library and information service leaders and staff to:

- continue to maintain and strengthen existing digital and physical services
- innovate, adapt and plan for future restriction scenarios
- develop strategies to support the social well-being of their communities
- continue to undertake health and safety risk assessments of their services and facilities.

LIANZA and PLNZ will support the sector by:

- sharing information about innovative solutions, programmes, and services
- collating and sharing information about central and local requirements providing time and space for members to connect and gain support.

PLNZ and LIANZA would like to acknowledge that this statement draws on the January 2022 statement from the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and thank them for their continued sharing of knowledge during this pandemic.