

U.S. Department of Labor

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Peoria Area Office
1320 W Commerce Dr.
Suite 800
Peoria, IL 61615



February 8, 2021

Reaching Across Illinois Library Systems
600 High Point Road
East Peoria, IL 61611

RE: OSHA Complaint No. 1731130

Mr. Morgan:

On Feb 8, 2021, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) received a notification of alleged workplace hazards at your worksite concerning *SARS-CoV-2 (severe respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2)*, which is the virus causing the current *COVID-19 pandemic*. The specific nature of the complaint is as follows:

1. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure the bins are disinfected with an EPA registered sterilant daily.
2. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure each employee is evaluated for contact with COVID-19 positive people and signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to work each day.
3. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure employees practice distancing.

Currently, there is an outbreak of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus. At this time, OSHA is prioritizing its enforcement resources, and OSHA does not intend to conduct an on-site inspection in response to the subject complaint at this time. However, because allegations of violations and/or hazards have been made, we request that you immediately investigate the alleged concerns and make any necessary corrections or modifications. Please advise me in writing no later than February 16, 2021, of the results of your investigation. You must provide supporting documentation of your findings. This includes any applicable measurements or monitoring results, photographs/video that you believe would be helpful; and a description of any corrective action you have taken or are in the process of taking, including documentation of the corrected condition.

In addition, OSHA is aware that the current pandemic has created an increased demand for some protective equipment, limiting availability for use in protecting workers from exposure to the virus. If this situation has prevented you from furnishing protective equipment to your employees, you should provide that documentation of the efforts you have made to obtain that

equipment. Please feel free to contact the office at (309) 589-7033 if you have any questions or concerns.

This letter is not a citation or notification of proposed penalty which, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Act, may be issued only after an inspection or investigation of the workplace. It is our goal to assure that hazards are promptly identified and eliminated.

Please take immediate corrective action where needed. Depending on the specific circumstances at your worksite, several OSHA requirements may apply to the alleged hazards at your worksite including:

- 29 CFR § 1904, Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illnesses
- 29 CFR § 1910.132, General Requirements - Personal Protective Equipment.
- 29 CFR § 1910.133, Eye and Face protection.
- 29 CFR § 1910.134, Respiratory Protection.
- 29 CFR § 1910.141, Sanitation.
- 29 CFR § 1910.145, Specification for Accident Prevention Signs and Tags.
- 29 CFR § 1910.1020, Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records.
- Section 5(a)(1), General Duty Clause of the OSH Act.

OSHA's website, <https://www.osha.gov>, is a full-service resource center, offering a wide range of safety and health-related services in response to the needs of the working public, both employers and employees. These services include training and education, consultation, voluntary compliance programs, and assistance in correcting hazards.

OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens standard (29 CFR § 1910.1030) applies to occupational exposure to human blood and other potentially infectious materials that typically do not include respiratory secretions that may contain SARS-CoV-2 (unless visible blood is present). However, the provisions of the standard offer a framework that may help control some sources of the virus, including exposures to body fluids (e.g., respiratory secretions) not covered by the standard.

Information about these and other OSHA requirements can be found on OSHA's website at www.osha.gov/laws-regs.

If we do not receive a response from you by February 16, 2021 indicating that appropriate action has been taken or that no hazard exists and why, an OSHA inspection may be conducted. An inspection may include a review of the following: injury and illness records, hazard communication, personal protective equipment, emergency action or response, bloodborne pathogens, confined space entry, lockout/tagout, and related safety and health issues. Please also be aware that OSHA conducts random inspections to verify that corrective actions asserted by the employer have actually been taken.

OSHA's website, www.osha.gov, offers a wide range of safety and health-related guidance in response to the needs of the working public, both employers and employees. The following guidance may help employers prevent and address workplace exposures to pathogens that cause acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 illness. The guidance includes descriptions of the relevant hazards, how to identify the hazards, and appropriate control measures. Additional resources are provided that address these supply issues and contain industry-specific guidance.

1. For OSHA's latest information and guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak, please refer to OSHA's COVID-19 Safety and Health Topics Page (S&HTP) located at www.osha.gov/coronavirus
2. Preventing Worker Exposure to Coronavirus (COVID-19), (OSHA publication 3989), www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3989.pdf
3. Guidance on Preparing for COVID-19, (OSHA publication 3990), www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also maintains a website that provides information for employers concerned with COVID-19 infections in the workplace. The CDC has provided specific guidance for businesses and employers at the following CDC webpage, which is updated regularly:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>.

1. For general information and guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak, please refer to the CDC's main topic webpage at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.
2. For the CDC's information and guidance on the seasonal flu, please refer to their webpage located at www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html.

The CDC is recommending employers take the following steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- **Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.**
- **Accommodate sick employees through separation or telework (if possible)**
- **Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees**
- **Perform routine environmental testing**
- **Check government websites (CDC, State Department) for any travel advisories (where applicable)**
- **Plan for infection disease outbreaks in the workplace**

The concerned party involved has been advised of OSHA's response and has been provided with a copy of this letter. Section 11(c) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act provides protection for employees against discrimination because of their involvement in protected safety and health related activity.

You are requested to post a copy of this letter where it will be readily accessible for review by all of your employees, and to return a copy of the signed Certificate of Posting (attached) to this office. In addition, you are requested to provide a copy of this letter and your response to a representative of any recognized employee union or safety committee that exist at your facility. Failure to do this may result in an on-site inspection. The complainant has been furnished a copy of this letter and will be advised of your response. Section 11(c) of the Occupational Safety and

Health Act provides protection for employees against discrimination because of their involvement in protected safety and health related activity.

Please feel free to contact the Area Office at (309) 589-7033 if you have questions or concerns. I appreciate your personal support and the interest in the safety and health of your employees.

Sincerely,

Brian Bothast

for

Barry Salerno

Area Director

Attachment

Attachment A

**CERTIFICATE OF POSTING
OSHA NOTIFICATION OF ALLEGED HAZARD(S)**

Employer Name: Reaching Across Illinois Library Systems
Complaint Number: 1731130

Date of Posting: _____

Date Copy Given to an Employee Representative: _____

On behalf of the employer, I certify that, on _____ date, a copy of the complaint letter received from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was posted in a place where it is readily accessible for review by all employees, or near such location where the violation occurred, and such notice has been given to each authorized representative of affected employees, if any. This notice was or will be posted for a minimum of ten (10) days or until the hazardous conditions referenced in the letter are corrected.

Signature

Title

Employer/Establishment name

February 12, 2021

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
1320 W. Commerce Dr.
Suite 800
Peoria, IL 61615

RE: OSHA complaint No. 1731130

Mr. Bothast:

We are in receipt of your letter dated February 8, 2021 - complaint number 1731130 referencing workplace concerns related to COVID-19. Our organization takes complaints very seriously and has reference steps already taken or already in place that are related to each accusation. The purpose of our processes are to assist with reducing the risk of contracting the virus as much as possible. Additional supporting documentation, included with this letter are pictures of our posters, instructions, and products used related to the prevention of the virus.

- 1. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure the bins are disinfected with an EPA registered sterilant daily.**

RAILS utilizes an electrostatic disinfectant sprayer to regularly sanitize delivery bins as an extra precautionary measure. The Shockwave TRU disinfectant & cleaner solution used is a registered product authorized by the EPA. **Exhibit #1**

- 2. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure each employee is evaluated for contact with COVID-19 positive people and signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to work each day.**

All employees have been communicated with regularly (through monthly staff meetings, regular emails from the RAILS Human Resources team, and additional COVID-19 related resources published on the staff Intranet) about RAILS expectations for safe and responsible work behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. These procedures include workplace health and safety guidance, a travel procedure, a positive diagnosis procedure, a temperature check procedure, and an FAQ about receiving the vaccine. We are also in the process of releasing a COVID-19 specific playbook, which includes an additional detailed scenario chart for the action related to the many specific personnel scenarios that may arise as related to COVID-19. We are also working on a detailed wellness self-assessment that we will post as a reminder to anyone entering our buildings.

As a precautionary measure, all employees are required to take their temperature when entering the facility using the temporal artery thermometer installed at the main entrance. Employees who exhibit a temperature above 100.4 Fahrenheit or who is experiencing symptoms of the virus are expected to exit

the facility immediately and contact his or her immediate supervisor and Human Resources. A notice indicating these expectations is also posted next to each thermometer. **Exhibit # 2 and 3**

Posters are mounted throughout the facility, including exterior doors, informing every one of the requirement of face covering, to maintain six feet of spacing and to not come to work if they are not feeling well.

3. Employees are exposed to illnesses including coronavirus and the employer does not ensure employees practice distancing.

The organization has implemented extensive safety protocols employees are required to follow, such as, requiring facemasks in all areas when significant social distancing cannot be maintained. Have provided gloves (optional use) and recommend frequent hand hygiene, we have purchased hand sanitizers for vehicles and gallon bottles of sanitizer for the office.

Posters are mounted throughout the facility requiring staff to maintain a minimum of six feet of separation. **Exhibit #4**

Vehicles are strategically parked allowing adequate space for unobstructed egress and regress. **Exhibit #5**

Employee start times are staggered to reduce the possibility of staff congregating prior to their routes departure and return.

The design of our sort rooms were created with “L” shaped PODs to eliminate excessive walking and interaction with other team members as shown in **Exhibit #6**.

To ensure compliance of our COVID-19 procedures, our facility are monitored by security cameras as shown in exhibits 5 and 6. Staff who are not exhibiting proper facial covering or social distancing are reminded or reprimanded by supervisory staff.

Libraries serviced by RAILS are required to create contactless delivery areas for the delivery and retrieval of bins.

Libraries quarantine their outgoing materials for currently 72 hours prior to items being placed in delivery bins. This isolation period allows any contamination to diminish prior to our arrival.

Delivery was shut down as a precautionary measure from March through June 2020. All delivery staff were paid their full salary throughout the shutdown period.

RAILS office staff who are able to do their jobs from home have been permitted to work from home since March 2020. RAILS has invested significantly in the technological infrastructure of the organization in order to make a transition like this possible.

RAILS has taken the initiative to compile guidance and information received on [COVID-19](#) and has it available for anyone to access, including staff.

We truly believe our organization has taken very proactive steps to reduce the risk and exposure of the pandemic to staff and member libraries.

Sincerely,

Mark Hatch
Delivery and Facilities Director
Reaching Across Illinois Library System
Burr Ridge Office
Phone: 630.734.5125 | Mobile: +17734256739
Fax: 630.734.5050
mark.hatch@railslibraries.info
<https://www.railslibraries.info>

Exhibits

Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2a



Exhibit 2b



Exhibit 3a



Exhibit 3b



Exhibit 4a



Exhibit 4b



Exhibit 5



Exhibit 6a



Exhibit 6b



Exhibit 6c

