

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES

Approved by Board of Trustees on Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Updated: Tuesday, May 12, 2020

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has forced our library buildings to close temporarily, but it has not closed our library. Virtual and digital services continue, developed and provided through the talents and creativity of the library's extraordinary staff. As we commit every day to extend those services to our community, we are thinking carefully about what a return to our physical spaces must consider and include. While we assess our environment and discuss scenarios, there are elements of that environment we do not know and cannot predict, such as when governmental orders to shelter in place and to permit only "essential" services to continue will be lifted. We do know, however, that a return to physical spaces will not be an immediate return to a pre-pandemic environment. First and foremost, the health, safety, and well-being of our staff members and our patrons have guided and will continue to guide the development of these stages and in large part will determine when we reopen our facilities.

This document, *COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES*, responds to that reality by outlining proposed stages to reopen our facilities and to reintroduce people to our physical spaces, our materials, and building-bound services with new health and safety protocols in place. Considerations for each stage include proposed timelines; restrictions and extensions on services, hours, and places; prerequisite needs for supplies and materials; plans for continuation of remote working; and descriptions of how we will determine when we would be ready to move from one phase to another. Additional assumptions include the potential for reversion to earlier stages if new infections occur and government mandates to shelter are reinstated. This document, therefore, will continue to be developed as we learn more and is subject to change.

In approving this *COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES*, the Board of Library Trustees authorizes the Library's Executive Director and the ED's Leadership Team to execute it, to adjust it as needed according to the most authoritative and reliable information available to them, and to inform the Board of Trustees promptly regarding the time and manner of its execution.

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Summary of Library Service Levels

1

Reserved materials pickup by reservation at Main Library only, earliest start date is June 15. Staggered materials returns (not simultaneous with pickup), earliest start date is July 1.

2

Main Library opens with limited building capacity, reduced hours.
By reservation only:
Main Library public computer use.

3

Dole & Maze branches reopen
Smaller-scale public meetings and library programs.
By reservation study room use.
Full stacks access, including Special Collections.
Self-checkout.

4

Full service restored
Larger-scale public meetings.
Larger-scale library programs.
Storytimes, outreach to preschools resume.

REOPENING SERVICE LEVELS

Preparations for reopening

Library buildings are closed to the public. Virtual services and digital library access continue. Staff come in to prepare to reopen the buildings. **Anticipated date is dependent on local and state assessment of risk. Length of time for preparations is a minimum of two weeks.**

Context: Stay-at-home order is lifted by state and local authorities for the Oak Park region. Physical distancing is required. Infection risks are still high. Supplies are limited and restocking ability is uncertain.

Service Level 1

Main Library reopens to provide limited access to physical materials (books, movies, and music) through curbside pickup. New materials will be processed. There will be no public access to the building. Materials returns will be gradually accepted and quarantined before check-in. Dole and Maze Branches remain closed. **Anticipated Date is dependent on local and state assessment of risk.**

Context: Physical distancing is required. Infection risks are still high. We have enough supplies to comply with safety recommendations for public and staff, but supply needs and availability are uncertain.

Service Level 2

Patrons are able to come into the building for express services. Numbers of people in the building and time spent in the building may be limited. Home delivery resumes for registered patrons. **Anticipated Date is dependent on local and state assessment of risk.**

Context: Physical distancing is still recommended, but infection risks are declining. Supply needs are predictable and supplies are plentiful.

Summary: Intention is that patron visits are brief and services do not encourage gathering or extended stays. Seating is removed from the public floors. No reservations for study rooms or meeting rooms are accepted and spaces are locked. Computer access may be offered by appointment or will be limited to express stations. Open hours are reduced from our regular schedule to allow for materials to be shelved and holds pulled before the library opens to the public. Specific hours for vulnerable patrons may be established. While open, there is limited face-to-face staff/public interaction. Staff assist through chat, phone calls, emails and by appointment. Home delivery services may expand to include new patrons prioritizing seniors, families of young children, and patrons without internet access. Many staff continue to work from home as much as possible. Dole and Maze Branches remain closed.

Service Level 3

The majority of library services are reintroduced and all locations reopen. There may be limitations on larger group gatherings for meetings and programs. Programs for children in grade school and older may be offered as well as adult and teen programming, but children must be able to understand and practice safe hygiene and physical distancing. Community engagement and outreach to young children in-person is still suspended. **Anticipated Date is dependent on local and state assessment of risk.**

Context: Physical distancing guidelines have been relaxed to allow for smaller group gatherings. Large group gatherings are still considered a risk.

Summary: Some seating is re-introduced but configured to allow for physical distance. Study rooms may be used with one or two people. Computers are accessible at socially distant intervals. Desk staff are available on the service desks but only one staff member per desk. RAILS delivery may be reintroduced.

Service Level 4

Full Service return to “our new normal”. **Anticipated Date is dependent on local and state assessment of risk.**

Context: Infection threat is considered low or non-existent or there is a vaccine.

Summary: Service desks are fully staffed. Device checkouts are permitted and all computers are in operation. All seating areas are back on the floor. Larger group gatherings of all ages for meetings or library programs are allowed in meeting spaces at all locations. The Community Engagement team makes Book Bike visits and attends other outreach events. Visits to preschools and storytimes resume. Art exhibits may be scheduled.

COVID-19 LIBRARY BUILDING REOPENING: PROCEDURAL DETAILS

HUMAN RESOURCES GUIDELINES

The health and well-being of library staff members is our highest priority. Therefore, the library will reinforce these best practices and guidelines with regard to preventative health measures throughout the stages of reopening the library.

Hygiene Practices: To stop the spread of germs at work.

- **Clean your hands often.** Wash your hands with soap and water, vigorously rubbing together front and back for at least 20 seconds. Or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers, rubbing hands until they are dry.
- **Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.** Sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away; use your arm or sleeve to cover if you do not have a tissue.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs need an entry point, and the average adult touches their face once every three or four minutes.
- **Clean shared surfaces and equipment often.** Use disinfectants to clean commonly touched items such as doorknobs, faucet handles, copy machines, coffee pot handles, desktops, handrails, microwave buttons, keyboards, and elevator buttons.
- **Stay home when you are sick.** When you are sick or have flu-like symptoms, stay home, get plenty of rest, check with a health care provider as needed, and notify Human Resources as needed. See the illness practices below for additional information.

Physical Distancing Practices: To minimize the spread of the disease among the staff.

During the workday, staff members are requested to:

- Masks are required. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Staff are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail, or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building. Unavoidable in-person meetings should be short, in a large meeting room where people can sit at least six feet from each other; no shaking hands.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions unless a virtual option is available.
- Do not congregate in work rooms, staff rooms or other areas where people socialize. Keep six feet apart when possible.
- Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others (avoid staff room and crowded restaurants).
- Encourage staff members to request information and materials via phone and email in order to minimize person-to-person contact. Have the materials and information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.

For outside of workday activities, staff members are encouraged to the extent possible to:

- Avoid public transportation (walk, cycle, drive a car) or go early or late to avoid rush-hour crowding on public transportation. Utilize flexible schedules and e-work options as possible.
- Avoid recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc., where staff members might come into close contact with others.

Illness Practices: What to do if you or a family member has signs or symptoms indicating illness.

- **Cold, Influenza (Flu)** - According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, other respiratory viruses are currently circulating in Illinois. Fever, coughing, and difficulty breathing are symptoms associated with these viruses. Staff members exhibiting any of these symptoms or other signs of illness should stay home or will be asked to return home. Staff members should not return to work until all signs and symptoms are gone, including being fever free for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.
- **COVID-19** - If a staff member has signs or symptoms indicating COVID-19 (fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness), the staff member will be asked to notify Human Resources and seek medical assistance. Staff members who have tested positive for COVID-19, may be asked to submit a doctor's note indicating they are fit to return to duty prior to returning to the library.
- **Increased vulnerability to illness** - Based on CDC recommendations and other guidance, staff members over a certain age and/or with underlying health conditions may not be allowed to return to work in the library buildings. E-work may be an option, if available.
- **FMLA Leave Expansion and Emergency Paid Sick Leave due to COVID-19** - There are two separate forms available on the Staff Resources page to request a leave related to COVID-19:
 - Emergency FMLA Leave Request Form - Staff members will use this form if they are unable to work (or e-work) due to a need to care for their child when the school or place of care has been closed, or their regular childcare provider is unavailable, due to a public health emergency with respect to COVID-19.
 - Emergency Paid Sick Leave Request Form - Staff members will use this form if they are unable to work (or e-work) due to one of the reasons (defined in the form) related to COVID-19.

Please refer to the FMLA Leave Expansion and Emergency Paid Sick Leave Guidelines on the Staff Resources page or contact Human Resources for more information.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

Prior to reopening

- Cleaning service prepares all three buildings.
- Staff are trained in safety protocols.

Service Level 1

- Staff meetings, if held in person, allow for 6 ft physical distance between participants.
- Masks and gloves are available for staff who need them.
- Staff are scheduled to address the need for distancing in work spaces.

- Hand sanitizer and wipes are provided throughout the Main Library for patrons and staff to sanitize hands and surfaces.
- Schedule staff to shelve materials during closed hours so that we can reduce patron contact.
- Returned materials are quarantined.
- Staff will monitor patron behavior to prevent group gatherings
- If masks are required for entry to the library, we will supply for patrons who do not have a mask or will bring materials to them.

Service Level 2

- 6 ft distance is marked from service points.
- Plexiglass is installed at service desks.
- Seating is arranged to allow for physical distancing.

Service Level 3

- Meeting room set-ups are configured for smaller groups.

Service Level 4

- Return to regular safety practices.

SPACES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, COLLECTIONS, TECHNOLOGY

Prior to reopening tasks

LT - Determine Main Library building public hours and access level to physical resources for service level 2.

- We are considering open hours for the public from 10 AM -6 PM Monday through Saturday with the first hour from 10:00-1100 AM reserved for seniors and vulnerable patrons. This recommendation is to offer a consistent daily schedule and to allow for time before and after open hours for shelving and other work in the public spaces. Sunday would also be closed for this purpose.

Spaces

- Clean Main Library spaces.
- Remove all seating from public spaces.
- Prepare staff and public spaces for physical distancing.
- Order, organize and distribute required/recommended sanitation supplies in staff and public areas.

Services and Programs

- Promote and expand digital library (collections, technology, services, programming).
- Provide remote tech help with digital collections and online resources.
- Verify residency of new digital accounts.
- Answer contact us emails, forwarded calls and chat.
- Schedule staff for Service Levels 2-5 .
- Update patron records with bounced emails

Collections

- Continue selection and ordering on digital and physical materials.
- Receive, invoice, catalog and process new materials.
- Work with SWAN on holds processing setup and workflow for Phase 2.
- Check-in, sort and shelve materials after sufficient quarantine.
- Shelf-read and organize.
- Conduct materials and supplies inventory.

Technology

- Provide technology infrastructure and support for staff working remotely and onsite.

- Prepare public technology for Service Levels 2-4.

Service Level 1 Tasks

Spaces

- Areas/furniture that invite gathering that cannot be removed are blocked off with caution tape or by other methods.
- Designated areas are used for quarantine of returned materials (Facilities team delivers book drop pickups directly to quarantine designated areas.)

Services and Programs

- Promote and expand digital library (collections, technology, services, programming).
- Answer contact us emails, forwarded calls and chat.
- Provide tech help with digital collections and online resources.
- Staff assist the public with self check-out and technology if physical distance can be maintained or if not assist through chat.
- Develop and present virtual programming.
- Verify residency of new digital accounts.
- Contact-less home delivery resumes for registered patrons.
- Prepare summer reading prizes for mailing, pickup or delivery.

Collections

- Allow checkout/pickup of existing materials available on hold shelf.
- Pull OPS (Main Library only) items on hold for Oak Park cardholders (if SWAN hold map is adjusted accordingly)
- Curate materials by request for pick-up and/or delivery.
- Receive, invoice, catalog and process new materials.
- Check-in, sort and shelve materials after sufficient quarantine.
- Shelf-read and organize.
- Conduct materials and supplies inventory

Technology

- Offer 1-2 public PC express stations per floor.
- Possibly offer free small print jobs for pickup in the Lobby.

Service Level 2 Tasks

LT - Determine Maze and Dole public library hours and access to physical resources for Service Level 3.

Spaces

- Maze and Dole prepare for reopening.
- Some furniture is reintroduced and placed at safe physical distances.
- Signage with guidelines for study room use is posted.

Services and Programs

- Service desks are staffed at the Main Library with one person per service desk.
- Home delivery expands to include new patrons prioritizing seniors, families of young children and patrons without internet access.

Collections

- Curate materials by request for pick-up and home delivery (Children/Families, Seniors prioritized).
- Deliver and pick up home delivery materials.
- Check in materials from RAILS deliveries (when service is restored) and other returns after sufficient quarantine.
- Receive, invoice, catalog and process new materials.

- Check-in, sort and shelve materials after sufficient quarantine.
- Shelf-read and organize.
- Conduct materials and supplies inventory.

Technology

- Public PCs and copy/scan/print/fax stations are accessible with socially distant intervals at all locations.

Service Level 3 Tasks

Spaces

- Toys are reintroduced to the children's spaces. Toys that cannot be regularly [cleaned and sanitized](#) will not be used.

Services and Programs

- Meeting reservations for small groups are accepted.
- Library programs are planned for small audiences 25 or fewer attendees (registration required to be able to enforce limits). Programs for children may be planned for ages 5-7 (with a caregiver) or for Grades 3 and up (children must be able to understand and comply with physical distancing and safe hygiene practices during the program).
- Volunteers may assist with projects that can be done remotely.

Collections

- All collections services are fully restored at all locations.

Technology

- All public technology is fully accessible at all locations.

Service Level 4 Tasks

- Conduct evaluation of COVID-19 reopening plan.
- Volunteers may resume traditional support services.

RESOURCES INFORMING THIS PLAN

- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) April 24, 2020 Reaching Across Illinois Libraries www.railslibraries.info
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates](#) April 24, 2020 Institute of Museums and Libraries www.ims.gov
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) [Resources for Businesses and Employers](#) April 24, 2020 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov
- [Coronavirus Resources](#) April 24, 2020 Illinois Library Association www.ila.org
- [Coronavirus Resources](#) April 23, 2020 Urban Library Council www.urbanlibraries.org
- [COVID-19 Information](#) April 24, 2020 SWAN Library Services www.swanlibraries.net
- HR Source Coronavirus: Resources for Employers, Sample Forms and Documents, April 24, 2020, www.hrsource.org
- [Pandemic Preparedness | Tools, Publications & Resources](#) April 24, 2020 American Library Association www.ala.org

- [Resources — The Harwood Institute](https://www.theharwoodinstitute.org) April 24, 2020 The Harwood Institute www.theharwoodinstitute.org

QUESTIONS

What positions can do the above tasks? Staff whose work is suspended during certain stages may be reassigned to work on other tasks.

How many staff can be working in an area at the same time? Managers will identify the numbers for their service area that allow for physical distancing. Staff will also be trained in how to navigate working together safely in a shared environment.

What should the shift patterns be to ensure proper social distancing at work? Create shifts based on service area needs and number of people who can work safely together as indicated above.

What hours do we need to be open to accomplish the above tasks? In some stages the library may reduce hours open to the public, so staff can accomplish their work safely such as shelving.

Examples of tasks that can be done from home?

- Promoting and expanding digital library (collections, technology, services, programming)
- Answering contact us emails, forwarded calls and chat
- Providing tech help with digital collections and online resources
- Verifying residency of new digital accounts
- Making/sewing masks
- Developing and presenting virtual programming
- Selecting and ordering new materials
- Preparing and sending important communications daily to staff and community members
- Meeting virtually to plan, coordinate, and evaluate our work and its effectiveness

How will HR help us determine which employees are high risk and need to work remotely or remain off work? Staff will need to inform HR if they are not able to return to work and provide a reason. HR will listen to the concerns of staff and then confirm to managers/schedulers to make adjustments as needed.

What are the necessary supplies and equipment needed for maximum health protection? (Gloves, masks, shields if the public are approaching any desks). We will rely on CDC guidance for this at each phase.

What tasks should be linked to the reopening of other institutions? We will coordinate our reopening plans/tasks with RAILS/SWAN and other partner institutions.

How do we clean and disinfect library spaces if someone is sick with the virus?

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards
- Once an area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.