Coloma Public Library Reopening Plan

This plan is subject to change as necessary and appropriate.

*This document is originally based on
Recommendations for Library Services During the Covid-19 Pandemic
as prepared by Regents Public Library Advisory Council (RPLAC):*

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*Various contributions from sample draft re-opening plans from
other libraries were used where appropriate.*

Contents

The following is the reopening plan approved by the Coloma Library Board of Trustees. If an executive order is in effect, all elements of the executive order will be followed and the executive order will control, if there is a conflict. The Reopening Plan only applies if permitted by law or executive order. This Reopening Plan is not intended to supersede or change any Library employment policies.

Introduction & Purpose

The COVID 19 virus has had an unprecedented impact on libraries and the communities they serve. The primary consideration in this plan is maintaining the safety of library patrons and staff while finding ways to provide necessary services that the library is uniquely positioned to perform.

These guidelines are intended to provide basic procedures for providing library public services again after a closure due to an infectious disease pandemic. All questions may not be answered here, but it is meant to guide staff and be a fluid, working document as information continues to develop.

Library services and workflow will change as we learn how to handle serving the public while staying safe. Everyone should be flexible as we deal with the new challenges before us.
The best practices laid out in this document represent a partnership of multiple public library systems with the shared goal of providing a consistent model of response to a pandemic situation. It is for the benefit of the community at large that libraries collaborate. Some library systems may need to adapt sections to suit the unique needs of their service area, however, this document will provide an overall framework based on the current knowledge at the time drafted.

> **Relevant Links and Resources**
> Daily Counts (Region 5) via Michigan.gov
> https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163_98173_99207---,00.html
>
> Governor Whitmer's 6 Phase Plan
> https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MIEOG/2020/05/07/file_attachments/1446147/
>
> Governor%20Whitmer%27s%20MI%20Safe%20Start%20Plan.pdf
> https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163_98173---,00.html

Library Service During Pandemics and Infectious Outbreaks

The Centers for Disease Control recommends taking a phased approach in dealing with infectious diseases.

Per CDC guidelines
- Patrons should not enter the Library with symptoms of an infectious disease.
- Patrons with an infectious illness such as the flu must not enter the Library until at least twenty-four (24) hours after they are free of fever *(100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C)* or signs of a fever without the use of fever- reducing medications.

- The Library shall provide notice on the Library doors of the patron responsibility requirements currently in effect.

Considerations for Core Library Services

Restrictions on those coming and going from the building will vary based on the social distancing recommendations currently in place by local government and public health agencies, especially those establishing recommended limits for gatherings.

Internet Access: Internet access is a critical resource for the community especially during times of economic distress. Patrons require internet access to apply for unemployment insurance, access social services, apply for jobs, and access educational resources. Moreover, internet access can be provided to patrons with a limited amount of danger to patrons and staff.

Digital Materials: Electronic content continues to be a popular choice for people who want efficient access to materials at any given time. During times of pandemic and quarantine, demand will increase greatly. It will remain a vital point of service for the public when the library must restrict physical access to materials.

Cardholders: Libraries recognize the importance of broad community access to resources. Flexibility in issuing cards and removing barriers to cardholder access to library resources when regular services are disrupted is crucial to continue engagement and connection.

Programing & Outreach: The community views library programs as a core service, but as we have seen public gatherings have been one of the main methods by which infectious diseases are transmitted. With that in mind, the Library needs to be cautious about when and how it reinstates programming. Outreach visits encourage community use of the Library and assist in providing high priority services to the community, but they also pose a transmission risk. In a pandemic, it is another vector of exposure.

Physical Materials: Circulation is a core function of the Library. However, traditional checkout puts at risk both staff and patrons during a time of virus transmission. The goal is to create a balance with restoring this core service while protecting staff and patrons. Materials handling is one of the most complex areas of operations during a pandemic due to the potential of virus transmission on various surfaces and shared objects.
Holds pickup: The method for holds pickup could be scaled based on the severity of social distancing recommendations.

Technology Help: The library is frequently a place where patrons learn how to use various forms of technology. The spread of contagious illness and social distancing impose unique difficulties in providing help with devices and on public computers. Because most technology help requires patrons and staff to be at close quarters, there will be limits on how help can be provided until social distancing recommendations are lifted.

Shared Materials Within the Library: Libraries frequently provide access to shared materials in their spaces ranging from office supplies, equipment, and various items throughout the library (commonly in youth departments). The risks of these shared items vary widely, though shared items constitute a higher risk as potential vectors for contagious transmission.

Progressing from a phase to the next one
Based on guidelines from the CDC as well as state government officials.
To move forward from one phase to the next, the following criteria should be met:
1. Stay at home orders have been cancelled. Regional, state and national health officials no longer recommend the public stay at home.

2. The Library has in place protective equipment and supplies as recommended by government and health agencies.
3. The library has access to the necessary materials to maintain appropriate and reasonable hygiene standards.
4. The library has access to enough staffing to run all of its core operations for each phase.

Phased Library Services and Staffing Plan
The headings below describe the Library's service and staffing levels during phases of the pandemic.

The Library Director determines which phase is in effect based on requirements, mandates, as well as recommendations from local government and public health agencies.

General Safety Precautions
- Implement a health screening process for workers that complies with government mandates and meets privacy laws. Screenings may take place at home or on site.
- Require workers who exhibit signs of the illness of the pandemic/epidemic to stay home from work or to seek medical attention.
- Enhance sanitation of the workplace as appropriate.
- Provide personal protective equipment as available and appropriate to the function and location of staff within the library location.
- Implement remote working where it makes sense from an operational standpoint.
- Implement staggered work shifts for staff when possible.
- Hold meetings and conferences virtually when possible.
- Deliver library services such as reference assistance and holds placing remotely when possible.
- Encourage continued social distancing measures on library property.

Library Services Phase 1-2: Library is Closed to the Public

Physical Location(s): The library building will be closed to the public in compliance with government and health agency mandates. All staff may work remotely. Library access is limited to work which is required to sustain the safety, maintenance, and life of the institution.

Public Service Responses During Closure
- Internet Access: As possible, boost wireless signals at library locations to provide free and open public wi-fi. Encourage patrons accessing wifi from outside the building to maintain proper social distancing.

- Digital Materials: Purchase, promote, and make available digital materials within budget constraints.

- Cardholders: Expand the number of cardholders, either via temporary digital cards, or other means. Temporary fines and fees embargoes will be put in place. Due dates for materials shall also be extended at least until library buildings are reopened.

- Programs & Outreach: Transition programming to a virtual environment. Outreach visits and programs should not occur. No home delivery services should be offered because they are not classified as essential travel under a Stay at Home Order.

- Technology Help: Technology help, if available, should only be provided over the phone, through email, through webforms and chat.

- Materials in the Library: Library materials including holds will not be available for pickup. Checkouts are limited to electronic services. It is recommended essential staff practice safe handling of items as recommended by health officials when clearing book drops.

Staffing Practices
- During mandated closures, essential staff will be allowed in a building, to perform critical duties. Other staff may only be permitted if Stay-At-Home orders are not in effect.
  Work tasks may include
    - Quarantine returned materials.
    - Catalog and Process items for the collection. *Some of this work may be done from home.
    - Acceptance of regular mail and deliveries.
    - Answer phones, and provide remote reference. *Can be performed by staff working from home.
    - Handle vital fiscal, personnel, and statistical responsibilities.
    - Perform administrative duties as needed.
- If more than one essential staff member is working in the building at a time, implement screening process before beginning work, if required by law.
- Wear facemasks as required by law.
- When handling library materials, avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth. Gloves and face masks may be used if preferred. Handwashing after handling library materials is required.
- All returned library materials should be quarantined. Avoid cross-contamination of returned materials and quarantined materials. Consult the OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 for additional safety procedures.

Recommendations to be completed before moving to Phase 3
- Secure adequate stores of appropriate PPE and other hygiene supplies.
- Determine and install safety equipment such as sneeze guards.
- Designate spaces for:
    - isolation for any person(s) exhibiting symptoms as may be required by government and health agencies
    - materials quarantine.
- Determine work hours for staff.
- Develop procedures for curbside service.
- Communicate protocols for quarantine and curbside service to patrons.
- Secure and schedule staffing for:
    - cleaning of the library,
    - quarantining of materials,
    - curbside service,
    - outreach services (if possible; determine which locations are viable.)
- Explore and determine potential "By Appointment" services; prepare as appropriate.
- Determine hours for public service.
- Investigate options for providing computer assistance while maintaining social distance.
- Rearrange computer stations to allow adequate social distancing either by removing stations or placing stations out of order.

- Determine processes for disinfecting equipment between each use.
- Map out public traffic throughout building and apply signage as needed.
- Determine whether public will be required to wear face coverings, and whether masks will be provided.
- Implement plan for seating/furniture to maintain social distancing.
- Determine safe building capacities.

Library Service Phase 3-4: Curbside and Service By-Appointment

Physical Location(s): Library service is available to the public with limitations during this phase.

Staffing Practices
As described in Phase 1 and 2 with non-essential staff returning to duty to help implement Curbside and By-Appointment Services.

Public Services
- Limited access to library building may still be in effect based on state and health official guidelines such as:
    - Limited numbers of group gatherings
    - Directed traffic flow and distance maintained between patrons during checkout, and/or physical barriers for high-use areas. Other precautions may also be utilized.
- Computer use by appointment only with disinfecting equipment between use. *For Coloma, patrons will be offered disposable sanitary wipes to clean their computers. This will give patrons confidence that the keyboard and station is acceptably cleaned. It will also save staff time and support social distancing.*
- Public Access to Library Collections may be restricted to staff-only.
- Programs & Outreach activities would not occur in this stage.
- Shared Materials in the Library: Passive activity and play stations continue to be unavailable.

Patron Behavior
- Patrons will be expected to comply with **Code of Conduct** Policy, as well as any precautions deemed necessary by the Library for the safety and security of the public as well as staff.
- During **Phases 3-5**, patrons may be required to wear protective masks as well as maintain social distancing from staff and other patrons.
- The Library Administration may suspend library privileges to patrons not in compliance with this Plan or any other Library Policies.

Right of Appeal Patrons may appeal a decision to remove a patron or deny entry to the Library by sending a written appeal to the Library Board. The appeal must be sent to the President of the Library Board. The decision of the Library Board is final.

Hours of Operation during phases with limited services. The Coloma Public Library Board of Trustees establishes Library hours of service. When this plan is in effect due to pandemic and illness outbreaks, the Director may modify service hours to account for fewer staff on duty and limited service offerings

Recommendations to be completed before moving to Phase 5
- Secure staffing for:

- o Service desks,
- o Outreach functions,
- o Other activities as permitted by current safety guidelines.
- Determine programming balance between virtual and possible in-person offerings.
- Develop procedures for in-building activities while maintaining minimal staff contact.
- Restore any computer stations and furniture that have been removed to accommodate social distancing.
- Clear backlog of quarantined items and return to conventional turnaround on shelving items.
- Restaff and schedule for all regular operations.
- Reset changes to due dates and patron block criteria changed at the beginning of the crisis.

Library Service Phase 5: Return to Full Services

Physical Location(s): Library building is open to the public though some limitations may be kept in place during this phase. The Public areas could continue to allow for 6' social distancing recommendation as may be recommended by government and health agencies.

Staffing Practices
- Staff schedules, onsite presence, and library hours of operation will return to pre-pandemic levels.
- In-Building Operations: Resume regular operations.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Staff may continue to use based on personal preference as reasonable.
- Material Handling: Consult state and CDC guidelines to determine processes for material handling. Quarantine processes may be phased out.

Public Services

- Resume all core services with an increased emphasis on hygiene.

- Normal hold pickups and checkouts could occur, but curbside services may still be available as a regular service. Physical barriers for service desks may continue to be used.

  Computer and Internet Access: If distancing recommendations are canceled, normal use of the Library's computers could commence with improved hygiene and cleaning processes. Normal technology assistance could commence with improved hygiene procedures.

- Programs & Outreach: In-person programming may require advanced registration and limited attendance based on current state and CDC guidelines. If all distancing recommendations are lifted, the Library could return with an active slate of programs. Outreach visits and programs could resume as normal, though with special consideration paid to those that serve vulnerable populations.

- Shared Materials in the Library: Public Access to Library Collections may be resumed.

Goals
Determine how virtual programs fit into the spectrum of services going forward.

SAFE HANDLING OF MATERIALS: QUARANTINE PROCESS

Quarantine of library materials is the most effective known method of disinfection.

The Library will set up an area of the building as a materials isolation zone for those items that may have recently been exposed to the COVID-19 virus for the purpose of quarantine for a period of 7 days* (or 168 hours):

- A space will be designated to hold items while in quarantine.
- Daily groups of returned items will be labeled with dates of when those items entered quarantine and when they are safe to re-shelve.
- Courier totes, bins, and carts should also be quarantined.

*As more information from credible scientific sources, this plan may be adjusted accordingly.

Approved: 06/15/2020