

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES

Approved by Board of Trustees on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 | Updated: May 4, 2022

INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, COVID-19 forced our library buildings to close temporarily, but we never closed completely. Virtual and safer, contact-free services were continued, developed and provided through the talents and creativity of library staff. As we committed every day to extend those services to our community, we thought carefully about what a return to our physical spaces must consider and include. While we assessed our environment and discussed scenarios, there were elements of that environment we didn't know and couldn't predict. We knew then, and continue to know now, that a return to physical spaces would not be identical to a pre-pandemic environment.

This document, COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES, responds to that reality by outlining flexible stages toward fully reopening library spaces, sharing all materials, and building-bound services with new health and safety protocols in place. Considerations for each stage include 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, continues to be subject to change as we continue to learn about the virus, its variants, and we continue to adapt accordingly.

In approving this COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR BUILDINGS AND SERVICES, the Board of Library Trustees authorizes the Library's Executive Director (ED) 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 Library Trustees promptly regarding the time and manner of its execution.

Note: At each service level, anticipated dates are dependent on local and state assessment of risk and guidance, with local guidance being prioritized.

Service Level 1: Virtual and digital services only. Library buildings are closed to the public. Virtual services and digital access are available and supported by library staff working remotely during defined hours. No public WiFi is available. Materials due dates are extended. Only designated staff members come into library buildings as needed and as permitted by state and local health orders.

Context: State and local stay-at-home orders are mandated. Physical distancing and face coverings are required for staff. Local infection risks are high. The number of library staff affected by and requiring quarantines may affect the library's ability to offer services consistently. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies are limited, and restocking ability is uncertain.

Service Level 2: Virtual and digital services continue; limited access and services introduced inside library buildings. Patrons may come into library buildings for limited services. Materials returns are accepted in designated areas. The number of people allowed inside certain public spaces has occupancy limits. Patron visits may be limited to one hour. Public WiFi is available and public computers may be reserved for onsite use. Some in-person staff assistance is available at

service desks. Some seating is reintroduced and positioned to maintain a physical distance of 6 feet or more. Open building hours may be adjusted.

Context: State and local stay-at-home orders lifted. Physical distancing and face coverings required. Local infection risks are moderate. The number of library staff affected and required quarantines may affect the library's ability to offer services consistently. PPE supplies are somewhat limited, and restocking ability is somewhat certain.

Service Level 3: Full access and services provided virtually, digitally and inside all library locations. Full service returns to all library open buildings. All collections and technology are fully available. All public spaces are available with seating for extended stays. In-person meetings, programs, and outreach may resume with restrictions based on local and state guidance.

Context: Physical distancing and face coverings may be required. Local infection risks are low. The number of library staff affected and required quarantines will not affect the library's ability to offer services consistently. PPE supplies are not limited and restocking ability is more certain.

RESOURCES INFORMING THIS PLAN & DECISION-MAKING

- [Village of Oak Park Department of Public Health](#)
- [City of Chicago Department of Public Health](#)
- [Cook County Department of Public Health](#)
- [Illinois Department of Public Health](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

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- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) April 24, 2020 Reaching Across Illinois Libraries www.railslibraries.info
 - [AIHA Reopening Guidance for Libraries](#) June 25, 2020 American Industrial Hygiene Association www.aiha.org
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates](#) April 24, 2020 Institute of Museums and Libraries www.imls.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
 - [Pandemic Preparedness | Tools, Publications & Resources](#) April 24, 2020 American Library Association www.ala.org