

# ANCHORAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY REOPENING

## COVID MITIGATION PLAN, March 23, 2021

### Overview

While the Library is not specifically mentioned in EO 19, Library staff is using the guidance that pertains to Attachment H: Entertainment.

During this time of crisis, Anchorage Public Library has continued to provide services that follow our vision in our Strategic Plan:

- Education and Skills for Life: Providing the community with e-materials, databases and streaming services to all ages.
- A Bridge to Information and Resources: Online tutorials, increasing the amount of digital materials purchased.
- Building Community: Through online book clubs, storytimes

The safety of library customers and staff is the number one priority as we consider how to continue to provide necessary services crucial to the health, education and well-being of Anchorage. This plan outlines reopening scenarios, based on social distancing protocols, critical community needs, and budgetary considerations.

During each phase, the Library will implement the following:

- Improved procedures for staff and custodians to implement for frequent cleaning and disinfecting common areas. [View this CDC video on cleaning.](#)
- Provide staff with protective gear such as masks and gloves. Masks or face coverings are required when working in public areas, gloves are not. View these videos on the proper use of [masks](#) and [gloves](#).

### **TIMELINE, CONDITIONS, AND LEVELS OF SERVICE**

**Critical Services only:** Mandated by the Mayor with strict guidelines for operation.

- Staff Expectations:** Staff will either work from home or very-limited workers in buildings
- Services:** Only virtual or digital materials and telephone and Ask-A-Librarian online questions. All holds blocked
- Logistics:**
  - Stoppage of materials being shipping from vendors and material shipped from ALC
  - All physical programs and meeting rooms usage are cancelled
  - Safety, cleaning materials and sneeze guards are procured
  - All book drops are closed
  - All meetings are held virtually

**Step 1: Opening for staff:** Mandated by the Mayor in consultation with Health Department and Human Resources to establish safe guidelines for staff to physically return to the workplace while the library remains closed for no more than two weeks to prepare for reopening.

- Staff Expectations:** Staff may have different work schedules, depending on needs of the Library. Safety items, such as gloves, sanitizing liquid and masks will be available to staff. Staff will follow safe physical distancing from one another, wear masks and gloves as needed. Some staff may still be telecommuting.

**B. Services:** Continued virtual or phone/web reference

**C. Logistics:**

- a. All quarantined materials will be shelved in every location so that we will be prepared to open all book returns
- b. New materials will be prepared and shelved; shipments of new materials will be reinstated; shipped periodicals will be processed and shelved
- c. ALC will be notified that APL will start accepting shipments
- d. Plans will be finalized for curbside delivery
- e. Wearing of masks or face coverings are required for staff and public.
- f. Staff is assigned separate area for work, as well as separate unshared workstations, when possible. Workstations may need to be relocated to allow for effective physical distancing. Any shared workstations must be cleaned between users.
- g. Staff will be trained on safety protocol for managing materials returned, including wearing gloves
- h. Signage and messaging will be prepared to institute next phase for curbside and open book drops
- i. Staff will wipe down surfaces of book carts and door handles and other high touch areas
- j. PPE will be distributed to all locations and safety stations set up
- k. Staff will be trained in the procedures for curbside, shared duties with all public service staff in various workflows

**Step 2: Opening for Curbside Delivery/Personal Shopper: minimum of 14 days**

**A. Staff Expectations:** Telecommuting will be reduced to prepare for personal shopper/curbside delivery services. Meetings and training will be predominantly through Teams. Branch hours return to normal; Loussac hours 10-6 M-Sat; Staff shifts might vary, depending on needs of the library

**B. Services:** Virtual programming; curbside delivery/personal shopper; program kits for YS; phone/web service

**C. Logistics:**

- a. Book drops opened; staff will minimally handle materials with gloves and set aside for quarantine
- b. ALC shipments will be received; materials will be sent back to owning library. All materials will be checked in fine free
- c. Staff will continue physical distancing, wearing masks, frequently washing hands, and wearing gloves for unquarantined materials
- d. Holds will be turned on
- e. Holds messaging is changed to instruct customers to call to make an appointment for pickup
- f. Staff will wipe down surfaces of books cart and other high touch areas
- g. Staff will continue to be trained in the procedures for curbside, shared duties with all public service staff in various workflows
- h. Public spaces will be prepared for opening the library, including reducing the numbers of computers and seats in all locations
- i. Cleaning protocols are established, and staff trained
- j. Plexiglass will be installed at service points
- k. Seating and tables are arranged for physical distancing, households can sit together

**Step 3: Opening for Reduced Library Services:** Continued curbside; limited library service hours as posted (Monday through Saturday Loussac; Tuesday through Saturday branches)

**A. Staff Expectations:** Most staff will be available to work physically in our libraries, while some staff might telecommute. Meetings and training will continue to be predominantly through Teams or SharePoint. Work shifts will vary, depending on need of the library. Staff will be informed of the Supervisor responsible for COVID concerns each day. A pre-shift staff screening will occur with a screening log.

**B. Services:** Virtual programming; continued curbside delivery/personal shopper; program kits for YS and AS; phone/web service; onsite reference service; limited customer use of the library with a focus on computers and account services.

**C. Logistics:**

- a. Computer use will be limited to 60 minutes per day, depending on need in all locations
- b. A log will be kept of all patrons in the Library longer than 15 minutes
- c. Cleaning materials will be provided so that patrons may clean Laptops before and/or after use
- d. Public facing staff will continue wearing masks
- e. Each location, as possible, will have a specific entrance and exit door
- f. Security guards and staff will monitor the numbers of people in the building to no more than 50% of capacity in each location
- g. Staff will maintain physical distancing
- h. No money handling, including payment for bus passes
- i. Mask use will be required for the public
- j. Staff are trained on safety protocols and expectations
- k. Hand sanitizer is available at multiple locations for staff and public; wipes will be available as procured
- l. Passports services discontinued
- m. Customers exhibiting symptoms may be asked to leave. They may utilize curbside services to pick up materials
- n. Curbside pickup remains an available option for all customers
- o. Donations of materials will continue to not be accepted
- p. All customer payments must be made online
- q. Staff will avoid handling any item belonging to a customer, including library cards, credit cards, and IDs
- r. Technology services will be available for the public at a reduced level, allowing 6 feet between stations.
- s. Staff need to be proactive about physical distancing, while still providing friendly customer service. While good service is encouraged, safety should be the top priority

**Step 4: Opening for Most Library Services:** Continue curbside (reduced at Loussac and Chugiak-Eagle River); Library hours as posted (Monday through Saturday Loussac; Tuesday through Saturday at branches) until Supervisors fill open positions.

**A. Staff Expectations:** Most staff will be available to work physically in our libraries, while some staff might telecommute. Meetings and training will continue to be predominantly through Teams or SharePoint. Work shifts will vary, depending on need of the library. Staff will be informed of the Supervisor responsible for COVID concerns each day.

**B. Services:** Browsing, computers, customer use of the library, printing, virtual programming; reduced curbside delivery/personal shopper; program kits for YS and AS; phone/web service; onsite reference service.

**C. Logistics:**

- a. Computer use will be limited to 60 minutes per day, depending on need in all locations
- b. A log will be kept for patrons to record if they plan to be in the Library longer than 15 minutes
- c. Cleaning materials will be provided so that patrons may clean Laptops before and/or after use
- d. Patrons and public-facing staff will continue wearing masks
- e. Staff will maintain physical distancing
- f. Mask use will be required for the public
- g. Staff are trained on safety protocols and expectations

- h. Hand sanitizer is available at multiple locations for staff and public; wipes will be available as procured
- i. Passports services discontinued
- j. Customers exhibiting symptoms may be asked to leave. They may utilize curbside services to pick up materials or other ADA accommodations.
- k. Curbside pickup remains an available option for all customers
- l. Donations of materials will continue to not be accepted
- m. Technology services will be available for the public at a reduced level, allowing 6 feet between stations.
- n. Staff need to be proactive about physical distancing, while still providing friendly customer service. While good service is encouraged, safety should be the top priority
- o. Reduced furniture availability to encourage shorter visits
- p. No food or drink consumption in the Library except for the Loussac atrium.
- q. Sitting on the floor will be prohibited.

**Step 5: Return to Full services:**

- A. Staff Expectations:** All staff will return to pre-COVID work schedule and all libraries will resume regular hours. Staff observes personal protection measures, such as staying home when sick, frequent hand washing. Face masks are not required. Building occupancy will follow EO or Municipal guidelines available at that time. Room reservations will be available to the public but may be subject to occupancy limitations.
- B. Services:** Regular programming may resume, depending on allowable attendance play areas in youth services and toys will be available
- C. Logistics:**
  - a. Building occupancy level will follow Municipal guidance
  - b. Furniture may be reduced for social distancing, computers and work areas will be restored
  - c. Circulation procedures (check out and discharging) returns to pre-COVID practices
  - d. The library will begin accepting donations
  - e. Passport services may resume dependent on staffing levels and State Department guidance
  - f. Regular technology services will resume with increased disinfection of surfaces. Hand sanitizer will be readily available for customer use
  - g. Staff meetings can either remain online or revert to face-to-face
  - h. Outreach and partnership activities will resume

**Hygiene Practices to be used during all steps**

- **Clean your hands often.** Wash with soap and water, 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/cough.** Sneeze into a tissue and then throw away, or use your elbow to cover the mouth
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **Clean shared surfaces and equipment often.** Use disinfectants to clean commonly touched items, such as doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, keyboards, copy machines, self checkouts, etc.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**