**COVID19 Prevention Checklist**

**Public Library Guidance**

As the number of COVID-19 cases begins to decrease, the State of Maine is adopting a staged approach, supported by science, public health expertise and industry collaboration, to allow Maine businesses to safely open when the time is right.

This is a guidance checklist document that the State has prepared for public libraries so they can be prepared to meet minimum health guidelines and reopen safely. Please make sure you pair this document with the general guidance document that applies to all institutions, which is available at: <https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/Restarting_Maines_Economy_GENERAL_GUIDANCE_CHECKLIST_4.29.20_2.pdf>

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available.

**Additionally, as your local communities and governing bodies determine the best way to safely re-open services, this document reflects minimum steps a library must consider. Libraries may certainly go beyond the guidance in this outline.**

**Phases 1, 2 or 3: Public Libraries**

***Released May xx, 2020***

**Library Staff: Personal Protective Gear, Supplies, And Clothing**

• Require employees and patrons to wear face coverings

• Provide gloves to employees for contact with high-touch surfaces, cleaning and disinfecting, and direct contact with patron handled library materials that have not been quarantined for 72 hours. Gloves should be changed when library staff move between tasks (shelving, checking books in, checking books out, etc.)

o Wear gloves when handling any patron library card or patron or ILL library materials.

* Quarantine books and other library materials for **72 hours until further guidance is received from the IMLS/Battelle national study**. See: <https://www.imls.gov/news/covid-19-research-partnership-inform-safe-handling-collections-reopening-practices-libraries>

o Wear gloves when returning library cards, books, other library materials or cash to patrons. Libraries can use bags for this purpose as well.

• Provide workers with up-to-date COVID information and training on safe donning, doffing, and disposal of personal protective equipment such as gloves and face coverings. Need to link to guidance.

**Patrons**

• Inform your patrons of your COVID policies and procedures in advance, if possible, via website, newsletters, newspaper, signage, etc. **Post on library doors:**

o Don’t come to the library if you feel sick

o Maintain physical distance in all areas of the library

o Follow signage in library for browsing shelves

o Face coverings are required for staff and patron safety (this is via Governor’s

• Use posters and signage to remind patrons and staff of physical distancing at entrance, checkout areas, computers, counters, etc.

• Encourage patrons to limit who they bring into the library, particularly children.

• Support physical distance between patrons and library staff by taping off 6 feet distance from counter.

• Plexiglass barriers:

* Minimum: a temporary easy to install plexiglass barrier to maximize physical distancing where appropriate in the library based on procedures for check-out and circulation desk configuration.
* Maximum: more permanent glass or plexiglass barriers that the library will most likely keep in place beyond Stage 4.

• Do not let patrons in library staff areas.

• Minimize shared touch surfaces such as tablets, pens, library cards, receipts, etc.

• Consider going fine free to limit cash transactions

• Consider free printing to limit contact and cash transactions depending on your local printer access and policies.

**Library Buildings**

Understand the square footage of the library facility ([download the PDF of Maine libraries sq./ft](https://stateofmaine-my.sharepoint.com/personal/janet_mckenney_maine_gov/Documents/Desktop/Coronavirus/CoronavirusWebsite/COVID19-SqFt-LSA-Mapped.pdf).) and limit the number of people in the library to no more than the maximum allowable under Governor Mills’ Stage 1 and Stage 2 guidance.

* People in the library must be able to appropriately social distance. (i.e. if Stage 2 allows for no more than 50 people in a business at one time, but also requires 6 feet social distancing, the library facility must be able to accommodate that. If unable, then reduce the number of people allowed in the library facility until further guidance is established).
* Make it very clear to patrons if certain areas of the library are off limits.
* Arrange furniture and any seating to ensure social distancing.

Signage – prepare signage relating to patron behavior

Doors/Entrances – signage and counters for # of people

Cleaning – See [general guidance](https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/Restarting_Maines_Economy_GENERAL_GUIDANCE_CHECKLIST_4.29.20_2.pdf)

Parking lot and spaces – clearly designate areas for curbside pickup. Institute a practice for patrons to call.

Policies for Staff physical distancing in work areas, lunchrooms, kitchens, etc.

CDC - [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)

Restrooms:

* Minimum: Create signage on the restroom door that indicates when the restroom was last cleaned. Clean on a regular and scheduled basis.
* Maximum: Establish separate restrooms for staff and patrons and use minimum guidance.
* Check with health officials for local ordinances and building codes if you intend to close public access to bathrooms in early stages.

**Safe Handing of Library Materials**

***When federal guidance is received from the IMLS/Battelle research this guidance may change and will be updated after Maine CDC approval.***

Current guidance – see <https://www.maine.gov/msl/libs/services/Coronavirus.htm>

**From guidance:** Library lendable items are a made of a variety of materials and the latest studies indicate that the coronavirus can live on surfaces for up to 72 hours under laboratory conditions. Some epidemiologists are comfortable with 24 hours.

Clean and disinfectant the surfaces you can (e.g. DVD covers, acetate book covers) and the ones you cannot, let them sit for 72 hours before handling them. Continue to remind library workers to not touch their face and practice hand hygiene, especially after handling materials handled by others. Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces (e.g. counter tops, door handles, keyboard covers, phones) in the work place, often.

Books and other library materials that have been on library shelves, in a drop box, in a bag or in a tote and not touched in 72 hours, should be safe to handle.

Quarantining of library materials should be done when:

• Materials are returned to the book drop or by drop off appointment or left in a designated area.

• Library materials (CD cased, acetate book covers, etc.) should be cleaned/disinfected using approved cleaning/disinfecting products. <https://www.maine.gov/msl/libs/services/documents/ListNProductswithEmergingViralPathogensANDHumanCoronavirusclaimsforuseagainstSARS-CoV-2DateA.pdf>

**Lending Services - Curbside**

• Curbside Services are not encouraged by the Maine State Library until (June 2020). Schedule appointments and materials for pick up by phone or email.

• Have patrons stay in their vehicles if library staff will be delivering materials curbside.

• If patrons are picking up designated bags of materials, ensure they are clearly marked and inform patrons that only one person is allowed in the materials pick up area. Patrons are not to congregate or linger when picking up materials.

• Create a designated “touch-free” drop spot for library materials if a book drop is not available for materials return

**Lending Services – In Library**

• Support physical distance between patrons and library staff by taping off a counter checkout area and waiting line with 6-foot intervals marked.

• Create signage and guided paths through library stacks (one-way signs, floor stickers, arrows, etc.) to

maintain physical distancing in all areas of the library.

• Don’t serve coffee, food or snacks. Libraries working with other community organizations to provide social services should consider providing these services curbside.

• Consider circulation desks, checkout scanning equipment, tables, and public access computers as “hot spots” with high touch surfaces in confined areas. Staff checking out library materials should wear gloves and clean barcode scanners when finishing tasks. Equipment should be cleaned in between each staff use.

• Patrons should bring minimal items into the library.

• Limit the number of patrons in the library at any one time to [library square footage guidance](https://stateofmaine-my.sharepoint.com/personal/janet_mckenney_maine_gov/Documents/Desktop/Coronavirus/CoronavirusWebsite/COVID19-SqFt-LSA-Mapped.pdf).

• Do not share pens.

**Public Access Computing**

• Ensure computers are updated and in good working order to minimize close contact during patron use

• Ensure social distancing while computers are in use. Remove computers, chairs, desks to accomplish this. •Access to other public technology resources like scanning stations, photocopiers, printers should also be reviewed for social distancing, cleaning, and practicality purposes.

• Larger libraries with public access computer areas should establish perimeters around areas of normal congregation, indicate start of queue, etc.)

•Libraries can adopt scheduling computer use by appointment. Laptops and tablets can allow for easier cleaning.

•Exchangeable keyboard covers may provide easier disinfecting routines.

**Reference Services**

• Provide references services virtually by utilizing online video conferencing, or via phone or email to minimize face-to-face interactions. Reference services can be done remotely.

•In library reference should be arranged by appointment or call ahead to minimize time for staff and patron are together

• In library reference service should be provided in areas with chairs, desks arranged for appropriate social distancing and privacy for patrons.

• Limit customers in the library at any one time to library square footage guidance. Conduct sales and service business by appointment only at this time. Call ahead for urgent service visits.

• Reference Desks are high-touch surfaces and need regular wiping down.

• Operate with reduced number of reference and other staff.

• Conduct all reference work with books, paper and other items in a spacious area for patron to review. Reduce back and forth handling of materials. Maintain physical distance of 6 feet.

• Do not share pens.

**Library Programming**

• Avoid special events/promotions that could draw large numbers of library patrons to your building at one time

• Continue or initiate virtual programming as an alternative to in-library programs.

Adhere to all current guidance as it relates to maximum number of people that can gather in a physical space at one time. Outside events **must be limited in number of attendees – registered attendees only- and practice social distancing with masks.**

**Note regarding Children Services**

Children find it difficult to maintain physical distancing. It is recommended that children’s programming be suspended until at least Phase 3 of the Stay Safer at Home Order while the state tracks spread of COVID-19 and makes assessments about gathering of children. Libraries may follow future guidance issued for summer camps

• Story time, summer reading in the library, children’s craft and programming should not be planned unless a library is assured that parents can control children’s movements in the library. Libraries may follow future guidance issued for summer camps

• Children count in the number of people allowable in your building.