

Best Practices for Infectious Disease Mitigation for Libraries

Become familiar with the ALA Resource Page for Pandemic Preparedness

<http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/pandemic-preparedness>

If you choose to remain open

- Keep your local municipality informed of your decisions.
- Consider cancelling all library programming and the use of meeting rooms.
- Implement a regular schedule of cleaning/disinfecting that follows CDC recommendations for cleaning covers hard surfaces such as door knobs/handles, tabletops, desks, handrails, light switches, keyboards and other related computer equipment, restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- Ensure staff conducting such cleaning are wearing protective gloves.
- Post good hygiene practices at all building entrances, restrooms, and various public spaces throughout the building. If possible, provide hand sanitizer at various locations.
- Consider waiving for patrons during this period any fees which would result in the physical exchange of checks, cash or coins – essentially limiting staff and patron shared contact of these items. Use it as a positive public relations position. Remind staff to regularly wash their hands after handling items.
- Encourage employees to stay home if they are feeling sick or if they have a sick family member in their home.
- Pay attention to city/county directives for closures or for the banning of large groups in your community, which could include the library.
- If your local school district closes, the library should follow suit.
- Include on your website (and social media accounts, if practical) links to trusted sources of information for your community, County and State:
County Health Department – for example:
<https://ldchealth.org/>
Kansas Department of Health and Environment -- COVID-19 Resource Center:
<http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/index.htm>

If you choose to close the library

- Do not surprise your local municipality with a closure – communicate and coordinate with them.
- Utilize all avenues of communication at your disposal to inform the community of this decision and to keep them informed of future developments. Provide an email contact point for them to ask questions and have a staff member prepared to monitor the account.
- Consider waiving overdue fines during the closure period.
- If you close, continue to pay both full-time and part-time employees for their regularly scheduled shifts. The money has already been budgeted and they will need it more than ever during a quarantine crisis. Set expectations for staff whether they will continue working in the library or remotely from home. (See suggestions below.)

- Gain an agreement from your local municipality that the library wi-fi will be turned on 24/7 to accommodate the community's ability to access information.
- Stay in regular contact with your board, and be open to their thoughts on what to do about closures.
- Include on your website (and social media accounts, if practical) links to trusted sources of information for your community, County and State:
County Health Department – for example:
<https://ldchealth.org/>
Kansas Department of Health and Environment -- COVID-19 Resource Center:
<http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/index.htm>
- Schedule one or more staff members (rotation?) to check the book-drop and receive and process courier materials for at least a week after the closure - those things take time to get stopped! For more advice on dealing with courier materials, visit:
<https://kslibexpress.mykansaslibrary.org/2020/03/resources-for-covid-19/>
- Notify NEKLS if you plan to close your library and include your projected timeframe for closure (start date, end date). Send in an email to: nekls.staff@nekls.org

If you choose to close to the public, but allow employees to come in to work

- Deep clean the library. (See CDC recommendations link above.)
- Create informational posts for social media, to post on public bulletin boards, and for your library's website – be the source of trusted information for your community.
- Encourage patron use of your electronic resources (maybe shift some money you save by being close in utility use to your Hoopla budget).
- Consider whether or not to provide materials. Latest data says that the virus can live on hard surfaces for up to 3 days, so unless you are prepared to deep disinfect every book and item you send out, you could be counteracting your good work in closing for the public health.
- Weed the collection.

If you close and choose to allow employees to work from home, consider the following activities:

- Check out the state's roundup of free webinars and attend one a day to gain/sharpen skills.
- Find a class at Coursera (coursera.com) or Udemy (udemy.com) to take (for free) on a topic that will improve their skills.
- Start a library book club about some library-related topic (check out the ebooks available to you through the Gale Virtual Reference Collection at http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/klmb_nekls?db=GVRL (password is skyway)) for staff to read and discuss via Zoom or some other web conferencing platform (check with Robin or Jessi or George for access to NEKLS Zoom rooms)
- Complete projects that have been on the back burner and that don't require specialized equipment.
- Catch up on professional reading by going to Flipster and browsing through back issues of the Library Journal Magazine.

Sample Announcements from around the country

“The Superior District Library locations that are not located in our public schools (Bayliss, Pickford, Les Cheneaux, Curtis, and Brevort Township) will remain open at this time. Engadine, DeTour, Drummond Island, and Mollie R. Kahl locations will be closed during the school shutdown. We will be closely monitoring the situation and will follow all state guidelines regarding public libraries. We do ask that you utilize our online services as much as possible, limit your visits to quick in and out, and respect the staff and the library resources. We will meet the needs of the online learning situation as much as possible, but we have a limited number of computers and staff to assist. Also remember that we are an institution for the public but we are not equipped to be a daycare facility. Do not leave your children at the library for the day. Toys are no longer available in an effort to decrease the spread of illness, as well as headphones.

Again, we will be providing as many services as possible, but remember that our staff have families and live in the community and we are all dealing with this situation together. Stay healthy and thank you all.”

As a thriving community hub with events for all ages, we believe it is in our community's best interest to **cancel all library-sponsored events from March 13–31, 2020.**

All events scheduled for the auditorium will also be cancelled through March 31. However, meeting rooms and study rooms will remain open and available to outside organizations and individuals with reservations.

Lawrence Public Library administration is closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19 and will continue to assess COVID-19 updates to make decisions about April events later this month. For updates about COVID-19 and how we're responding to the virus, follow along at lplks.org/covid-19.

Sending you well-wishes from the library,

The health and safety of our patrons, volunteers and staff are a top priority. In light of the recent COVID-19 developments, the Bonner Springs City Library has made the following decisions about library services starting Friday, March 13th through Friday, April 3rd. We will continue to monitor the situation and may make other decisions or changes as needed. Stay up to date by following us on social media, checking our website, or calling the Library.

Immediate new protocols for the Library effective until Friday, April 3rd:

- All programs and events at the Library are cancelled.
- All use of the Library Meeting Room by the public is suspended.
- Book donations will not be accepted.
- All material returns must be put in the outside book drop or inside book drop; we will not take returns at the circulation desk.

- The Library will waive overdue fines for patrons unable or unwilling to come in due to the current situation. Please call the Library to arrange this or you can let us know when you do return with your materials.

At this time, the Library will remain open, and the Library is continuing to promote health and safety by increasing its practices of cleaning and sanitizing frequently touched surfaces. Please help us by washing your hands before and after handling materials, avoiding touching your face, and practicing social distancing. Thank you for your understanding and for helping us keep our community safe. If you have any questions, please call the Library at 913-441-2665.
