

Phased Re-Opening Plan for Rochester Public Library

Introduction

The Rochester Public Library closed to the public on March 16, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff continued to report on a limited basis through March 19, offering curbside pickup at the Central Library and faxing services in some branches. Also, during this week, MCLS Shipping staff picked up materials at all MCLS member libraries and placed all materials in quarantine. All materials returned this week through book drops at all locations were also quarantined. Book drops were closed March 19.

On March 23, under Governor Cuomo's NYS on PAUSE executive order, limited staff continued to report for work, primarily supporting the construction projects at Central. Facilities staff and some Finance and Shipping staff continued to report. Branches were closed. All other staff were instructed to work from home until further notice.

This report seeks to establish guidelines for re-opening Rochester Public Library locations as NYS on PAUSE is relaxed. Any re-opening will be based on information and guidance from the City of Rochester, County of Monroe, Commissioner of Health for Monroe County, and New York State.

The Rochester Public Library seeks to re-open in phases, beginning with touchless curbside pickup at the Central Library and ends with re-opening all locations to modified full service.

This plan will describe each phase in terms of:

- Conditions
- Library Services Offered
- Health, Hygiene, & Facilities Requirements

Each RPL location will have a written plan for re-opening in each phase that has been approved by the MGM Team, the Library Board, and the City.

Phase I - Current State on May 28, 2020

Condition

- Community is in Phase I of re-opening.
- Selected businesses have re-opened. Large gatherings are prohibited, people are still encouraged to stay home, and use of masks and social distancing is strongly recommended.
- Limited staff reporting to Central, with hours serviced Monday-Friday, 7:00am-3:00pm.
 - Curbside pickup is available from 9:30 am – 2:00 pm, Monday-Friday.
 - Mail and deliveries are accepted, sorted, and delivered to appropriate Central locations.
 - Finance Office staff are working staggered shifts and continuing to process payments and deposit checks.
 - Construction projects continue with weekly quality checks and meetings led by Finance Director and supported by Facilities staff.
- No staff reporting to Branches.
- Majority of staff are furloughed or working reduced hours. Those still working from home are developing and producing virtual programs, e-reference, collection development, and special projects.
- Communication is achieved through email, telephone, text messaging, and online group meetings.

Library Services Offered

- Digital content via Overdrive and Hoopla is available.
- Databases and curated lists of online activities and information resources are available on the MCLS and RPL websites and social media platforms.
- Virtual programs are offered via Zoom, Discord, YouTube and other sites.
- Reference questions are being answered online, by telephone, and by email.
- MiFi Units are available as requested.
- WiFi remains on at all branches and at Central.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Staff reporting to Central are provided with masks and gloves and are required to wear them when in contact with others. Social distancing is maintained.
- Entrances and other high-touch areas are cleaned two to three times per shift.
- Book drop remains closed.
- Cleaning staff needed to sanitize restrooms, elevators, and circulation desks each day, entrances multiple times per shift.

Supplies Needed

- Masks
- Gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Cleaning supplies – spray disinfectant, glass cleaner or all-purpose surface cleaner with 70% alcohol content, rags or paper towels.
- Plastic bags

Phase 1.B – Touchless Curbside Service Expanded to Branches

Condition

- Touchless curbside service at Central has been successful for at least 2 weeks.
- MGM Team, Library Board, City & County approve expansion.
- Curbside process has been smoothed out and can be applied in Branches.
- Selected Branches have a written plan for how they will implement the service and the plan has been shared with and approved by the RPL MGM Team. Branches being considered are Arnett, Winton, Lincoln, and Charlotte. Winton will go first.
- May require some staff be recalled from furlough and/or shared work.

Library Services Offered

- Requirements for Branch Service
 - There must be an enclosed space at the branch entrance where items can be placed for pickup, i.e. a vestibule or lobby.
 - Branch supervisors will have to commit to the process being contactless. That means no contact with the patron until it is safe to do so. This is to protect both staff and the patrons. So, no faxing, no copying, no computer access, etc. for now.
 - Ideally, the branch has a parking lot where it is safe for people to pull up and park if they are driving to the branch. If your patrons mostly walk, this is not an issue.
 - The Branch Manager will develop a written plan that includes hours, process, and staffing needs and submit it to the MGM team.
- Branch collections are smaller than Central, so branch might loan things such as craft kits, puzzles, or other items besides books and DVDs.
- Delivery still offline; no shipping of materials between locations.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Staff will wear mask and gloves, replacing gloves or sanitizing gloves after each transaction.
- Staff member sanitizes vestibule, table, and all door handles before next patron is allowed in.
- Staff member stays at this station and is rotated out once an hour.
- No returns will be accepted.
- Book drop remains closed.
- Cleaners or staff needed to sanitize restrooms, entrances and circulation desks each day.

Supplies Needed

- Masks
- Gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Cleaning supplies – spray disinfectant, glass cleaner or all-purpose surface cleaner with 70% alcohol content, rags or paper towels.
- Plastic bags

Phase II – Selected Staff Return to All Locations

Condition

- Municipal workers may return to their buildings.
- Staff may work staggered shifts.
- Library complies with guidance on number of staff allowed in buildings (25%, 50%, etc.)
- Some staff will continue to work from home.
- High risk staff, those caring for ill family members, and those with childcare issues are identified and may continue to work from home.
- Curbside service and all online programs and services continue but the library is not yet open to the public.

Library Services Offered

- Curbside service continues.
- Online and telephone reference is available.
- Book drops remain closed.

Staff Activity

- Staff returning to work will resume as much of their normal work as possible.
- All staff will be engaged in determining methods of ensuring social distancing and hygiene in staff and public areas. This will include rearrangement of furniture, modification of shared spaces and items such as coffee and vending machines, and modifications to schedules.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Entrance to the building – need to determine if we maintain one entrance for Central.
 - All staff are required to wear masks; gloves are optional. The Library may (will?) provide 2 cloth masks per employee.
 - Hand sanitizer is supplied at each entrance. Staff must use.
 - Staff must enter the building at least 6 feet apart and remain 6 feet apart as they work.
- Staff may be screened for health upon entry using the roccovid.org website.
- Library must provide training for staff on use and disposal of PPE's.
- Frequent handwashing is encouraged; use of hand sanitizer is encouraged.
- Separate trash cans are provided for disposal of used masks and gloves.
- Desks and work areas will need to be rearranged to ensure social distancing.
 - Need to determine appropriate spacing for desks & computers or develop staggered schedules. Possibly set and offer B shifts for selected staff.
 - Physical modifications like sneeze guards – staff must determine where to place sneeze guards in public spaces. Jerry Tevels has made two prototypes and has enough material to build 12 guards. We will need many more for all service desks at Central and in Branches.
- Institute “clean desk” policy – removal of personal items that are hard to clean. Yes/No?
- Elevator protocol established – 1-2 riders at a time.
- Meetings of more than 6 people will be done virtually if 6 ft distance cannot be achieved.
- Shared materials such as pens, pencils, staplers, scissors, coffee machines, etc. must be kept clean. Wipe down after every use. Do not share materials if possible. Staff will bring their own supplies to common areas like service desks. We are exploring the use of bluetooth keyboards

that would be issued to staff and carried from personal desk to service desk to eliminate the shared keyboards at service desks.

- Reduce touchpoints where possible – keep interior doors open to reduce need for touching door knobs.
- Social distancing signage – See report from Graphics. Staff will determine traffic flow and signage & directional requirements for their floors, departments, and branches.
- Facility Checks and questions
 - Is interior air flow adequate? We know there are issues in both Central buildings and at Wheatley.
 - Mechanical systems check
 - Water/plumbing check
 - Fire safety check
- Provide training and guidance for staff using public transportation.
 - Wear PPE's
 - Maintain social distance
 - Use hand sanitizer when you get on and when you get off bus
 - Wipe surfaces down before you sit, if possible.

Business Continuity Issues

- Risk & liability in bringing staff back – must check with City.
- Notify vendors to resume shipping.
- End mail-hold via USPS for Central and Branches. Assigned to Adam Traub & Frank Russo.
- Determine who can or should continue to work from home. High-risk staff and those with childcare complications should be prioritized.
- Suspend all travel for remainder of calendar year.
- Develop instructions for staff returning library equipment. Who sanitizes?

Phase III – Limited Public Access at Central and Branches

Condition

- Permission has been granted to allow public back into municipal buildings.
- Social distancing still in place.
- May have to manage number of people in building at any one time. Formula being recommended is (usable sq. footage ÷ square of recommended social distance = 36 for now). Need assistance from Architectural Services to determine usable square footage for each library building.
- Limited services available.
- Possible change in hours to accommodate staggered schedules and appointment-only services.
- Most staff return to active service. Staff at high-risk, those who are caring for sick family members, or those who have childcare complications may continue to work from home.

Library Services Offered

- Computer services by appointment. Hands-free assistance is provided.
- Returns accepted; book drops open; returns quarantined for 72 hours.
- Materials can be checked out and holds picked up.
- No group programs or activities inside the library. Outdoor programs for fewer than 10 people may be allowed.
- In-person Reference service is available.
- Delivery service is resumed.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Touchless computer assistance replaces one-to-one computer help. Training on how to do this is being developed by Hannah Ralston at Henrietta.
- Plan for quarantining returns is implemented using meeting room space. Returned materials quarantined for 72 hours (3 days) before shelved or put in delivery.
 - Quarantine should follow guidelines published by [IMLS/OCLC/Battelle Program](#) when available.
- Circ and reference desks are modified for social distancing. Will need input from each Branch & Division regarding this process. May remove reference desks from branches and conduct all business from the circulation desk.
- Computers and other equipment and furniture are reconfigured to maintain social distancing.
 - Will have to remove some computers or shift them into the meeting rooms.
 - Patrons will be required to wear gloves and mask, and will be given a cleansing wipe to wipe keyboard and mouse.
 - Sneeze guards at desks, between computers, at security posts. Where else?
- Patron Hygiene
 - Sanitize hands on entry.
 - Must wear a mask; masks provided at entry.
 - Health screening at entry. Possibly have people use roccovid.org website.
 - Limit time in building?
 - Give instructions on social distancing including that people will be removed if they do not follow guidelines.
 - LOTS of concern from staff regarding patron reaction to PPE use. Can City Security assist if necessary?

Phase IV – Increased Public Access at Central and Branches

Condition

- Larger public gatherings are declared safe by state and local government.
- Some social distancing still in place.
- Larger number of people allowed inside the building at any time.
- Normal hours resume.
- Returned materials continue to be quarantined.
- Most staff return to active service. Staff at high-risk, those who are caring for sick family members, or those who have childcare complications may continue to work from home.

Library Services Offered

- Computer services return to normal.
- Returns accepted; book drops open.
- Materials can be checked out and holds picked up.
- In-person programs resume with participation limits.
- Reference service is available in person, online, and by phone.
- Delivery service continues.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Touchless computer assistance is still encouraged.
- Returned materials quarantined for 72 hours (3 days) before shelved or put in delivery.
- Circ and reference desks continue to be modified for social distancing.
- Computers and other equipment and furniture are reconfigured to maintain social distancing. Sanitation of equipment continues.
- Patron Hygiene
 - Sanitize hands on entry.
 - Masks are no longer required.
 - Health screening is no longer required.

Phase V – Full Public Access at Central and Branches

Condition

- Public gatherings safe and happening on a routine basis.
- Social distancing recommendations completely relaxed.
- Institutions and businesses allowed to operate at 100% capacity.
- Returned materials may be quarantined.
- Staff return to work under normal operations plan.

Library Services Offered

- In-person programs resume without social distancing limitations.

Health, Hygiene & Facility Requirements

- Touchless computer assistance encouraged as new normal.
- Returned materials no longer quarantined before shelving or delivery.
- Service points can be re-configured for optimal patron service.
- Patron Hygiene
 - Hand sanitization still encouraged upon entry.

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Questions

RPL Re-opening Questions

1. Confirm call-back procedure with DHRM and develop call-back plan based on service implementation. Big question: Can/should we recall furloughed and shared work staff *before* July 31?
2. Do we need library-specific Business Precaution Plan posted, or will City provide? (Lists precautions we are taking to ensure safety, including response to patrons & staff showing COVID symptoms.)
3. Clean Desk policy? Removal of personal items that are hard to keep clean?
4. Remove unnecessary doors, or keep open?
5. Survey staff to determine their expectations for return to work?
6. Can some staff still work from home? Who? Must ID high risk staff, those caring for ill family members, and those with childcare issues.
7. Suspend public & staff use of shared supplies – headphones/headsets, pens & pencils, staplers, scissors, tape, etc?
8. Suspend food in the library for patrons?
9. Implement strict refrigerator use for staff?
10. Cleaning – Big Lift here – who does what and how often. What can we reasonably expect non-cleaner staff to do? Should check with DHRM regarding job description limitations.
11. Do we reduce # of entrances in all buildings so all people enter and exit through same door?
 - a. Need to work out traffic flow for early voting at Arnett and Red Cross blood drive at Winton.
12. Sanitizing packages and mail? For packages, does Shipping staff unbox before delivering to recipient?
13. Vending machines – clean regularly or close down?
14. How do we determine number of people allowed in Central? Formula is (Net Usable Sq.Ft. of space ÷ square of recommended social distance – so 36 for now). Do we determine floor by floor? Branch by Branch?
15. Funds allocation – material funds remain allocated to digital content and MiFis for most divisions & branches until Phase 4. Rebalance funds 2nd quarter.
16. Summer programs – can we do outdoor, in-person programs? If so, what is recommended attendance limit and how do we manage crowds?

Branch Supervisor Concerns/Questions on Re-Opening

- Safety of staff
 - PPE Use – need training. Library will provide masks, gloves & hand sanitizer
 - Need to re-educate the community on using the library as things will be different
- If library is a food site, where would food be distributed? Eat on site? Grab and go?
- Communications/transactions between staff and public
- Cleaning guidelines for restrooms, public areas, and staff areas
- Traffic patterns
- Enforcement of safety/mask issues with public
- Scheduling changes
- Hours of operation. Should Saturdays be closed? Should we stagger open days between libraries or at individual libraries

- Social Distancing of children - should they be accompanied by an adult? If so, age restriction for the “adult”?

MCLS Re-opening Questions

1. Survey members to determine their expectations for return to service? Adam has done that with the Re-opening Team.
2. When do we re-start ILL operations? Would like a plan from Rob (or Adam & Patty if prior to Rob’s return to work).
3. When do we re-start Outreach? Would like a plan from Melanie.
4. When do we re-start delivery to member libraries?
 - a. When do members re-open book drops? Should everyone open at the same time?
 - b. Do we re-start for full system or on modified routes?
 - c. Must resolve quarantine issue. System recommendation is that quarantine happen at point of return to reduce possible spread of virus via trucks and drivers.
 - d. What staff must be recalled in Shipping? All or some?
 - e. Will member libraries re-open at same time with same services or will it be library by library? Who is doing curbside and when?
5. When do we recall full Tech Services staff? **1-2 weeks before towns and/or RPL start ordering physical materials again(?) (JL)**
 - a. Partial staff return now to support cataloging & addition of new items available for curbside service.
 - b. When do we start to have vendors release orders for delivery?