

Re-Opening Guidelines 6/1/2020

Libraries across Four County began shutting their doors in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 virus pandemic and Governor Cuomo's Executive Orders. According to Governor Cuomo, each region in the state must meet and maintain core [metrics](#) to determine if they can re-open. As New York State begins to look towards re-opening safely, this document is intended to provide guidelines for safe and effective practices. This document was created in collaboration with the Steering Committee for the Four County Library System.

According to New York State, reopening will occur in phases.

- Phase 1 includes manufacturing, construction, and some retail locations who must offer curbside pick-up.
- Phase 2 includes professional services, finance and insurance, retail, administrative support, and real estate.
- Phase 3 includes restaurants, food services, and hotels.
- Phase 4 includes arts, entertainment, recreation and education.

Based on the current understanding of the opening requirements from state and regional authorities, and the roll out of the state's phases, HML will gradually reopen in the chapters noted below.

All re-opening chapters are dependent upon libraries implementing the following actions and protocols as listed in the [NY Forward Safety Plan Template](#)-

- Provide free protective equipment (gloves, face masks, sanitizer, etc) to ALL staff: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-20216-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency>
- Implement enhanced cleaning or quarantine procedures for library materials as recommended by the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC): <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/3.-emergency-management/3.5-disinfecting-books>
- Implement enhanced cleaning procedures for common areas following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.
- Develop a written plan for the protection of staff and patrons, including social distancing and reduction in workplace density
- Screen employees entering the workplace for COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Fever over 100, loss of taste or smell, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, or sore throat
 - Screening results must be reviewed every day and documented
- Develop a process to notify public health officials, staff, and the public in the event of a confirmed case among the library staff or persons known to have used library services and to cooperate with contact tracing effort
 - Maintain confidentiality as required by state and federal laws
- Create a process to maintain a continuous log with contact information for worker who may have close contact with other individuals at the work site or area; excluding deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means

*NOTE: Progress through the chapters will be halted or reversed if confirmed COVID-19 cases are found in staff or patrons.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter begins when The [NY Forward Business Reopening Lookup Tool](#) indicates it is safe.

and the requirements listed above are met.

- Staff will be allowed to continue to work from home (WFH) as much as possible. Staffing the building will be done on a staggered schedule and/or in separate areas of the building to encourage social distancing in response to the Executive Order that staff must be in the building at 50% capacity.
- Library book drops may be opened for returns and all recommended guidelines for quarantining materials for 72 hours as recommended by the NEDCC will be followed.
- 4CLS delivery will resume to return library materials to owning libraries. Materials must be quarantined for a minimum of 72 hours before being put in delivery as recommend by the NEDCC.
- Local holds can be placed for HML patrons. At this time, it is uncertain if the patron can place their own holds through the online catalog. Those with the BookMyne app can place local holds on a smart phone or tablet.
- Patrons will not have access to library buildings in this stage.
- HML will post signage to remind personnel to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols

Chapter 2

This chapter begins when a region enters NYS Phase 2, the requirements listed above are met, **and** the activities listed in Chapter 1 are fully established.

- HML will offer curbside pickup by appointment only. Patrons can either call, email or place local holds using the BookMyne app and the library will call to set a pick-up time in the Entry Way.
- Returns will be accepted through the outside Book Return boxes only.
- The public will not be allowed in the library to browse, read periodicals or use the meeting rooms.
- Staff will wear proper protective equipment during all interactions with the public and library workers in this process and are allowed in the building at 50% capacity.
- Library programs will be provided online only.

Chapter 3

This chapter goes into effect when a region enters Phase 4, the requirements listed above are met, **and** the activities listed in Chapter 1 and 2 have been in place for at least two weeks.

- Libraries offer limited access to the building. The number of patrons allowed in the building will follow an state guidelines (e.g. 1 person per 4 square feet or % of maximum capacity)
 - entrances/exits locations will be monitored
- Suggested guidelines on social distancing will include, but are not limited to:
 - Altered traffic patterns
 - Chairs completely or partially removed from tables and reading rooms to allow for greater distance between users

- Computer stations spaced a minimum of 6 feet apart to allow for greater distance between users
- Staff work stations, offices, and break rooms will allow for physical distancing
- Social distancing markers using tape or signs that denote 6 feet of spacing in common areas
- All employees and patrons will wear personal protective equipment.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of all commonly touched surfaces will take place on a regular and frequent schedule and logged.
- Hand hygiene stations will be provided for personnel including handwashing with soap, water, and paper towels, or an alcohol-based sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible.
- Computer use will be by appointment for a reduced session length.
- Computers will be disinfected after each use and both staff and patrons must wear proper personal protective equipment.
- Interlibrary Loan will be reinstated.
- Programs can be held if they have low attendance and large enough room capacity to allow participants to maintain a 6-foot distance. Attendees must continue to wear masks as is required when entering the library.
- Children's programs that cannot maintain the recommended physical distance will be held virtually or postponed.
- Bathrooms with multiple stalls will be considered single-use and will be disinfected regularly.

Chapter 4

This chapter goes into effect when gatherings of up to 50 people are allowed, and national, state, and regional elected and health officials no longer recommend public stay at home.

- Resumption of core services takes place with an end to limited building access and an emphasis on social distancing and enhanced cleaning practices.
- Regular programs can be scheduled for adults and youth as long as attendance is less than 50 people.
- Library meeting rooms can be used by outside groups.

Chapter 5

This chapter goes into effect when all restrictions on gatherings have been removed.

- Libraries offer in-person programming and provide meeting rooms for community use.