Pandemic Reopening Plan
May 15th, 2020

The Jack Russell Memorial Library (JRML) Board has an obligation to both staff and public to provide a safe environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the nature and ongoing changes of dates and information from officials, this plan is a guideline only with dates and procedures subject to change on a moment’s notice. Phases may be implemented in order, skipped, or reverted back to if prudent.

The goal of this plan is to re-open JRML in a safe manner while following guidelines from the CDC, Washington Ozaukee Health Department Blue Print for Re-opening and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation for Public Facilities Guidelines. These following measures are being put into place for the safety of all citizens.

JRML patrons and staff are asked to continue following the guidelines from the CDC listed below:

- Cover any coughs and sneezes with your elbow.
- Wear a cloth face covering (also recommended by the Washington Ozaukee Health Department Blue Print for Re-opening)
- Use hand sanitizer provided by the City of Hartford and available at JRML service desks
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance from staff and library patrons whenever possible.

For detailed information about the guidelines complementing this plan, please visit the following websites checking them frequently as plans/guidelines are updated frequently as new information is made available.

CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/

Washington Ozaukee County Blueprint for Reopening
http://www.washozwi.gov/Portals/WashOzHealthDept/May%204%20Blueprint%20for%20Reopening%20Washington%20and%20Ozaukee%20Counties.pdf

Washington Ozaukee County Blueprint for Reopening FAQ
http://www.washozwi.gov/Portals/WashOzHealthDept/BlueprintFAQ_v_10_513_1.pdf

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Guidance on Public Facilities for COVID-19

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation General Guidance for Businesses for re-opening

Each phase provides details as to how library operations will be provided based on the guidelines mentioned above. Please note some phases have dates and while other do not simply because of the fluid nature of living through a Pandemic. The top priority for all phases is the safety of library staff and citizens using the facility and services provided.
PHASE 1: Initial actions (March 16th – 17th)

On March 16th President Trump announced individuals and organizations should cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 10 or more people. Based on information and concern rapidly escalating, the City of Hartford closed JRML to the public effective Tuesday, March 17th.

- Library Director communicated with the library board via email about the closure as well as making a phone call to the Library Board President regarding the closure.
- Programs were cancelled and meeting reservations cancelled (and called) through April.
- Signs made for doors and communications made through social media and website. Phone message updated to reflect new situation.
- Volunteer program suspended indefinitely (phone calls were made to each volunteer).
- Library Director kept the drive thru book return open for materials return because this is handled in a separate area with the door in the library. Based on a CDC webinar on March 23rd for librarians, the recommendation was made to quarantine materials for 24 hours to curb the spread of the virus. The Division for Libraries came out with a best practice guide on March 25th, suggesting libraries hold materials for 72 hours.
- With this information the Bookkeeper/Secretary devised a plan to safely handle materials and quarantine items for 72 hours using the Friends Room and carts. Materials were separated into two categories: those owned by Hartford and those belonging to other Monarch Members. Carts were labeled with the date to be checked in and separated according to our regular re-shelving process. By continuing to accept returns, it allowed JRML in to avoid running out of room to store materials as they were returned and items to be re-shelved as plans were being made to re-open.
On March 24th, Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm issued Emergency Order #12 – Safer at Home Order to help prevent the spread of this virus. This order took effect as of 8 AM on March 25th and remained in effect until 8 AM, Friday, April 24th. This order shut down non-essential businesses, prevents non-essential travel and orders people to stay at home.

During this time JRML daily operations were as follows:

- **Curbside service was offered for two days in March on the 18th and 20th** to push out holds that had arrived for patrons. Due to the overwhelming demand while trying to setup a brand new way of providing services, curbside was closed on March 20th.
- **Monarch Library System made the last delivery of materials on Wednesday, March 18th**.
- **Library Director designated an emergency responder and all library employees designated as essential employees by City Administration.** City Departments were given latitude to implement hybrid plans of working from home as well as coming into city offices to pick up materials to keep employees safe and to help slow the spread of COVID-19
- **Employees working from home received weekly work packets to complete online training along with a form to fill out what they learned to be submitted with their timesheet to the Library Director. (March 24th – April 13th)**.
- **Part-time employee hours were reduced by 50%. Two full-time staff deemed essential by Library Director.**
  - Bookkeeper/Secretary remained on site to accept deliveries and ensure building was not damaged outside or there were mechanical failures inside. Safely sorted and handled materials being returned in the drive thru book return.
  - Starting March 12th, the Assistant Director/Youth Librarian worked exclusively from home based individual health needs.
  - Rotate employees to work limited hours per week in the library to handle items coming out of quarantine and check them in. Pack bins for pickup at a later date by Monarch Library System Delivery. Complete other tasks assigned by the Library Director or Assistant Director.
  - Library Director marked each employees’ timecard with hours as related to COVID-19 per direction from the City of Hartford.
- **The Library Director worked a hybrid model onsite and from home to help slow the spread** (March 24th – April 6th). During this time, the Director was in regular communication via phone and email with
  - City of Hartford Administrator
  - Assistant Director/Youth Librarian
  - Washington County Library Directors
  - City of Hartford Department Heads
  - Bookkeeper/Secretary
  - JRML staff via phone and email
  - Citizens via Facebook Live
- **The following online services were promoted via the library’s website and social media to citizens in the Hartford Area**
  - Downloading Ebooks and Eaudiois through Overdrive using the Libby App
  - Access streaming content through the RBDigital App (for ex: Acorn TV & The Great Courses)
  - Gale Courses
Online story times with authors reading their work out loud through Facebook live or videos. Publishers granted permission for copyrighted work to be used in this manner due to the Pandemic.
JRML’s Youth Librarian made videos at home featuring crafts, science experiments and games to make at home using everyday items people have in their homes. (Started week of March 24th and is ongoing during limited in person services).

- Starting April 6th, the Library Director was onsite fulltime with meetings, phone calls, emails and programming through social media (EX: Quarantine Bingo). Programs scheduled for April and May were rescheduled until the fall of 2020 with speakers/performers/authors.
- April 13th – JRML part-time staff were asked to return to the library on a limited, rotating basis to allow for social distancing to continue to slow the spread of the virus. Staff’s main job was to re-shelve 15 carts of materials that had gone through the new return and quarantine process.
- On Thursday, April 16th, the Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm issued Emergency Order #28- Safer at Home Order which would remain in effect until 8 AM, Tuesday, May 26th. Public Libraries were listed as essential service and able to provide curbside pickup for materials starting at 8am on Friday, April 24th. The order stated Public libraries shall remain closed for all in-person services, except that they may provide the following services:
  - Online services and programming.
  - Curb-side pick-up of books and other library materials, if all operations are performed by one person in a room or confined space. Materials must be requested online or by phone before pick-up. The library may not require a signature from the patron. The library must schedule pickups to ensure compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 16 of the Safer at Home Order.
  - Any Essential Governmental Function
  - Food distribution.
- The Library Director began immediately planning to offer curbside pickup starting at 10am on Friday, April 24th.
- Part-time staff’s hours were increased to the full amount as of April 20th when they returned to work in two teams. This was a temporary approach to limit their exposure to each other and allowed prepping to start for pickup of materials by appointment.
- Adult programming staff prepared crafts for grownups to go kits to be picked up curbside once per week.
- Quarantine Bingo was released to the public on social media

Curbside Pickup - Released on Friday, April 24th at 10am with the following procedures
- Staff pull items that are hold for pickup in Hartford on JRML’s shelf.
- When the items are pulled, staff traps the hold in Polaris and attaches receipt to the item with the patron’s name.
- Staff then call the patron to set-up an appointment. Curbside pickup hours are as follows: Monday – Thursday 10am-7pm; Friday 10am-4:30pm and Saturday 10am-2pm.
- Appointments are available every hour on the hour, with seven per hour. Citizens were given flexibility during the hour to pick up materials. For those who missed their pickup time, staff called to make another appointment.
- After the appointment is made, staff check the items out the patron with an extended due date. (In response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the resulting economic stress placed on our community, JRML felt this was a way to lessen an already hard situation).
• Items are then placed onto tables marked with pickup dates and times. Staff then label the bags with the patron’s last name, first initial, the pickup date and time.
• The bags are then stored in the community room on tables waiting for pickup.
• On the day of pickup, tables are rolled out of the community and placed near the front door in order of appointment times.
• At the top of each hour, staff roll the new table out underneath the tent serving as the pickup area and bring the previous table in to be sanitized.
• When patrons arrive, they are asked to show their library card or photo id and hold their bag up to the staff member in the window to verify their identity.
• In the event of inclement weather, staff bring the table into the foyer area and open up the left side of the double doors. The table is right up against the door frame to the patron can grab their bag and materials are protected from the weather.
• On Monday, May 11th appointments were increased from seven per hour to 10, allowing JRML to provide same day pickup for materials.
**PHASE 3: PLANNING FOR ESSENTIAL IN PERSON SERVICES AND CURBSIDE PICKUP (April 24th – May 15th)**

JRML is defining essential services as:
- Browsing for materials
- Printing, photocopying and faxing
- Internet Access

JRML requested an occupancy of the library proper (the area in the library citizens utilized) by the Hartford Fire Department on Wednesday, May 6th. *Please note this occupancy does not include the staff workroom, the Community Room, Youth Services work area and the Hartford History Room. The occupancy is strictly based on areas citizens have access to for independent study, meeting and browsing for materials.*

The gross calculated square footage for the combined first and second floor areas available to the public is 21,405 square feet. According to table 14.8.1.2 of NFPA 1, 2012 edition (Life Safety Code) the occupant load factor for library stack areas is 100 sq ft per person. This calculated out is a total of 214 persons for maximum capacity: (21,405 sq ft/100 sq ft per person=214 persons)

Based on information from the Washington Ozaukee County Blueprint for Reopening FAQ released on May 5th, recommended occupancy guidelines for outdoor events, bars, zoos and museums (just to name a few) is suggested to be at 25%. While JRML does not sell any goods or serve food and/or drinks, citizens gather here to socialize and meet. Based on this guideline, the Library Director moved forward with planning to reopen for essential services with an occupancy of 53 people at one time in the library, including scheduled staff plus 2 (allowing for delivery personal and other contractors who might come on site for scheduled maintenance).

The following adjustments were made in preparation for Phase Four in the library proper to allow for social distancing while following the guidelines of the Washington Ozaukee County Blueprint for Reopening FAQ:

- Rearrange library seating to allow for one person at a time
- Modify the front entrance to allow traffic to flow in one direction entering and exiting. Using cones and caution tape from DPW, a line down the front area of the library has been set-up to maintain the distance and traffic flow.
- Keeping the second set of doors at the entrance open at all times to reduce touching the door handles as citizens enter and exit.
- Add a line queue area in front of the circulation desk marked by X’s on the floor designating the 6ft of distance of where citizens ought to wait to get assistance.
- Staff will adjust their workflow to stand at the circulation station closest to the Library Directors office. When the line gets to be more than three people, the lower circulation station will be used and staff will call patrons over to checkout.
- Plexiglas shields have added to the circulation desk and reference desk.
- The reference desk has two tables in front of it to promote 6ft of social distancing between citizens and staff.
- Bubblers are closed and covered in plastic.
• To promote social distancing with internet computers on the second floor, five stations are available, 6ft apart. The remaining stations have been covered in plastic.
• OPAC’s (online public access catalog) have been reduced to five on the first floor of the library facing north and two upstairs on the second floor right near the stairs. Keyboards and mice have been covered in plastic so staff are able to disinfect the area after use by a patron.
• The restrooms on the first floor remain open with the doors propped to reduce touching the door handle while entering and exiting.
• The restrooms on the second floor have been cleaned and are closed due to the size of the space and to discourage citizens from taking care of their personal hygiene needs during COVID-19.

Service Adjustments worked on during this phase
JRML’s circulation supervisor created maps of the first and second floor to use a guide when patrons need to locate a book on the shelf.

The Library Director and Circulation Supervisor worked through procedures for contactless registration for citizens getting a new library card. Staff were asked for their input as well.

Collecting cash for services shall be handled using a box to keep transactions as contactless as possible.

Youth Services Department
During this phase much thought and deliberation has occurred amongst regarding Youth Services and staffing capacity in this department at time of re-opening. Due to the design of the service desk and staffing challenges JRML has right now in this department, this service desk shall be closed to the public until such time as staffing capacity increases and more Plexiglas is available.

Areas utilized by children, families and young adults have been adjusted as follows:
• All tables are set-up for use by one patron.
• The nine internet access computers have been covered plastic to discourage youth from congregating at the library to play computer games all day. The school quarantine remains in effect and JRML wishes to support it.

Summer Learning Challenge
JRML’s Youth Services Librarian has researched and purchased with approval from the Library Director an online program called READsquared to allow contactless tracking of activities with the SLC. This software was selected because of its robust customization abilities. For families without internet access, the paper option to log minutes will be available.

Ventilation System
The system at library has no forced air heating or cooling, it is all in floor or slab. The exhaust fans run continually with the air exchange system which exhausts 100% outside air and bringing in 100% during full occupied system hours. We change filters twice a year and just replaced prior to opening. JRML has a great dehumidification/ humidification system. It is a completely closed system which allows for no possible chance for bacterial growth as it electrostatically dispenses the humidity at a rate of 50%.
PHASE 4: Re-opening for Essential Services Only (May 16th – Current Date)

As outlined in Phase 3 during the planning stages for this phase, JRML is defining essential services as
- Browsing for materials
- Printing, photocopying and faxing
- Internet Access

Curbside service will sunset during this phase and be available on a request only basis for those patrons who are uncomfortable or unable to come inside JRML for essential services.

**Occupancy – 53 citizens and staff at one time**

As researched in Phase 3, based on information from the Washington Ozaukee County Blueprint for Reopening FAQ released on May 5th, recommended occupancy guidelines for outdoor events, bars, zoos and museums (just to name a few) is suggested to be at 25%. While JRML does not sell any goods or serve food and/or drinks, citizens gather here to socialize and meet. Based on this guideline, the Library Director moved forward with planning to reopen for essential services with an occupancy of **53 people** at one time in the library, including scheduled staff plus 2 (allowing for delivery personal and other contractors who might come on site for scheduled maintenance).

**Contact Tracing**

As stated by stated Kirsten Johnson, the public health officer for Washington Ozaukee Health Department “the health department will continue robust contact tracing and effective public health campaigns. When outbreaks occur, we will publish them and issue legally binding direction to the organization(s) involved to quickly resolve the risk to the community. Voluntary compliance with the Blueprint mitigates the risk of large outbreaks.” (Press Release May 14th, 2020).

**Managing 25% Occupancy**

To manage the occupancy in JRML while collecting contact tracing information, patrons shall be given one hour, per person, per day to access essential service and be asked to fill out the following form. This will allow JRML to serve as many citizens possible while providing a safe environment. When patrons exit the library, they will be asked to turn the form in (see appendix A for the form).

- **Staff Procedures shall be as** follows for checking people in (and modified as needed – having never done this prior, it’s all new)
  - Each patron shall be asked to fill out the form with their name and time entering JRML using the form provided in appendix A. The patron will keep this form with them during their visit.
  - Staff will then give the patron a label to wear with the time written on it so they know when essential library visit ends as well as staff.
  - At the bottom of each form is a number assigned to the patron. Depending on the number of staff working for the day the number of patrons shall vary. The total shall not exceed 53 people at one time (for staff, the number is the total number scheduled for the time of day plus two for delivery drivers and other contract workers). Therefore, staff are to be extra diligent when assigning people numbers as they enter JRML.
  - For each day, stacks of forms will be available to allow for ease of checking
UPDATE: 05/18/2020: A staff member will be at the door counting patrons as they enter and exit the library to ensure capacity is at 25%. This number includes staff plus two for other vendors who are on site.

Library Hours - updated 06/18/2020
Library hours have been restored to regular hours.
- Monday – Thursday 9am-8pm
- Friday 9am-5:30pm
- Saturday 9am-2pm

To allow JRML staff ample time to wipe down surfaces, change plastic coverings on keyboards and mice and complete work due to the suspension of the volunteer program, JRML shall temporarily reduce operating hours during this phase. Essential, in person services will be available during the same hours as curbside during in phase 3.
- Monday – Thursday 10am-7pm
- Friday 10am-4:30pm
- Saturday 10am-2pm

Returning Materials Inside JRML
The inside book return shall be closed. In its place, patrons shall place returned materials into recycling bins on loan from DPW. Library staff can wheel the carts into the backroom as they are filled and bring a new one out. This will allow staff to continue serving the public and sorting materials into the library’s 72 hour quarantine.

Internet Access
- Patrons will be allowed one hour, per person per day to use one of the five stations available on the second floor.
- Printing will be available at a cost of $.10 per page as outlined in the library services policy.
- Staff will try to provide assistance with questions at distance of 6ft.

Youth Services Department
Due to the design of the service desk and staffing challenges JRML has right now in youth services, this service desk shall be closed to the public until such time as staffing capacity increases and more Plexiglas is available. Limited staff will be available via phone and through a virtual help desk during this phase.

Common areas have been adjusted to allow for 6ft of social distancing:
- All tables are set-up for use by one patron.
- The nine internet access computers have been covered plastic to discourage youth from congregating at the library to play computer games all day. The school quarantine remains in effect and JRML wishes to support it.
- The Wii, steam kits, Buddha boards, and tinker kits shall be unavailable until staffing capacity increases for items to be disinfected properly in between each use.

All programming has been suspended until further notice.
The Summer Learning Challenge shall roll out on June 1\textsuperscript{st} with a virtual option through READsquared and a paper option for families without internet access at home.

**OPAC’s (online public access catalog)**

JRLM has reduced to the number available to five on the first floor of the library facing north and two upstairs on the second floor right near the stairs. Keyboards and mice have been covered in plastic so staff are able to disinfect the area after use by a patron. Plastic covers will be changed every morning before opening to the public and disinfected throughout the day.

**Restrooms**

The restrooms on the first floor shall remain open with the doors propped open to reduce touching the door handle while entering and exiting. Staff will check bathrooms once per hour and wipe down areas.

The restrooms on the second floor have been cleaned and are closed due to the size of the space and to discourage citizens from taking care of their personal hygiene needs during COVID-19.

**Faxing and Photocopying**

Both services will be available at the circulation desk. Costs for each service per the library services policy are:

- Photocopying - $0.10 per page for B&W/$0.50 for color copying
- Faxing - $1.50 for the first page and $1.00 for each page thereafter, cover sheets are not provided.

**Library Cards and Borrowing Privileges Policy**

All loan periods and checkout limits shall be restored in this phase. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the resulting economic stress placed on our community, JRLM shall temporarily suspend charging fines for materials returned late in this phase.

Automatic notification for hold pickups are restored with Monarch when libraries are allowed to exchange materials – **UPDATE:** turned notifications back based on conversation with staff. Felt with re-opening it’s another step forward for the public to have a sense of regular operations from JRLM.

05/16/2020

**Monarch Delivery Update 05/19/2020**

Delivery update (Memo sent via email to Library Directors)

To all Monarch library directors and staff:

From: Jennifer Chamberlain, Monarch director May 19, 2020

Please share this memo with all staff who deal with delivery.

First, here is a request: Please let Lynn or drivers know how many bins you currently have in your library (include all bins, full & empty in this count).

Changes to Delivery starting **Tuesday, May 26**

1. Twice/week delivery will continue for the next several weeks. We will inform you when we are ready to offer additional days. Delivery continues Tuesday and Friday.
2. Drivers will continue picking up your daily bin average - we cannot take extra bins due to truck capacity. Please make it clear to drivers which bins are ready for pick up. We will provide additional bins as we are able.

3. Continue to prioritize filling a bin for a single library if possible.

4. Starting May 26, you may fill holds for other libraries on your daily pick list. Given the high volume and constraints of bins, we know libraries will have considerably more holds than you can fill. Just fill what you can.
   a. Prioritize holds for libraries that allow you to fill or top off a bin.
   b. Prioritize filling holds for libraries that fill a bin AND are on your delivery route.
   c. For smaller libraries (5 bins or less) you may have mixed bins. Please write on the tape “Mixed, routes #, date sealed”

5. Starting May 26, you may receive bins that require additional quarantine. Please ask staff to read the last pack date on the bin tape and refrain from opening bins until 72 hours following last pack date.

6. SCLS is beginning to do periodic deliveries to systems (up to 1x/week). This will be sporadic and focusing on rehoming materials. There has been no announcement as to when SCLS will resume normal activities. In terms of WISCAT returns, process items as normal. Refrain from placing new requests for physical items in WISCAT until further notice.

7. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding. Our number one goal is to provide this valuable service in a safe and efficient manner. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lynn Huether, lhuether@monarchlibraries.org.

As of Monday, June 8th delivery resumed to three days per week (Monday, Wednesday & Friday). To get materials moving through the system and free up bins, items are being quarantined for 48 hours at the hub. Staff are asked to read the last pack date on the bin tape and refrain from opening bins until 72 hours following last pack date. Updated 07/09/2020: Plymouth Public Library requested when sealing bins with the date, to also include the time the bin was last handled.
**Thursday, June 18th** the following went into place during this phase based on the recommended increase occupancy to 50% or 106 people in the library at one time. This increase is addition to the essential services being provided and three day a week delivery from Monarch Library System.

1. Library Hours restored to regular levels: Mon-Thurs 9am-8pm; Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat 9am-2pm
2. Daily visits increased from 1hr to 2hrs.
3. Two study rooms on the second floor open for up to two people to work together for two hours. We will encourage citizens to call ahead to make an appointment.
4. Opening up one additional computer for internet access on the second floor - 6 will be available for up to one hour per day. If no one is waiting we will allow up to two hours on a computer.
5. Mystery Bundles available via a google form for citizens to have a librarian make selections for them.
6. Curbside pickup available on a request only basis for those who are uncomfortable coming into the library.
7. Made masks available at the service desk located at the entrance to the library for patrons who want to wear one while visiting and not have a mask with them.

**Thursday, July 23, 2020**
Increased quarantine of materials from three days (72 hours) to four days (96 hours).

On July 21, 2020, scientists at Battelle Labs released the results of Test 2 of the REALM Project. Library materials tested included Braille paper pages, glossy book pages, magazine pages, children's board books, and archival folders, in varying environmental conditions. While most of these results came back acceptable under current recommended quarantine practices, the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 showed a trace amount of virus at four days on certain materials. In light of these results, DPI and the system directors have determined that the **recommended quarantine time for library materials be increased to four days.**

**Monday, October 5th, 2020** – The following went into effect based on occupancy levels between May 16th and September 30th.

1. Removal of the two hour time for library visits. Citizens are invited to return to the library wearing a mask or face covering per the State of WI emergency order.
2. Hold n Go service available for pickup of materials through the mylibro app.
3. Staff removed from the front door and counting of people as they enter is moved to the circulation desk.
Monday, October 12, 2020
Reduced quarantine of materials from 4 days/96 hours to 24 hours based on advice from DHS and DLTCL.

Updated Advice on Handling Library Materials during COVID-19 Pandemic

In response to inquiries received from various sources connected to the Wisconsin library community, the Division for Libraries and Technology (DLT) reached out to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) for guidance on the handling and circulation of library materials during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision to contact DHS at this time was based on the recent advice released by the State Library of Oregon, in response to concerns about independent interpretation of the results of the REALM project, whose research has provided information about the viability of the virus on library materials, but has not provided specific recommendations on materials handling.

Upon review of the guidance provided by the State Library of Oregon, advice from the experts at the Oregon Health Authority, and review of the REALM test results, Wisconsin DHS agreed with the Oregon Health Authority’s interpretation that a 24-hour quarantine time would be sufficient as a precautionary measure.

JRML’s current practice of a 4 day/96 hour quarantine has ended effective immediately. As of October 12th, all materials returned will sit in quarantine for 24 hours. This means items returned on Monday afternoon, for example, will be checked back on Wednesday morning. Another example is items returned on Saturday will be checked in on Monday morning.

JRML staff will continue to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to follow these safety procedures and policies

- Wearing masks/face coverings,
- Washing or sanitizing hands frequently,
- Avoiding touching one’s eyes/nose/mouth, and
- Maintaining at least 6 feet of physical distance from others.

Citizens seeking further information about the 24 hours quarantine of materials can reach out to JRML Director, Jennifer Einwalter at 262-673-8241 or via email at hartfordpl@hartfordlibrary.org
Schultz, Shannon M. DPI <Shannon.Schultz@dpi.wi.gov>

Mon 10/12/2020 8:43 AM
To: Jennifer Einweiler <jennifer@hartfordlibrary.org>
Cc: DPI DL DLT Libraries <DPIDLTDLTLibraries@dpi.wi.gov>

In response to inquiries received from various sources connected to the Wisconsin library community, the Division for Libraries and Technology (DLT) reached out to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) for guidance on the handling and circulation of library materials during the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to contact DHS at this time was based on the recent advice released by the State Library of Oregon, in response to concerns about independent interpretation of the results of the REALM project, whose research has provided information about the viability of the virus on library materials, but has not provided specific recommendations on materials handling.

Upon review of the guidance provided by the State Library of Oregon, advice from the experts at the Oregon Health Authority, and review of the REALM test results, Wisconsin DHS agreed with the Oregon Health Authority's interpretation that a 24-hour quarantine time would be sufficient as a precautionary measure.

DLT acknowledges that these recommendations are intended to assist libraries in making local decisions about handling and circulating materials safely. Regional and local conditions should be taken into account when considering changes to current materials handling and delivery practices. We strongly encourage local libraries to communicate with their public library systems prior to making such changes, as systems may need time to prepare for logistical challenges brought on by an influx of circulating materials.

Libraries can continue to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by following the safety protocols of mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing, increased cleaning; by avoiding touching one's eyes, nose, and mouth; and by limiting in-person services and reducing occupancy within their facilities.

The Wisconsin Public Libraries Reopening Guide will be edited to include this updated information this week.

Shannon M. Schultz, Public Library Administration Consultant
Division for Libraries & Technology
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
P: 608-266-7270 shannon.schultz@dpi.wi.gov
Updated Advice on Handling Library Materials during COVID-19 Pandemic

In response to questions received from local libraries, the State Library of Oregon sought the advice of experts from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) on how to handle and circulate library materials safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those questions arose as libraries independently interpreted the results of the REopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums (REALM) project, which studied the viability of the novel coronavirus on surfaces typically found on circulating library materials. The REALM project's intent is to provide information, not to give specific recommendations on materials handling.

OHA staff reviewed the results of tests 1-4 of the REALM project, together with studies and commentary from other experts analyzing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Staff reviewing the information included Deputy State Epidemiologist Ali Hamade, PhD, DABT; Public Health Physician Claire Poche, PhD; Public Health Physician Ann Thomas, PhD; and other analysts from the Oregon Health Authority. Below is Dr. Hamade’s response to the State Library’s inquiry. Italics added.

"We considered the testing results, the commentary in The Lancet, and some of the studies cited therein and came to the conclusion that an overnight quarantine period of materials is likely sufficient and 24 hours is even more precautionary. This would be ideally combined with advice to library workers to wash hands with soap and water regularly especially if they are prone to touching their faces.

For this conclusion, we accounted for almost complete virus loss of viability within 1-6 days in the REALM studies despite the high amounts of viable virus used that are not reflective of most real-life scenarios.

With that in mind, when considering the relatively low amount of virus transferred to a surface, how much virus becomes nonviable within a day, how much the next person picks up, and how often they touch eye/nose/mouth, our conclusion of quarantine between overnight and 24 hours is reasonable.”

The State Library of Oregon cultivates, preserves, and delivers library and information services to foster lifelong learning and community engagement.
This advice may differ from libraries’ current practices, which are informed by individual interpretations of the REA LiM results, analysis of other research, and consultation with local public health professionals. OHA’s recommendations are intended to assist libraries in making local decisions about handling and circulating materials safely. As such, the State Library recommends that libraries do the following:

- Compare above OHA’s advice to current practice. Note how implementing the recommendations may change workflows, if at all.
- Share this information with library staff, decision makers, local health departments, and anyone else involved in establishing the library’s pandemic protocols.
- Discuss the recommendations and determine if any changes to current practice are warranted, based on local situations and needs.

As Dr. Hamade noted, libraries can continue helping mitigate the spread of novel coronavirus by adopting policies and procedures to encourage pandemic best practices:

- Wearing masks/face coverings,
- Washing or sanitizing hands frequently,
- Avoiding touching one’s eyes/nose/mouth, and
- Maintaining at least 6 feet of physical distance from others.

Libraries seeking further information and support to respond to the pandemic may access the State Library’s page on COVID-19 information for Oregon libraries at https://libguides.osl.state.or.us/coronavirus. Questions may also be directed to Buzzy Nielsen, Program Manager for Library Support and Development Services, at buzzy.nielsen@state.or.us or 971-375-3486.

The State Library of Oregon cultivates, preserves, and delivers library and information services to foster lifelong learning and community engagement.
Exaggerated risk of transmission of COVID-19 by fomites

A clinically significant risk of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) transmission by fomites (inanimate surfaces or objects) has been assumed on the basis of studies that have little resemblance to real-life scenarios. The longest survival (6 days) of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) on surfaces was done by placing a very large initial virus titre sample (10^7 infectious virus particles) on the surface being tested. Another study that claimed survival of 4 days used a similarly large sample (10^6 infectious virus particles) on the surface. A report by van Doremalen and colleagues found survival of both SARS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2 of up to 2 days (on surfaces) and 3 days (in aerosols generated in the laboratory), but again with a large inoculum (10^4-10^6 infectious virus particles per mL) in aerosols, 10^4 infectious virus particles on surfaces. Yet another study found longest survival (5 days) of human coronavirus 229E on surfaces with what I would still consider a substantially large viral load (10^3 plaque-forming units) in a cell lysate. However, using a cell lysate rather than purified or semi-purified virus might enable initial viral proliferation or protection from the effects of the sample drying out.

None of these studies present scenarios akin to real-life situations. Although I did not find measurements of coronavirus quantities in aerosol droplets from patients, the amount of influenza virus RNA in aerosols has been measured, with a concentration equivalent to 10^10-10^10 viral particles in a droplet, with even fewer infectious influenza virus particles capable of growth in a plaque assay. By contrast, one study found human coronavirus 229E to survive for only 3-6 h (depending on the surface tested), and human coronavirus OC43 to survive for 1 h after drying on various surfaces including aluminum, sterile latex surgical gloves, and sterile sponges. In a study in which the authors tried to mimic actual conditions in which a surface might be contaminated by a patient, no viable SARS-CoV was detected on surfaces.

A 2020 literature review included most of the studies I have cited here (and others), but adds no new research, and in my view, does not critically evaluate previously published studies. I am not disputing the findings of these studies, only the applicability to real life. For example, in the studies that used a sample of 10^4, 10^5, and 10^6 particles of infectious virus on a small surface area, these concentrations are a lot higher than those in droplets in real-life situations, with the amount of virus actually deposited on surfaces likely to be several orders of magnitude smaller. Hence, a real-life situation is better represented in the work of Dowell and colleagues in which no viable virus was found on fomites.

In my opinion, the chance of transmission through inanimate surfaces is very small, and only in instances where an infected person coughs or sneezes on the surface, and someone else touches that surface soon after the cough or sneeze (within 1-2 h). I do not disagree with ering on the side of caution, but this can go to extremes not justified by the data. Although periodically disinfecting surfaces and use of gloves are reasonable precautions especially in hospitals, I believe that fomites that have not been in contact with an infected carrier for many hours do not pose a measurable risk of transmission in non-hospital settings. A more balanced perspective is needed to curb excesses that become counterproductive.

Emmanuel Goldman
egoldman@njms.rutgers.edu

Professor of Microbiology, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, 10029, USA

Phase 5: Moving towards pre-covid levels of operating library services

Due to the nature and ongoing changes of dates and information from officials, the Library Board shall authorize the Library Director to monitor the fluid situation and make decisions regarding service levels. All decisions shall be shared with the Library Board via the email.

Decisions to close the library shall be made by the Library Board, if needed.

The following questions and opinions were released by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities on Thursday, May 14th via their email newsletter.

Must a library close if there is a county or local health department order in place establishing restrictions similar to Safer at Home?

Yes, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 251.08, the jurisdiction of the local health department extends to the entire area represented by the governing body of the county, city, village or town that established the local health department, except that the jurisdiction of a single or multiple county health department or of a city-county health department does not extend to cities, villages and towns that have local health departments.

In the absence of a county or local health department order, does the governing body have authority to close the library or does that authority fall to the library board?

In the absence of such an order, the statutes appear to give the library board the authority to determine whether the library should open or close. Wisconsin Stat. § 43.58(1) provides that the library board has “exclusive charge, control and custody of all lands, buildings, money or other property devised, bequeathed, given or granted to, or otherwise acquired or leased by, the municipality for library purposes.”

Please note this plan is a guideline only. Dates and procedures subject to change on a moment’s notice. Phases may be implemented in order, skipped, or reverted back to if prudent.

As the State of WI says:

Wash your hands. Cough into your elbow. Stay home if sick.

According to the most recent information from the CDC, for most people, the immediate risk of being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low. We encourage any concerned patrons, especially those in high-risk populations, to stay home if they are feeling ill or are simply concerned about potential exposure.

Please keep in mind, as a public space, the Library cannot guarantee a germ-free environment or germ-free physical materials. You need to consider if using library materials, or visiting the Library or other public spaces, is best for you and your family. As a reminder, the Library has many digital services available to you for free; check out our collections.