

# Information Services Toolkit

Presentation  
Tuesday, May 26th



**CULC/CBUC Toolkit**  
on Recovery & Reimagined  
Public Library Services Post COVID-19



Canadian Urban Libraries Council  
Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada

# Introduction

## Information Services Working Group

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- **Donna Bedry**, Public Service Manager, Calgary Public Library
- Carol Cooley, Chief Executive Officer, Saskatoon Public Library
- Kent Raymond, Manager, Service OPL, Ottawa Public Library
- **Meg Uttangi Matsos**, Branch Manager, Hamilton Public Library
- **Jennifer Wile**, Manager, Information Services, Surrey Libraries



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# Background

The Toolkit is not a document where you will find all the answers, as the science and practice of COVID-19 response is changing, and the “right answer” might look different from one jurisdiction to another, and from one space to another.

## Goals:

- Practical, timely and accessible
- Be relevant to the widest possible audience of Canadian public libraries
- Ask the right questions and consider all issues
- Share innovative responses

# Guiding Principles

- Health and safety
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Role technology plays in our society and in our libraries
- Supporting community members in participating in the economy
- Providing access to information and knowledge
- Promoting community connection and engagement
- Exemplifying strong, public organizations working in diverse remote, rural, and urban communities across the country and committed to Reconciliation, environmental sustainability, innovation, partnership, and responsible financial stewardship

# Toolkit Overview

Information Service includes reference and referral services, reader's advisory, technical help and instruction, and customer service:

- Key Considerations
- Best & Leading Practices
- Stories from the Field
- Additional Resources

**Disclaimer:** Use of this toolkit must consider a library's governance context whether provincial, territorial, regional, or municipal, and reflect the needs of the community the library serves. Nothing in this document constitutes legal advice. All information that is not the copyrighted material of another party may be adapted and shared for non-commercial purposes; attribution to CULC/CBUC appreciated.

# Key Considerations

- How can the library provide meaningful customer support and technology assistance while maintaining physical distance?
- How do you provide equitable access to information for those experiencing barriers to access? Including:
  - social isolation
  - technology access (devices, WiFi, know-how, etc.)
  - language barriers (ESL/multilingual, literacy-levels, etc.)
  - accessibility barriers (digital and built environments)
- How can you understand evolving community information needs and respond to them quickly?
- How can staff feel safe/prepared enough to give the best possible customer service?
- How can you provide user-centered service design?

# Best & Leading Practices

## Info Needs

- Raise awareness of available services through communication plan
- Triage services considering first most needed
- Train staff *before re-opening* on service in new environment
- Leverage social media, websites, webforms, blogs and other interfaces/software to deliver reader's advisory

# Best & Leading Practices

## Info Referral

- Leverage partnerships to address social isolation
- Information and referral services to cover service gaps
- Make needed community resources easily findable
- Find ways to serve customers experiencing accessibility issues
- Provide community resource training specific staff



# Best & Leading Practices

## Technology

- Train/support staff in new technologies before opening
- Prepare for rush of initial customers needing computers, etc.
- Be flexible and responsive with tech solutions
- Collaborate to augment existing technology solutions, avoid duplicating work
- Provide simple instructions for e-resources and/or use vendor's
- Investigate best practices for customers with barriers to access

# Best & Leading Practices

## Technology

- Mirror screens for computer assistance to info desk customers
- Leverage computer lab projection screens for 1 on 1
- Provide WiFi outside of library walls observing safety measures
- Lend devices, laptops, and data sticks leveraging partnerships
- Screen share for remote and in library support
- Chat Bots/AI for communication
- Traditional virtual service (phone, email, chat, text)

# Best & Leading Practices

## Technology

- Investigate tech customer relationship management/ticketing tool
- Bookable 1 on 1 sessions and a booking system for computer use
- Pre-record tutorials and webinars for tech assistance
- Consider partnerships and digital assistance/tutorials for government forms
- Use ILS and other software to support fines and fees suspension

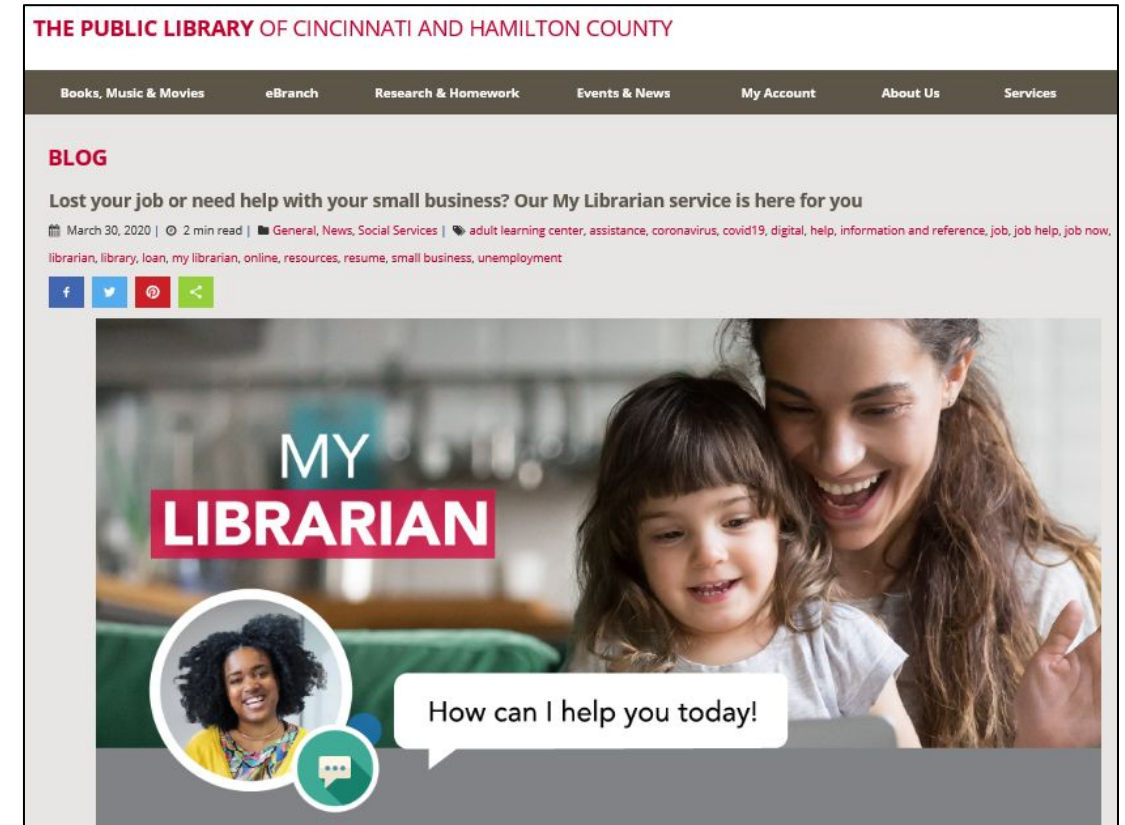
# Best & Leading Practices

## Staff and Public Safety

- Reduce touch points on technology
- Consider PPE and plexi to allow closer interaction with customers
- Recognize limited capacity might cause customer conflict
- Communicate new cleaning protocols to staff as well as new safety requirements/notices to both staff and patrons
- Set designated and/or assisted hours for vulnerable customers
- Seat computer users safe distance from each other
- Consider staff working remotely to create more public space

# Stories from the Field

- Offering traditional library services virtually
- Developing and leveraging existing tools to help customers navigate library resources
- Working with local partners and community organizations to develop community resources that are accessible to customers





# Community Services



## SERVICES

[Adult Learners](#)

[Community Services](#) ▲

[COVID-19 Information and Programs](#)

[Activities in the Community](#)

[Education Resources](#)

[Employment and Income Programs](#)

[Food and Meals](#)

[Health Services](#)

[Household Goods](#)

[Housing](#)

[Legal Resource](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Family History](#)

[Jobs & Business](#)

[Kids & Families](#) ▼

[Newcomers](#)

[Online Library](#) ▼

[READ-Ability](#) ▼

[Teens](#) ▼



### COVID-19: Affects on Current Programs

Services offered by many organizations may be affected by COVID-19. Call ahead if you can. We are currently working on updating and adding the confirmed resources to our [COVID-19 section](#).

Learn about some of the resources available during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many of these resources have just recently been announced. Details are changing quickly, and we are doing our best to monitor them. If programs listed as upcoming apply to you, it may be worth checking to see if applications are open.

We hope this helps. If you find a resource that you think should be included, we would love to [hear from you](#).

You can find our full [Community Services](#) lower on the page.



## Health Information and Programs

Find the BC self assessment tool, and related government health programs. Find current, accurate



## Food and Meals

Find meals, and lower cost grocery options. Also, find food and supply delivery options for seniors and vulnerable people.



## Employment Insurance & Other Programs

Apply for Employment Insurance benefits. Find out about resources and programs available to help if



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# Stories from the Field

- Offering ESL services and services in other languages
- Connecting with customers who may be socially isolated
- Distributing technology
- Providing way for customers to get a library card
- Offering remote printing solutions


**Library Settlement Partnerships Continue to Help Newcomers**  
May 15, 2020 | Elsa

  Comments (0)

Our **Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP)** service is still helping newcomers with their settlement questions through phone or email during our closure. Library Settlement Partnerships is funded by **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada**.

Funded by:	Financé par :
 Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

### Online Library Card Registration



Use often. Expand your world.

For more information please read through the [Online Library Card Application FAQ page](#).  
Register for a Hamilton Public Library card if you live, work or attend school in Hamilton.

# More Resources

- ALA Recommends Wifi open during closure  
<http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/03/american-library-association-recommends-libraries-leave-wifi-open-during>
- CCOHS - Tips for Retail: <https://www.ccohs.ca//images/products/pandemiccovid19/pdf/retail.pdf>
- Cushman Wakefield: Recovery Readiness: A How-to Guide for Reopening your Workplace  
<https://www.cushmanwakefield.com/en/insights/covid-19/recovery-readiness-a-how-to-guide-for-reopening-your-workplace>
- Forbes article. Customer Experience Mindset Post-COVID  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/04/27/customer-experience-mindset-in-a-post-covid-19-world-an-infograph/#259370a53d0e>
- KPMG Customer First Approach During Unprecedented Times  
<https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2020/04/a-customer-first-approach-during-unprecedented-times.pdf>
- HBR: Supporting Customer Service Through the Coronavirus Crisis  
<https://hbr.org/2020/04/supporting-customer-service-through-the-coronavirus-crisis>



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