

Toolkit on the Recovery & Reimagined Public Library Services Post COVID-19



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Introduction

May 21, 2020

In mid-March 2020, one after another of Canada's public libraries closed their doors in response to the spread of the Novel Coronavirus. The decision to close was swift, as public health officials and librarians alike realized that it would be impossible to meet the new public health directives in the public library as we had come to know it. Our push to be the place where people were invited to come together, and linger and share, and learn, also made us a place of potential spread of the virus.

As our sector, like so many others, needed to reimagine our future in the context of a pandemic, we knew that by working as a team to explore the key considerations and best and leading practices we could tackle this. Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada struck a steering committee, reached out to our membership to help build content, and 50 colleagues from 22 libraries and institutions coast to coast stepped up to participate. We are, after all, in this together.

The efforts of many over the past weeks have resulted in this toolkit. This 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. Rather, the goal of this document is to provide practical, timely and accessible guidance to libraries across Canada. The information is designed to be relevant to the widest possible audience of Canadian public libraries recognizing that differently sized or constituted libraries may need to apply or scale the information in ways suited to their specific needs and capacities. This document should prompt you to ask the right questions and consider all issues with a broad lens. It shares innovative responses not only from the library sector, but from other sectors facing challenges that are similar to ours: retail settings, restaurants, schools.

On behalf of the Steering Committee and the CULC/CBUC Executive, I extend my thanks to all our colleagues who, in addition to the demands within their own organization, committed time and enthusiasm toward this project. We hope that this toolkit builds your confidence to walk toward the challenge facing us. With adjustment and innovation, public libraries will persevere. Our purpose remains strong.

Introduction

À la mi-mars 2020, les bibliothèques publiques du Canada ont fermé l'une après l'autre en réaction à la propagation du nouveau coronavirus. La décision de fermer a été rapide, car les responsables de la santé publique et les bibliothécaires ont compris qu'il serait impossible de respecter les nouvelles directives de santé publique dans la bibliothèque publique telle que nous la connaissions. Notre volonté d'être le lieu où les gens étaient invités à se réunir, à s'attarder, à partager et à apprendre, a également fait de nous un lieu de propagation potentielle du virus.

Comme notre secteur, comme tant d'autres, avait besoin de réimaginer son avenir dans le contexte d'une pandémie, nous savions qu'en travaillant ensemble pour explorer les principales considérations et les meilleures pratiques, nous pourrions y faire face ensemble. Le Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada a mis sur pied un comité directeur, a demandé à ses membres de l'aider à élaborer des contenus et des collègues d'un océan à l'autre ont participé à ce projet. Après tout, nous sommes tous ensemble.

Les efforts de nombreuses personnes au cours des dernières semaines ont abouti à cette boîte à outils. Ce n'est pas un document où vous trouverez toutes les réponses, car la science et la pratique de la réponse à COVID-19 changent, et la "bonne réponse" peut sembler différente d'une juridiction à l'autre, et de l'espace à l'autre. L'objectif de ce document est plutôt de fournir des conseils pratiques, opportuns et accessibles aux bibliothèques du Canada. L'information est conçue pour être pertinente pour le plus grand nombre possible de bibliothèques publiques canadiennes, sachant que des bibliothèques de taille ou de constitution différentes peuvent avoir besoin d'appliquer ou d'adapter l'information à leurs besoins et capacités spécifiques. Ce document devrait vous inciter à poser les bonnes questions et à considérer tous les problèmes dans une optique large. Il présente des réponses innovantes non seulement du secteur des bibliothèques, mais aussi d'autres secteurs confrontés à des défis similaires aux nôtres : commerce de détail, restaurants, écoles.

Ce document comprend des listes de contrôle qui sont fournies en français et en anglais et dans les dossiers de ressources, nous avons inclus des références à des documents en français, que nous espérons que la communauté ajoutera, enrichissant le contenu et reflétant les développements à mesure qu'ils se déroulent dans nos communautés et au niveau international, le cas échéant.

Nous espérons que cette boîte à outils vous donnera la confiance nécessaire pour relever le défi auquel nous sommes confrontés. Avec l'ajustement et l'innovation, les bibliothèques publiques persévéreront. Notre objectif reste fort.

Think Tank Steering Committee

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library

Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library

Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library, Vice Chair

Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des
Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada

Teresa Johnson, Director of Research and Planning, New Brunswick Public Library
Service

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries – CULC/CBUC
Exec Rep, Chair

Kitty Pope, Chief Executive Officer, Windsor Public Library

Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Victoria Public Library

Leslie Weir, National Librarian – Library and Archives Canada Rep

Checklist of Key Considerations

This checklist is a summary of the key considerations across all subject areas covered in the Toolkit. It is provided as a handy guide to the range of topics covered and a resource to support a comprehensive review of areas to be considered in reimagining public library services post COVID-19.

Governance Checklist

- ✓ Is your corporate strategy still relevant? To what degree are you prepared to re-invent the library's role in the community?
- ✓ What policies and relationships need to be in place before the library re-open?
- ✓ What needs to be ready for rapid decision making over the next 12-18 months? What decisions will be made by the Board; what authority will the CEO have?
- ✓ Do you need to reassess your risk identification and mitigation plans?
- ✓ Has your provincial government demonstrated a strong knowledge of public libraries? What advocacy is required?
- ✓ Do your existing policies support vulnerable populations' use of library services? (membership policy, longer loan periods, no overdue fines, use of cards or cash)
- ✓ Is your library/community prepared to move away, even temporarily, from traditional public library openness to everyone, in favour of a preferential system that may first focus on vulnerable populations, supporting school children, etc.?

Collections Checklist

GENERAL MATERIALS HANDLING

- ✓ What are the minimum health and safety recommendations to permit the lending of physical collections, understanding that research is emerging on how long the COVID-19 virus remains on various types of surfaces?

CUSTOMER ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

- ✓ What services could be offered to limit physical contact and support access for all, particularly, vulnerable groups?
- ✓ What membership and circulation policies should be reviewed to encourage library use and equitable access?

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ How should acquisition, cataloguing and processing workflows be adjusted?
- ✓ How can the library balance collections with new restraints and demands?

Marketing & Communication Checklist

- ✓ How will you raise awareness of what the library can offer now and consider these existing services as a foundation to build on?
- ✓ How can your library create a cascade of information – timely, accurate updates of what is available now, and what is to follow?

- ✓ How will you emphasize that a safe and sound approach to reopening will mean a gradual return of services; unfortunately, not every service?
- ✓ How will you remind patrons that each library service must adapt to a new operating environment?
- ✓ What are the best ways to keep your patrons informed of these immediate and long-term changes to their library system?
- ✓ Do you have a plan to communicate with your partners, your funders and your supporters to secure their continued interest and involvement?
- ✓ What roles can they play in your recovery efforts? What information do they need to support the library?
- ✓ Can you take your vision statement in a new direction? Can you deliver your mandate by doing things differently, and doing different things?
- ✓ How will we have candid and thoughtful community conversations about the ways libraries are changing?
- ✓ How can libraries demonstrate their relevance and communicate their value, without alienating library users that preferred the way things used to be?

Information Services & Other Frontline Services Checklist

Information Service includes reference and referral services, reader's advisory, technical help and instruction, work to reduce misinformation, and customer service.

- ✓ 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 feels safe/prepared enough to give the best possible customer service
- ✓ How can you provide user-centered service design including streamlined processes and clear communication?

Programming Checklist

PLANNING

- ✓ Which audiences and programs are priorities for your library at this time?
- ✓ What do our communities need in a time of pandemic, and can we create or adapt programs to address those needs?
- ✓ What is the optimal balance between digital programming, in-person programming and outreach? What mix of program models or approaches makes the best use of resources to meet community needs?

- ✓ Should all programs require registration, to ensure we are able to assist with contact tracing if necessary?
- ✓ What should the timeline look like (flexible, staged approach)?
- ✓ What changes need to be made to program policies or procedures to reflect the above?

COMMUNICATIONS

- ✓ How will you communicate new expectations to program participants?
- ✓ How will you respond if staff or patrons test positive for COVID-19?
- ✓ How will you inform the public of safety measures we are taking?
- ✓ What strategies will you use to communicate with the public and promote programs to diverse audiences, including those who are not online?
- ✓ How will you re-engage patrons and continue to engage with new patrons in a time of service limitations?

PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

- ✓ What is the effective occupancy of program rooms or spaces given physical distancing guidelines (note, a distance of 2m on all sides of a person creates a circle with an area of 12.56 square metres)?
- ✓ Can programs be held in open or outdoor spaces?
- ✓ Based on the answers to the above, how many participants can be safely included in an in-person program?
- ✓ Can children be realistically expected to observe physical distancing guidelines?
- ✓ Can programs that normally require close contact – for example, one-on-one technology help – be effectively adapted to follow physical distancing guidelines?
- ✓ Can programs that normally involve physical activity be effectively adapted to follow physical distancing guidelines?

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- ✓ How do you ensure the health and safety of staff, patrons, volunteers, partners, and external presenters?
- ✓ What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be required for staff, volunteers, external presenters and patrons?
- ✓ What shared objects are typically used in a program (for example, toys, games, craft supplies / tools, technology)? Can those be effectively sanitized for safe use, or can the program be adapted to work without them?
- ✓ For programs that normally include snacks, is there a safe way to provide these or can the program be adapted to work without them?
- ✓ For digital programs, how do you ensure patrons' safety and privacy while using a variety of technology tools?

STAFF SUPPORT

- ✓ What training will staff need with respect to health and safety measures?
- ✓ What training will staff need to support them with new models of programming?
- ✓ How can you best support staff working with the public in a time of high anxiety?

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- ✓ How do you make programs feel safe, welcoming and inclusive?
- ✓ How do you best reach and support vulnerable or underserved audiences?
- ✓ How do you best reach and support our Indigenous communities?
- ✓ How can you reduce or remove barriers to participation?
- ✓ Can digital programming content be shared with other libraries locally, provincially or nationally?
- ✓ How can you best work with community partners?

OPERATIONS

- ✓ Which new program models should be retained as libraries reopen?
- ✓ How will staffing models and staff roles be affected by the above questions?

The Built Environment Checklist

CAPACITY & LAYOUT (assumptions – social distancing = 2m)

- ✓ Will the public be restricted based upon total occupant load of the building or capacity of an area/space? and how will that be done?
- ✓ What are the unique challenges of each branch? (i.e. leased space, multiple floors, co-located with other municipal and non-municipal uses)?
- ✓ Does the library need to submit a “plan” of how it is meeting public health requirements prior to opening?
- ✓ What is the decision-making framework for changes to the facility? Who signs off on plans/renovations? Will some areas need to be cordoned off? Will you move to closed stacks?
- ✓ Which areas in the library are high priority for modifying to allow for social distancing? Computer lab/area, service points, entrances/exits, shelving aisles- directional limits (ex. one-way aisles), meeting rooms, reading lounges/seating areas
- ✓ Where should quarantined materials be held (program room? expanded book-drop areas?)
- ✓ What work could be done prior to reopening to improve capacity? weeding of collection

BUILDING SYSTEMS

- ✓ Are HVAC systems maintained and working well?
- ✓ Can windows in the building be opened safely?
- ✓ Is it preferable for the AMH to be used over staff handling materials? What is the most effective way to clean your AMH machine(s)?
- ✓ What changes are required to existing contracts? (ex. cafe, maintenance, janitorial)

FURNITURE & FINISHES

- ✓ Which surfaces and finishes are more susceptible to contamination and how long does the virus live? (research is evolving)
- ✓ Have you identified the library’s high touch surfaces identified to ensure cleaning priority?
- ✓ Is it possible to retrofit entrance ways so door handles are eliminated?
- ✓ If furniture/equipment/toys are to be moved, where will they be stored?

TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ How will keyboards and mice be cleaned (public and staff use)?
- ✓ Can self-checks be set to not require touch screen use? Is it possible to implement further touch free/self-service options with customers checking out items on their own devices?
- ✓ Are there options for touch-free automation to reduce contact with other surfaces (ex. automated hand-washing dispensers, automated hand drying, automatic doors, etc.)

MOVING THROUGH & INTERACTING WITHIN THE SPACE

- ✓ Are distance markers required for limiting the number of people allowed in at a time? For queueing?
- ✓ What strategies can be used to manage crowding in elevators, escalators and stairs?
- ✓ Is it possible to separate entrance areas for exit areas in your building?
- ✓ Do emergency evacuation procedures need to be reconsidered? What would that look like?
- ✓ Should plexiglass barriers be installed to service desks? Between public computers?
- ✓ What strategies will we use to discourage use of cash? (cards/phones with tap preferred, fine-free?)
- ✓ When will it be safe to open children's play areas? Will they have shared toys? Interactives?
- ✓ Should all shelving be done during closed hours?
- ✓ How will staff breaks be handled to allow for social distancing? Are staff areas being adequately cleaned? Who is responsible for the cleaning?
- ✓ Are there adequate hand-washing stations? Is there a need for handwashing stations in the public areas of the library? In staff (circulation) areas? More hand sanitizer stations featured more prominently?
- ✓ Should water fountains be used? Should they be redesigned? Should food and drink continue to be allowed in libraries?
- ✓ What should be measured at the facility? Gate count, material returns, WiFi use?
- ✓ What has to be procured in advance of opening? sneeze shields, foot print – peel and stick, PPE, stanchions, signage.
- ✓ If your library continuing curbside pickup during a partial or staged opening for people who choose it or who have compromised immune systems? What precautions need to be in place outside of buildings?
- ✓ Is the adjacent outdoor space that can use to increase seating capacity? Can the building's WiFi be extended into that space?

COMMUNICATION

- ✓ Is there signage and communication asking customers to stay home if feeling unwell/displaying any symptoms?
- ✓ What wayfinding methods should be used to communicate new guidelines and limits to visitors and staff (signage, floor decals, PA announcements stanchions, etc.)?
- ✓ Are drawings needed to communicate what furniture is to be moved, routing of the public, stanchions?
- ✓ Is staff training required related to the physical changes to the branch?
- ✓ How are the limitations of the branch (occupant load) documented and communicated?

Staffing Checklist

- ✓ How can the library best support and accommodate staff, including those who:
 - ✓ are most vulnerable to COVID-19 once physical services resume?
 - ✓ have child/elder care obligations?
 - ✓ may come to work sick rather than provide medical notes?
 - ✓ are experiencing mental health issues arising from or exacerbated by COVID-19?
- ✓ How can the library meet their obligations to provide a safe work environment, including:
 - ✓ responding to staff fears and anxiety about safety in the workplace?
 - ✓ addressing work refusals?
 - ✓ determining what PPE or public health measures will be required?
 - ✓ responding to staff expectations about PPE?
- ✓ How will you manage the recall process for staff who are laid off/on leave?
- ✓ When are continued remote work arrangements appropriate?
- ✓ How can you build agile workplace cultures to respond quickly and innovate rapidly?
- ✓ What is the best way to promote a change positive culture in times of uncertainty and rapid evolution?
- ✓ How will you motivate employees and increase staff engagement in difficult times?
- ✓ What is required to deliver trauma informed approaches to support each other?
- ✓ How can staff learn to collaborate, communicate and deliver services and programs virtually?
- ✓ How does the library support leaders in identifying and developing the skills and competencies needed in an unprecedented crisis and in a time of ongoing uncertainty for staff?

Guiding Principles

Public libraries are:

- Committed to the health and safety of staff and users as top priorities
- Accessible, inclusive, and welcoming to the widest possible range of people, especially those who need library services the most
- Increasingly called upon to help bridge the digital divide and to support digital literacy in our communities
- Integral pieces of the economic engines of our communities, by advancing literacy, lifelong learning, and workforce skills development
- More crucial than ever in tough economic times, for instance supporting job seekers and entrepreneurship
- Indispensable access points to information and knowledge in multiple formats
- Key pieces of social infrastructure and public sphere, where people connect to ideas, community resources, and each other
- Strong, caring, publicly-minded organizations
 - representing the diversity of our communities, serving remote, rural, and urban populations across the country
 - forging paths of Reconciliation by listening to, learning from, and building relationships with Indigenous communities
 - sharing and advancing our communities' commitment to environmental sustainability
 - continuously evolving, innovating, and improving to stay relevant in shifting cultural, technological, and economic landscapes
 - eagerly collaborating and partnering with others to make a positive difference and to enhance and expand shared work
 - responsibly stewarding public funds to maximize positive impact within budgetary limits and ensure the long-term sustainability of our operations

In a world experiencing, or recovering from, a pandemic, public libraries will face new or heightened issues and opportunities, including:

- Increased incentive to be agile and to innovate and iterate solutions to prepare for varied future scenarios
- Unprecedented health and safety restrictions, and uncertainty about when they may be lifted and/or reinstated, that broadly impact operations and services, including access to, and use of, library facilities and technology; collections and materials handling; programming; activities in the community; and back office functions
- Economic downturn and an atmosphere of fiscal restraint, implying greater needs among library users and potentially diminished financial support for libraries
- Reduced ability or willingness on the part of library users to attend public spaces, programs, and events or to use library equipment and technology
- Accelerated shift to digital over physical resources and to virtual over in-person service

- Increased reliance on virtual services and digital platforms for business processes, services, and programming and the concomitant requirement to develop related organizational expertise and capacity
- Increased challenge to support the needs and social participation of the most vulnerable populations
- Transformed physical and virtual workplaces in which teams will need to learn new skills and interact and operate in new ways

Toolkit Template

Overview

Each toolkit topic will provide practical, timely, and accessible guidance to libraries across Canada. The information is designed to be relevant to the widest possible audience of Canadian public libraries, recognizing that differently sized or constituted libraries may need to apply or scale the information in ways suited to their specific needs and capacities. Each toolkit will be relatively brief, but simultaneously act as launching pad to more information, resources, experts, and institutions that can offer further guidance.

SECTION 1: INDEX OF KEY CONSIDERATIONS

This section provides a checklist of the most important questions or uncertainties every public library needs to confront during a pandemic or recovery therefrom. Where possible, these considerations are listed in order of urgency.

SECTION 2: BEST & LEADING PRACTICES

Based on each of the questions or uncertainties identified in the checklist, best and leading practices to transform the related library operations, services, programs, procedures, and/or policies in ways that respond to the crisis and its impacts on the organization and library users and staff are identified and described. This includes helpful hints, and links to reputable resources.

SECTION 3: STORIES FROM THE FIELD OR RELATED SECTORS

This provides a brief summary of success stories from the COVID-19 pandemic in the relevant area of practice and links to more fulsome information (e.g. press reports, websites) when available.

SECTION 4: RESOURCES

Resources to support questions and exploration in the area of practice.

SECTION 5: AUTHORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Authors and contributors.

TOOLKIT DISCLAIMER : This Toolkit and its parts were developed by a series of working groups comprised of CULC/CBUC members in May 2020. CULC/CBUC has endeavoured to make the content relevant to most public libraries, however, all libraries operate within their own context, and any use of this toolkit must consider a library's particular 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.

Governance



Credit: Philip Crocker

Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

The following questions can assist your thinking as you prepare to re-open, and can also be considered for generative discussions with your Board over the coming months, with preparatory reading drawn from the resources provided in Section 2.

1. Is your corporate strategy still relevant? To what degree are you prepared to re-invent your role?
2. What policies and relationships need to be in place before you open?
 - a. What is the state of labour relations as a result of the actions taken during the pandemic? Is corporate culture likely to be more positive or more negative?
3. What do you need to be ready for rapid decision making over the next 12-18 months?
4. Do you have what you need for crisis management in this area?
5. Do you need to reassess your risk identification and mitigation plans?
6. How can you best support stable governance?
 - a. Is the board skills matrix still applicable? How will you include trusted advisors?
 - b. Will your board be willing to delegate more authority to the CEO?
 - c. What has your provincial government demonstrated in terms of their knowledge of public libraries and does that require information/intervention/advocacy?
 - d. Is the law an obstacle to effective response and how do you mitigate its impact?
7. Do your existing policies support vulnerable populations' use of library services? (membership policy, longer loan periods, no overdue fines, use of cards or cash)
8. Is your library/community prepared to move away, even temporarily, from traditional public library openness to everyone, in favour of a preferential system that may first focus on vulnerable populations, supporting school children, etc.?
9. What is your policy for physical distancing given your specific situation?
10. How will you develop your plan for re-opening and follow these steps as an iterative process: analysis of your situation and the needs; designing your reopening plan; validate and implement the various steps of the plan; collect data and evaluate your impact?

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

The following sections identify policy areas to consider addressing before you open and to assist with planning for ongoing operations during COVID-19 health restrictions, as well as links to resources that may guide your policy development, and examples of policies where available. The sections include policy considerations before you open, for the first few months of operations, considerations for maintaining stable governance, and suggestions for virtual Board meetings.

If your provincial government or health authority has provided specific guidelines for libraries, refer to these for any policy considerations. An early example of a sector plan from Manitoba is available here: [Museums, Galleries & Libraries](#). Some may find the retail and curbside guides from Ontario more helpful: [Ontario Sector Specific Guidance for Re-opening](#). The Province of Alberta's [Guidance for Museums and Art Galleries](#), [Guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs, and Bars](#) & [Workplace Guidance for Business Owners](#) may also be helpful. The National Post has provided links to restart plans across the country: [COVID-19 reopenings: Here are all the plans by province and territory to ease coronavirus lockdowns](#).

PATRON MANAGEMENT

Codes of conduct for patrons may require revision, as well as policies for when you deny service to individuals. See The Built Environment section of this Toolkit for further considerations. Consider:

- Are you supplying sanitizer, cleaning materials to patrons?
- Are you screening? Turning away symptomatic patrons? Offering masks?
- Will you deny library access to patrons who break physical distancing repeatedly? Don't wear a mask if required? Cough openly?
- Where are you documenting maximum capacity for a space? Consider both the staff and public in identifying the maximum capacity. For example, provincial retail guidelines suggest 1 person per 4-5 sqm of open floor space.
- How will you count people? Will you use a counting device?
- How will you organize the waiting line outside? Will you mark on the ground recalling the physical distance?
- How long can patrons stay? Consider starting with short stays to pick-up holds, print jobs and briefly use a computer.
- Is group use allowed? How large a group?
- How do you enforce requirements in self-service locations? Consider increasing monitoring of the security cameras.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

Policies in this area may need updating, or a temporary policy will be required. See the Staffing section of this Toolkit for further considerations. OH&S responsibilities and committees may need to change for this period. Areas to consider include:

- physical distancing (one on one, behind desk, during training/groups)
- supply of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- personal hygiene expectations
- screening, which may include temperature checks or signed verifications prior to shifts
- cleaning, disinfecting
- continued liberal allowance for paid sick leave for staff who may get ill or show symptoms (related to risk management)
- written guideline for each scenario of illness, self-isolation and leave

Resources

- [Canada.ca: Preventing COVID-19 in the workplace \(in french\)](#)
- [WorkSafe BC: COVID-19 and returning to safe work operation](#)

Sample Policies & Guides

- [Hamilton PL's Health and Safety Considerations for Reopening](#)

WORKING FROM HOME

Authorities are encouraging people to continue to work from home to reduce exposure. In a unionized environment, include the union in discussions about considerations for working at home. Areas to consider include:

- equipment availability
- ergonomics
- working alone check-in procedures
- activity management
- flexibility of scheduling in the new environment/when working from home
- continuation of working from home on an indefinite basis

Resources

- [BC government: Safety Inspection for Working at Home](#)
- [COVID-19 Update: The “New Normal” – Facilitating Work-from-Home Arrangements – McCarthy Tetrault Employer Advisor law firm \(good guidance & includes some information by specific provinces\)](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Telework/Telecommuting](#)
- [A Crash Course in Protecting Library Data While Working From Home – ALA/LITA](#)

Sample Policies & Guides: Public Libraries

- [Edmonton PL’s COVID-19 Temporary Work From Home Procedures](#)
- [Hamilton PL Working from Home Guidelines COVID-19](#)
- [Working from Home: Calgary Public Library Staff Information Package](#)
- [Vaughan PL: Working Remote Guidelines for Employees](#)
- [Vancouver PL Work From Home Guidelines](#)

Sample Policies & Guides: Other Sectors

- [City of Edmonton Remote Work Policies](#)
 - [Alternative Work Strategies – Administrative Directive](#)
 - [Alternative Work Strategies – Administrative Procedures](#)
 - [Alternative Work Strategies, Benefits and Tools](#)
- [NorQuest College Remote Work Procedure](#)
- [Dalhousie Telework Policy & Procedures for Staff](#)
- [Toronto: Alternate Work Arrangements \(Remote/Telework & Flexible Work Week\) Policy](#)

RISK MANAGEMENT

Consideration of liability for public exposure should be considered. For example, if you have staff who work at multiple locations, do you need to consider changes to reduce exposure risk in an outbreak, as they have in long term care?

Resources:

- [Risk informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic – Canada.ca](#)
- [Sample risk matrix template](#)

- [EPL's Enterprise Risk Management Report & Risk Register](#)

PRIVACY

If your library is considering screening patrons or staff, taking temperatures or collecting information about patrons for contact tracing, privacy legislation will apply, and your privacy policy may need revision. The following documents provide relevant considerations for revising your privacy policy.

- [Privacy considerations when screening – Bennett Jones](#)
- [Joint Statement by Federal, Provincial and Territorial Privacy Commissioners for contact tracing and similar apps](#)
- [A privacy, cybersecurity and data governance framework for return-to-business planning – Torsys LLP](#)

VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Do your policies revisions and existing policies support vulnerable communities in using the library and reducing transmission? You may wish to consider longer library loan periods, waiving fines, hours for seniors only, and the impact of requiring contactless payment. Are there new partnerships that are arising as a result of this period that would make sense to continue, such as with food banks?

Resources

- [Bank of Canada asks retailers to continue accepting cash](#)
- [Working Together: Community Led Libraries Toolkit on designing policy, p.124](#)
- [Collective Impact Postpandemic| A Framework for Response, Recovery and Resilience – Tamarack Institute](#)
- [Responding to COVID19: Cities Responding to Poverty – Tamarack Institute](#)
- [Startling disparities in digital learning emerge as COVID-19 spreads: UN education agency – UN](#)

STABLE GOVERNANCE AND RAPID DECISION-MAKING

Health orders or community expectations may change rapidly during this period. Libraries should prepare for multiple waves of health restrictions that may require immediate action. The following are policies that can support rapid decision-making.

- Emergency meetings section/policy: allows you to call emergency meetings on short notice and appropriately considers that some trustees may not be reachable in an emergency.
- Delegated authority that gives the CEO the authority to act as needed in an emergency, which may include power that would normally be held by the Board, e.g. for significant financial issues or closure decisions. This should be explicit about decisions and notifications, and often includes delegated authority for financial controls.
- How does the CEO make decisions in emergency situations when the Board cannot be reached? e.g. set of criteria for making decisions that is approved, followed by an information report to Board.
- Succession policy for the CEO in case of illness

- Closure and re-opening policy or established criteria. Who will you need to align with? Public health authority? City direction? Other community facilities? Other libraries in the region?

Sample Language for Delegated Authority:

- Example: The CEO shall have, subject always to the general and specific instructions and directions of the Board, full power and authority to manage and direct the business and affairs of the Library (except for the matters and duties as by law must be transacted or performed by the Board), including power and authority to enter into contracts, engagements or commitments of every nature or kind in the name of and on behalf of the Board and to recommend, engage, and employ and to dismiss all managers and other employees and agents of the Board other than officers of the Board.
- Toronto – In the midst of the COVID-19 public health emergency, it is prudent for the Board to delegate additional authority to the City Librarian to make awards and enter into agreements, which are deemed urgent and necessary, allowing for emergency procurement and awards in excess of \$500,000. All awards made under this additional delegated authority would be reported at the next Board meeting.
- Edmonton – Authority and responsibility for purchasing goods and services, and construction contracting for EPL is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Purchasing commitments will be made within the funding approved in the EPL Board budget. Treasury Management Policy
- Edmonton – The Board of the Edmonton Public Library delegates authority to the CEO for the temporary closure of a library service point due to renovations, relocations, emergencies and other events. The CEO may consider the provision of library service from an alternate location if the estimated time of closure is deemed sufficient. Temporary Library Service Point Closures

Sample Policies for Emergency Meetings

- Hamilton – The Chair may, or upon the written request of any two members of the Board, call a Special Meeting by giving, through the Secretary or designate, at least three days written notice to each member, specifying the purpose for which the meeting is called. The purpose of a Special Meeting shall be specific. No business shall be transacted or considered at such a meeting other than that specified in the notice.
- Toronto – Special meetings of the Board may be held at any time at the call of the Chair or at the call of the City Librarian subsequent to receipt of a petition signed by a majority of the Members requesting a special meeting. There must be at least 24 hours' notice from issuance of the notice of special meeting and the time of the meeting. Notice to Members will be given by the Secretary in writing. The purpose of the special meeting must be stated in the notice and no other business will be transacted at that special meeting except in accordance with rules associated with urgent matters. Notice of special meetings will be posted on the Library's website. All meetings are open to the public, except for meetings or portions of meetings that satisfy the requirements of the Act for closed meetings.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

During physical distancing, many Board practices will need adjustment. Libraries' policies will need to allow for virtual and phone meetings, and ensure that decision making still meets legislative requirements in the jurisdiction. Examples of approaches to Board meetings are

described in Section 3: Stories from the Field, including using external coordination, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. [Google Hangouts](#) is another option.

- Does your provincial legislation allow you to meet virtually? If not, do you have an exemption?
- Does the procedure policy allow for virtual meetings?
- How does the public participate? Do they need to register in advance?
- How do you ensure confidentiality of in camera items?
- Does your technology solution allow the coordinator to mute everyone, or remove someone from a meeting?
- Can you ensure the privacy of a closed meeting with your technology solution?
- Will your solution support the number of people that you expect to attend?

Resources

- [9 Tips for Board Decision Making During COVID-19](#) – Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS)
- [Board Oversight during COVID-19: A Director's Checklist](#) – Osler
- [Partnership in a Time of Pandemic: The CEO and the Board](#) – BoardSource

Sample Policies and Guides:

- [Toronto PL: Delegation of authority for COVID-19](#)
- [Vancouver PL: Succession Plan](#)
- [Toronto PL: Procedural By-law amendment for virtual meetings](#)
- [Edmonton PL's Policy and Board Handbook sections on Virtual Meetings](#)
 - [Electronic Voting and Meeting Procedures](#)
 - [Participation in Board Meetings via Remote Communications Means Policy](#)
 - [Board Handbook – Meetings](#)
- [Mississauga PL: Board Meetings s.A.10](#)
- [Ontario Information Sheet on Electronic Board meetings](#)

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

In the worst case scenario, with all the health and safety measures in place, you may still have an infected staff member, volunteer, or member of the public who has used your facility, and you could have to deal with an outbreak. See the Marketing & Communications section of the Toolkit for additional support in crisis planning. In preparation for crisis management, areas to consider:

- Health & safety checklist: who do you need to advise in an outbreak? Will you need to close for cleaning? Who is notified? How is it different if public, if staff?
- Reputation management/crisis communication plan. What do you need to have on hand? e.g. your cleaning checklist, how you are managing risk.
- Who is your spokesperson?

Resources:

- [Crisis Communication Planning](#) – ALA
- [Outbreak Management](#) – Alberta Health Services

- [The Board's Role in Crisis Management – PDF, Osler](#)
- [Crisis Communications: Four Things Your Board Needs to Know – PDF, Boardsource](#)
- [Thoughtfully responding to the coronavirus \(COVID19\) crisis – PDF, Osler](#)
- [Hamilton PL Crisis Communication Presentation during COVID-19](#)

Section 3: Stories from the Field

Flexible, stable governance rarely reaches media, however, libraries across Canada have been amending procedures and finding new ways to meet during COVID-19 that ensure appropriate governance continues with Board and stakeholder participation.

From Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO: “[Hamilton Public Library is amending its Bylaws](#) to enable virtual meetings as well as calling emergency meetings. HPL is on Office 365 and is using [MS Teams Live](#) to support this. Board members and senior staff are set-up as “Presenters” and they can speak and be shown. Paul as CEO is the “Producer” and has been in the BoardRoom with the Board Chair, controlling who has control of the screen. The meeting is live streamed and it can be recorded, which we do. We are required to allow remote participation and are doing this through the Live Chat. The meeting generates a URL that anyone can follow, if you are not a producer of a presenter you are only able to watch and contribute via chat. We can go in-camera by turning the Live Recording off and then only presenters and producers can participate. Delegations that want to speak, need to be approved by the Board Chair in advance.”

From Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian: “Vancouver Public Library used Zoom for our board meeting in April. We set up two meetings, one public and one in-camera, with passwords for each, and we invited registration of the public on our website (no public attended). This allowed us to meet at our regular time, and the use of video meant participants felt more connected to each other and staff than had been possible for our March teleconference meeting. Our trustees successfully used the features like raising their hands, chatting, and using “thumbs up”. We didn’t record as we don’t normally. We’re anticipating that we’ll be able to continue virtual meetings in this way as long as physical distancing restrictions are in place with little adjustment.”

From Vickery Bowles, City Librarian: “Toronto used Webex for the virtual board meeting and hired a third-party service to facilitate and run the technology for the meeting. It was important to ensure members of the public who wanted to depute on any of the Board agenda items could do so, the public could hear/view the meeting and that the Board could go into closed session at the end of the meeting to discuss confidential matters. Members of the public who want to depute have to register in advance of the meeting. All voting is conducted as a recorded vote with the name of each Board member read for each vote and the Board member declaring ‘In Favour/Opposed’. This ensures transparency so members of the public listening to the meeting know how Board members are voting.”

From Pilar Martinez, CEO: “Edmonton Public Library held its first virtual board meeting tonight and along with regular board business prioritized time on the agenda for a generative discussion regarding COVID19 and the financial challenges we are facing. The discussion was rich and inspiring. We used the Tamarack Institute’s [Planning for the Future During Uncertainty](#) as one of the items on the pre-reading list, along with several questions including: 1) How do you think

the pandemic and the financial crisis will change behaviors? 2. What risks do changing citizen behaviors and economic challenges pose for EPL? 3. What are your fears / worries for our city, our province, our country? 4. What opportunities might this situation provide for EPL?

It was a robust and rich conversation that will be instrumental in our recovery planning. I am sharing comments that resonated most. We need to stay true to our north star and keep our fundamental values at the forefront, even though we may be using a different lens and applying different actions. With change, particularly global change of this magnitude, people crave certainty during uncertain times. The library is extremely well positioned because we are seen as a trusted friend, and individuals are looking for institutions they can trust. Now more than ever customers are dependent on digital access. What can we do to leverage this situation to ensure that our customers get equitable access to these resources and take full advantage of digital content. I am fearful that we will forget the lessons that we have been learning through this pandemic, that we will forget the care and compassion that we have shown. Public libraries could be such a huge asset and support for people in being entrepreneurial; they are critical institutions when times are tough. As one of the last true public spaces, the value we provide to seeking public space cannot be underestimated. Libraries can lead in terms of promoting humane values and democracy.”

Section 4: Resources

- [Governance advice during COVID-19 – BLG](#)
- [Planning for the Future During Uncertainty – Tamarack Institute – great generative discussion resource for Boards](#)
- [On Not Letting \(Another\) Crisis Go to Waste – Tamarack](#)
- [What Nonprofit Board Members Should Be Doing Right Now to Address the COVID-19 Situation – BoardSource](#)
- [Hamilton City Template to document restrictions and plans for re-opening](#)

FRENCH RESOURCES

- [Aide pour la reprise d'activité et la réouverture au public des bibliothèques territoriales + Recommandations – Gouv. France](#)
- [Aide-mémoire pour tous les secteurs : Réouverture du milieu de travail – Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail \(CNESST\).](#)
- [Aide-mémoire pour tous les secteurs : Distanciation physique en milieu de travail – Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail \(CNESST\)](#)
- [Aide-mémoire pour tous les secteurs : Liste de vérifications quotidiennes – Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail \(CNESST\)](#)
- [COVID-19 : Reprise des activités : Exemples pour le secteur municipal – Association paritaire pour la santé et la sécurité du travail, secteur « affaires municipales »](#)
- [Informations générales sur la maladie à coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Gouvernement du Québec](#)
- [Mesures de prévention pour la santé des travailleurs et des travailleuses – Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail \(CNESST\)](#)
- [Pistes de réflexions pour planifier la réouverture de votre bibliothèque : Balises, services au public, Webinaire \(in French\) – Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec \(BAnQ\)](#)

- Prévention de la COVID-19 sur les lieux de travail : Conseils aux employeurs, aux employés et aux travailleurs des services essentiels – Gouvernement du Canada
- Site ressource pour accompagner le déconfinement en bibliothèque / Fiche n°1 : Reprise du travail et organisation interne – Biblio.covid.fr (5 library associations in France)

Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Jeff Barber, Library Director & Chief Executive Officer, Regina Public Library

Vickery Bowles, City Librarian, Toronto Public Library

Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library

Marie D. Martel, EBSI, Université de Montréal

Pilar Martinez, Chief Executive Officer, Edmonton Public Library

Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer, Hamilton Public Library

TOOLKIT DISCLAIMER : This Toolkit and its parts were developed by a series of working groups comprised of CULC/CBUC members in May 2020. CULC/CBUC has endeavoured to make the content relevant to most public libraries, however, all libraries operate within their own context, and any use of this toolkit must consider a library's particular 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.

Collections



Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

GENERAL MATERIALS HANDLING

What are the minimum health and safety recommendations to permit the lending of physical collections, understanding that research is emerging on how long the COVID-19 virus remains on various types of surfaces?

CUSTOMER ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

What services could be offered to limit physical contact and support access for all, particularly, vulnerable groups? What membership and circulation policies should be reviewed to encourage library use and equitable access?

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT

How should acquisition, cataloguing and processing workflows be adjusted? How to balance collections with new restraints and demands?

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

GENERAL MATERIALS HANDLING

Protective Measures

- All library collections should be handled by:
 - using physical distancing measures
 - using hand hygiene measures between tasks (soap and water for 20 seconds, or hand sanitizer)
 - regularly cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that are used for handling collections
 - not touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- While gloves are referenced in some library practices internationally, they can pose higher risks if they are not used properly. The safest method when handling library materials is to use hand washing between tasks.
- Wearing non-medical masks and face coverings can be an additional measure taken to protect others when handling collections when physical distancing may not be possible (e.g. browsing, shelving).
- Physical barriers, such as glass or plastic (e.g., Plexiglas) windows at service counters are an option to help reduce exposure to the COVID-19 virus when physical distancing is not possible.

Quarantine & Mitigation

- Time in quarantine is the best method for disinfecting all types of library materials. Quarantine limits the amount of contact staff has with the materials and ensures the entire object has been treated. Disinfecting library materials can result in damage to the materials such as books and magazines.
- The most commonly used quarantine period for library materials (books, DVDs, etc.) to reduce the risk of COVID-19 virus spread is **72 hours**. For this period, the materials should be placed in boxes, containers or set aside on designated tables, date marked and where possible, stored in a separate area.

- Libraries should provide readily available quarantine bins in the shelving areas for users to deposit materials they have touched.
- Collections shipped between libraries or from vendors should be quarantined if it cannot be confirmed how long they have been in transit.
- Libraries should consult their integrated library system vendor (and user groups) to learn about automated options to manage the quarantine of collections. Examples: rolling returns/checkout dates to prevent an overflow of holding spaces.
- Review the types of materials that can be browsed or borrowed by users (e.g. newspapers, magazines, toys, games, tools, WiFi hotspots, instruments) and consider prioritizing items that are available to the public based on balancing community needs and the library's space to quarantine.
- When reopening, libraries can help prevent a massive return of materials by encouraging the public to use staggered drop off approaches. For example, advertising specific days to return materials based on a user's last digit of their library card or the first letter of last name.
- Consider floating collections to reduce material handling.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

- Hard surfaces used to handle collections should be regularly cleaned using an approved disinfectant for the COVID-19 virus.
- There are some library practices of disinfecting materials that are made of plastic or metal. Options include using an alcohol-based cleaner or a quat disinfectant solution.
- Libraries should inform the public of their safe handling protocols to deter users from using at-home solutions that could damage collections.

CUSTOMER ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

Providing limited contact service options and supporting the vulnerable sectors

When planning reopening services, consider a phased approach:

- Offer holds pick-up services, such as a walk-in service (e.g. self-serve holds shelves), and/or curbside pick-ups.
- Continue to promote digital collections.
- Budget permitting, explore options such as self-checkout kiosks, book vending machines, hold lockers, and self-check out apps.
- Permit browsing of the shelves where possible, with physical distancing indicators in place. Libraries may require the use of non-medical masks or face coverings when physical distancing is not possible in facilities. For some libraries, closed shelving may be required.
- Offer designated visiting hours for at risk populations.
- Expand upon outreach services to reach people who are not comfortable with visiting the library or unable to visit due to other barriers. Examples include:
 - home delivery services
 - collection deposits
 - books-by-mail services
- Provide options for users to request materials: online, telephone, email.

- Consider additional supports for users with print disabilities to ensure they have continued access to collections in their alternative formats of choice.

Planning for a curbside service

Many libraries are adapting curbside service models as a way to provide access to collections during library closures. Curbside service is also being used as an additional model when libraries are open to help serve more users.

Each library's service model will be different based on resources, facilities and location. However, there are some key areas for considerations that can apply to all libraries:

Health & Safety

- What are the health and safety protocols that need to be followed in your community to mitigate the spread of COVID-19? How will the library put in place physical distancing, physical barriers, cleaning and disinfecting protocols of frequently touched surfaces, hand hygiene measures, protective personal equipment requirements, etc.
- Does the library have adequate space to separately quarantine materials and to separately assemble materials for pickup? All returned materials require a quarantine before staff can assemble pickup orders.

Resourcing

- Does the library have the staff available to manage curbside pickup services, along with other services that may be in operation?
- Will the service be offered on a short-term basis (e.g. during the pandemic period, when libraries are required to close), or long-term basis (e.g. an extension of library outreach services to vulnerable sectors)?

Collections

- What collections will be included in the scope of the service? Will it include only books, CDs, and DVDs?
- Will different circulation procedures be required (e.g. number of checkouts, holds, loan periods, fee forgiveness)?
- Will return of items be accepted?

Requests

- What options will users have to make requests: Online catalogue? Online form? Telephone? Email?
- What solutions will be needed to track and manage requests (e.g. phone and email logs)?

Assembling Items

- What supplies are needed to assemble items for pickup?
- What measures will be put in place to organize and store assembled items for pickup?
- What measures will be put in place to ensure patron privacy?

Pickups

- Where can the pickup occur that can be done safely, while respecting physical distancing? At the library door, lobby, sidewalk, in a parking lot? Can parking be reserved for the service? What signage is needed?
- How will the library manage and schedule pickup times?
- Will users be required to show IDs, or give their name or will they be allowed to pick up items on their own for contactless delivery?
- Will users pickup materials for others who may not have transportation or are housebound?

Providing flexible membership and lending policies to promote library usage and ease anxiety during a difficult economic time

- Consider free library memberships or extending the term of library memberships.
- Consider a fines embargo.
- Review the acceptable collection loss rate and the threshold for making collection agency referrals for accumulated overdue fines.
- Expand membership profile options. For example, offer limited circulation cards to permit people without a proof of address to borrow materials; offer educator profiles with extended loan periods and checkout limits to support homeschooling; extend memberships to those who work within the library's service area but live in surrounding municipalities.
- Consider ways of verifying online requests for a library membership without the user having to visit the library. Examples: using OverDrive's instant digital card that is verified by postal code or using a contracted service provider to validate proof of ID and address.
- Review lending terms such as due dates, hold limits, checkout limits, renewal limits to balance community needs with library resources.

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT

Balancing New Demands & Restraints

- Review the acquisitions budget, making adjustments to reflect changing demands for formats, genres and subject areas (e.g. newspapers, magazines, travel guides). Review automatic release plans (ARP), standing orders and budget allocations with vendor representatives.
- Take advantage of free vendor trials as a way to scope community interest in new content before making a purchasing commitment.

Acquisitions, Cataloguing & Processing

- Resume operations as soon as possible to prevent collection backlogs and a stable flow of new materials for circulation.
- Review staff workflows to help reduce the handling of collections wherever possible. Create clearly identified spaces for incoming and outgoing materials.
- Consult vendors to consider staggered delivery schedules to help manage limited storage space.
- Consider suspending book donations if there is a shortage of storage space.

Section 3: Stories from the Field

The l'ABPQ, BIBLIOPRESTO, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) et le Réseau BIBLIO du Québec (RBO) have launched QuoiLire.ca. This new online tool aims to serve the general public, at a distance, during the confinement period. Quoilire.ca offers three options: thematic reading lists, video capsules, as well as an online form allowing the reader to list their interests. The specialists of Quebec public libraries agree to send within three working days, a selection of three books corresponding to the reader profile that emerges from an online questionnaire. The page dedicated to Video Capsules allows users to discover “reading enthusiasts” delighted to share their own suggestions and favorites.

Investments in digital collections have been a common practice in libraries. Bibliothèques de Montréal have added French and English audio books to their collections as a response to COVID-19. New Brunswick Public Library Service has added a dedicated webpage to new online resources available for a limited time.

The Cape Breton Regional Library offers “Novel Navigation”. Library staff send personalized reading recommendations by email based on users filling out an online reading interest form.

The Wellington County Public Library offers an online contest called the “stay at home challenge” that encourages reading, learning and using library resources.

Many libraries have started offering curbside pickup services. The Coquitlam Public Library offers a free curbside holds pick up service. Requested items are placed in paper bags and users are contacted by email or text. Name tags are produced from the integrated library system. The library is also circulating “grab bags” of preselected materials by genre, and age group, with five items in each bag.

The North Vancouver District Library offers a holds pick up service called “Library Take Out @ NVPL”.

The Fort Saskatchewan Public Library offers “Used Book Curbside Pick Up” as an alternative to their annual used booksale.

The Roskilde Municipality in Denmark provides access to collections through a Plexiglas hutch solution at the library door. Physical distancing is used outside the library to pick up holds.

At the library at the Ville de Saint-Rémi, users can phone or email to place their requests and pick up their holds without contacting staff or entering the library.

The Palm Beach County Public Library has created a YouTube video to explain their walk up holds service. The Vespasian Warner Public Library District and Beloit Public Library have created social media posters to advertise their curbside services. Hennepin County Library provides a three-step process and FAQ on their website.

The Bibliothèque Gabrielle-Giroux-Bertrand de Cowansville is allowing those without a library card to have temporary access to their digital collections. Edmonton Public Library is promoting their online library card registration, which includes access to digital collections, as part of their “EPL from home” suite of services.

The Bibliothèque Linette-Jutras-Laperle is offering a home delivery service on their website. Interested citizens are asked to fill out an online form to start the service.

The Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library offers a books-by-mail service for rural residents. Patrons make their selections by mail, phone, email or by completing a form online. The service is provided free of charge to patrons.

Section 4: Resources

- American Library Association – ALA
- Bibliothèques et archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) (in French) – Canada
- Canadian Federation of Library Associations – CFLA
- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions – IFLA
- Institute of Museum and Library Services – IMLS
- Librarianship.ca Facebook Group – Canada
- Library Management Facebook Group – United States
- Urban Libraries Council – United States

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Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Mary Cavanagh, School of Information Studies, University of Ottawa

Michael Ciccone, Chief Executive Officer, London Public Library

Sharon Day, Director, Branch Services and Collections, Edmonton Public Library

Teresa Johnson, Director, Research and Planning, New Brunswick Public Library Service

Marie D. Martel, EBSI, Université de Montréal

Edmund Salt, President, Whitehots Inc.

Chantale Saulnier, Public Services Development Librarian, New Brunswick Public Library Service

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Marketing & Communications



Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting public libraries in every community, and each public library requires a *localized response*. Constraints to operate and health precautions vary regionally; directives and guidelines are subject to change.
2. Marketing, as a discipline, includes research, planning, promotion, evaluation and communication to anticipate and meet customer needs. Social marketing* is specifically used in the library sector to anticipate and meet community needs. For the purposes of this toolkit, the general term “marketing” will be used.
3. Library marketing staff, or those with marketing responsibilities, are the intended target audience for this toolkit.
4. Library marketing staff must carefully set the right tone for communications, recognizing the tension between a fear of returning to public spaces and the eagerness to return to favourite places. From either perspective, the library experience will be different.
5. The new library experience requires a critical review of existing website content, signage, stock images, promotional material and wayfinding. Branch locations, digital services and social media channels must reflect the new reality and be flexible enough to change again if required.

CHECKLIST OF STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- ✓ When restoring services, consider your local context. Which community needs can your library *meet today*, given your current capacity? Which services *could be restored* with safe, incremental changes to your operating environment? Think of the following examples: municipal/regional plans and protocols, public health directives, provincial/territorial guidelines.
- ✓ Take a phased approach to communications. Raise awareness of what the library can offer now and consider these existing services as a foundation to build on. How can your library create an information cascade: timely, accurate updates of what is available *now*, and what is to follow?
- ✓ It’s worth repeating. Emphasize that a safe and sound approach to reopening will mean a gradual return of services; unfortunately, not every service. Remind patrons that each library service must adapt to a new operating environment. What are the best ways to keep your patrons informed of these immediate and long-term changes to their library system? Think of delivering the right message, at the right time, in the right format, while service is evolving.

* “Social Marketing seeks to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviours that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good. Social Marketing practice is guided by ethical principles. It seeks to integrate research, best practice, theory, audience and partnership insight, to inform the delivery of competition sensitive and segmented social change programmes that are effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable.” [International Social Marketing Association](#).

- ✓ Community conversations. Do you have a plan to communicate with your partners, your funders and your supporters to secure their continued interest and involvement? What roles can they play in your recovery efforts? What information do they need to support the library?
- ✓ It's time for innovative thinking. While some library services may no longer be viable in the ways they once were, new opportunities are emerging. Can you take your vision statement in a new direction? Can you deliver your mandate by doing things differently, and doing different things? Be specific.
- ✓ Our brand is "trust." While most people associate libraries with books, we are universally known as honest brokers. Our marketing efforts must be honest and authentic, consistent with everything we deliver as a library system. How will we have candid and thoughtful community conversations about the ways libraries are changing? How can libraries demonstrate their relevance and communicate their value, without alienating library users that preferred the way things used to be?

GLOSSARY OF MARKETING TERMS:

Canadian Marketing Association – <https://www.the-cma.org/resource/marketing-definitions>

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW

While it may be hard to imagine navigating a devastating crisis, such as a natural disaster or pandemic, it is important to be calm and confident as you lead your organization through an unforeseen challenge. Preparation is a key component to feeling in control when things go upside down.

As marketers and communicators, we are comfortable within a "plan, launch, report" mentality, but when a crisis hits, we move into a responsive/reactive mode.

Throughout all stages of Crisis Response,* it is important to remember to follow the Four Cs:

1. Clear
2. Confident
3. Credible
4. Correct

Our communications and marketing materials must be clear to all audiences, instill a sense of confidence in leadership, support our credibility to respond to a crisis, and must always convey correct information. To support those principles during an ever-shifting landscape might be challenging; for example, what may be correct one day, may change with little notice, hence the value of having clear communications channels and distributed work structure so updates and correction can be made widely as quickly as possible.

* To better understand crisis response, review definitions in the [Glossary of Marketing Terms](#) and the [Crisis Response Stages](#) attachment.

Tips for Communicating During a Crisis

- Use plain language (no jargon, short sentences, lower reading level)
- When possible, group updates together
- Version control, version control, version control – date communications, archive drafts and old information immediately
- Set clear and rapid approval structures, focus this as much as possible
- Be clear on communication channels, what is posted where and who has the ability to update information quickly

How to Make Your Crisis Response Plan

There are many great resources and courses on Crisis Communications. A key tool of a Crisis Response is your planning document. Understanding the various components required allows you to build one quickly or repurpose a template/sample.

Your Crisis Response Plan should:

- Identify goal(s)
- Identify stakeholders
- Provide information / approval structure
- Outline required messaging and materials (see below)
- Include Key Messages and FAQ
- Highlight potential risks

Examples of Messaging and Materials

Collateral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downloadable notice signs that can be updated and printed in-location • Signage for Book Returns if required
Graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure notices for all social media platforms (check specs) • Web banners / images
Copy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Statement / Advisory Template • Press Release Template • Key Messages • FAQ • Closure Notice copy (website / social media / phone) • Out of Office Email Sample • Phone script samples and upload instructions

Make sure to refer to the Crisis Communications and Marketing Checklist attachment to see what materials you need at each stage of a Crisis Response.

Social Media

Review the social media samples in Section 3 to see how visuals and messaging can shift throughout the stages of a crisis. For many organizations during a crisis, social media is the most effective way of communicating urgent information quickly. It will also become a much more significant customer service tool during a closure. See examples below.



Visuals



Be conscious of how you use visuals during this time. For example, as you approach reopening libraries, ensure that stock images reflect a new visitor experience, such as physical distance between visitors and staff.

Avoid using “alarming” colours, such as red or orange for signage unless the information is related to urgent safety notices. Ensure that signage is clear and concise, and incorporate high-contrast colours to help readability. See the example below.

Section 3: Stories from the Field

Here are some links from around North America, detailing what public libraries have achieved during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CANADA

- <https://www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/news/>
- <https://www.manitoulin.ca/northeast-town-public-library-launches-its-covid-19-chronicles-project/>
- <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/windsor-public-library-launches-phone-check-in-service-1.4888212>
- <https://www.guelphtoday.com/coronavirus-covid-19-local-news/guelph-public-library-offering-pick-up-service-within-two-weeks-2351443>
- <http://www.londonpubliclibrary.ca/about-my-library/coronavirus-covid-19-updates>
- <https://www.cp24.com/news/toronto-s-chief-librarian-working-on-plan-to-open-libraries-for-curbside-pickup-tory-1.4943169>
- https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/news_releases/2020/04/toronto-public-library-is-providing-free-books-for-kids-in-food-hampers-distributed-through-its-pop.html
- <https://kcls.org/news/covid-19-coronavirus-information-you-can-trust/>
- [WPL curbside pickup and delivery to begin June 15](#)
- [Curriculum support for young elearners](#)
- [Can't get out? Let us come to you!](#)
- [WPL telephone check-in service](#)
- <https://markhampubliclibrary.ca/news/how-has-covid-19-impacted-your-life/>
- <https://www.bpl.bc.ca/news/covid19>
- <https://www.toronto.com/news-story/9920661-toronto-library-loans-3d-printers-to-team-making-face-shields-for-covid-19-workers/>
- <https://www.ebsco.com/blog/article/librarians-rise-to-the-challenge-as-second-responders>
- <https://www.blogto.com/arts/2020/03/toronto-temporarily-closing-its-public-libraries-due-coronavirus/>
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/covid-questions-library-asthma-1.5570160>

USA

- [Spirit 105.3: Amanda from the Seattle Public Library joins Erica](#)
- [KING 5: Students rediscover free online resources from Washington libraries](#)
- [The Seattle Times: Seattle will reopen 5 library bathrooms during coronavirus pandemic](#)
- https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_116c32a8-a9d9-5af5-8fa4-90beb142c2d1.html

Section 4: Resources

- [Australia re-opening checklist](#)
- [Strategic communications PowerPoint](#)
- [Reopening news release](#)
- [Social distancing poster templates](#)
- [Miscellaneous resources](#)
- [Social media samples](#)

- Crisis to recovery: alerts; initial response; closure notice; messaging from staff; crisis management post
- Program and service promotion: notices; at-home activities; expanded services; online programs; story time with special guests; online reference centre
- Re-opening: 10-day countdown; 5-day countdown; 1-day countdown; open; sample messages
- Other Library Samples: Key messages and FAQs; CPL communication plan; CPL closure and staffing plan; VPL kids' content guidelines
- Other Resources: develop your voice worksheet; develop key messages worksheet
- Tips: how to film yourself at home; how to use FB Live

FRENCH RESOURCES

- Les services au public – Considérations entourant la réouverture : Communication, pp. 2-3
– Bibliothèques et archives nationales du Québec.
- Bibliothèque Le Prévost. Page Facebook.

Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Mary Kapusta, Director, Communications, Calgary Public Library

Carol Nelson, Director, Planning and Communications, Vancouver Public Library

Kitty Pope, Chief Executive Officer, Windsor Public Library

Daphne Wood, Director, Library Services, Planning and Engagement, Greater Victoria Public Library

Chris Woodrow, Director, Corporate Services, Windsor Public Library

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Information Services



Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

Information Service includes reference and referral services, reader's advisory, technical help and instruction, work to reduce misinformation, and customer service.

1. During a pandemic and recovery from it, how can public libraries support the changing information needs of the community?
2. How can libraries provide meaningful customer support and technology assistance while maintaining physical distance?
 - a. consider safe and equitable access to both hardware and software
 - b. explore technical solutions to help maintain distance for all libraries including those with limited resources
3. How do libraries provide equitable access to information for those experiencing barriers to access?
 - a. technology access (devices, WiFi, know-how, etc.)
 - b. social isolation
 - c. language barriers (ESL/multilingual, literacy-levels, etc.)
 - d. accessibility barriers (digital and built environments)
4. How do libraries understand evolving community information needs and respond to them quickly?
 - a. needs that can be answered with technological solutions
 - b. needs that change as the stages of the pandemic change
5. How can public libraries support the health and safety of staff and customers while delivering information services?
 - a. so that staff feels safe/prepared enough to give the best possible customer service
 - b. with user centered service design including streamlined processes and clear communication

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

Continue to support traditional library information services in a work-from-home environment that can be transitioned as needed in a phased re-opening of services. Use existing and new communication channels, technology, and service models to deliver information services to remote users and in-house users of libraries safely.

- Chat Bots / AI on websites (and on internal screens when libraries re-open)
- Continue to offer traditional virtual service (assistance by phone, email, chat, text)
- Screen sharing such as Apple share your screen, Anydesk, Zoho options for remote support
- Pre-recorded tutorials and webinars
- Email, chat, text, phone support using customer relationship management tools such as Freshdesk
- Bookable one-on-one sessions with an expert MS Bookings
- Offer information tutorial sessions via video conference/ virtual event software: Zoom, MS Teams, Webex, with consideration for those with barriers to visiting library or accessing online service

- Work with the ILS to create temporary fines and fees embargoes and extend due dates for materials until library buildings are re-opened to reduce customer concerns and inquiries about their account status
- Create documentation, tools, and/or leverage partnerships to assist customers filling out government forms

INFO NEEDS

- Implementing a robust marketing/communication plan is necessary to raise awareness of available services
- Triage community demands to focus first on the services most needed, with an awareness of those that are vulnerable
- Train staff before re-opening on how to deliver exceptional information services from behind a mask or face shield, behind a plexiglass screen, or from 2m away. Be aware of accessibility issues such as physical distancing and cloth masks impacting the ability for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing to hear and/or lip read
- Leverage social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), websites, webforms, blogs and other interfaces/software (ILS interface features, like BiblioCommons) to deliver reader's advisory through curated lists and individualized services

INFO REFERRAL

- Leverage partnerships with local and other organizations to
 - address social isolation, e.g. work with community partners to call people
 - offer information and referral services to other agencies
 - address information services gaps that other agencies don't cover
- Find a way to make relevant community resources easily findable for customers online via website, meeting accessibility standards via website (WCAG 2.0), and/or with self serve handouts
- Find ways to serve, as well as places to refer, customers experiencing accessibility issues
- Provide resource specific staff training to serve unique community needs

TECHNOLOGY

- Train staff well in new technologies to support them to provide best possible customer service
 - Online Card Registration
 - Remote printing service
- Prepare for the initial customers who will need access to technology
- Be flexible and responsive, leveraging partnerships with other organizations including vendors and their resources for technology. Explore various technologies to assist both remote users of library e-resources and in-house users of library computers/e-resources.
 - Look for opportunities to collaborate/partner with other organizations to augment existing technology solutions, e.g. share open source solutions
 - Provide virtual instructions for accessing e-resources or point to instructions created by the vendor
 - Partner with agencies or other libraries to use/create virtual assistance/tutorials on popular forms

- Provide public computer assistance to in-person customers while maintaining social distancing with tools such as [Anydesk](#), [Zoho](#) or use of a laser-pointer to show where to click on the screen
- Utilize computer labs to leverage projection screens for one-to-one appointments to support physical distancing between the customer and staff member
- Offer WiFi access outside of closed libraries while maintaining as much possible the safety of the public around library facilities (late hours, crowding, parking)
- Offer laptop, device, and data stick lending. Leverage partnerships to lend out technology to customers experiencing barriers and organizations that serve communities in need

STAFF & PUBLIC SAFETY

- Promote physical distancing and hand hygiene, reduce touchpoints and identify and communicate the process to sanitize touch points between customers
- At branches with security services, review expectations and integrate physical distancing education and reinforcement. Consider augmenting support recognizing limitations in capacity may cause customer conflict
- Create thorough cleaning and distancing protocols for public computer terminals and self-checkout machines; communicate those protocols widely with library employees and customers
- Set designated or assisted hours for vulnerable customers such as seniors or persons who are immunocompromised
- Use guidelines such as in the [Cushman and Wakefield](#) document to calculate how many people you can safely have in your spaces, including both public and employees, including study spaces and meeting rooms
- Consider maintaining information services work remotely as this could create more public space for other services including access to computers and study space
- Clearly communicate to your customers any new practices and policies that will affect service experience. Post these changes on your website, library entrances, and notify in email where possible. Consider creating videos for staff and customers of the new processes to increase comfort and understanding
- Post notices that customers who might be sick, have been exposed to someone sick, or have just returned to Canada should not enter the library
- Create a booking system for computer use at a predetermined time to assist in controlling the number of patrons in the building and minimizing conflict between patrons competing for technology
- Consider PPE in the form of masks, gloves, face shields and possibly gowns for employees assisting patrons with computers. If properly protected, employees can engage in closer contact with patrons
- Block access to areas of the library not open to the public
- With the guidance of the appropriate public health authority, decide how to handle masks – are customers expected to wear masks? If so, how do you handle patrons who don't have masks? Will customers who appear to be ill be asked to wear a mask? Will masks be available to customers who don't have them? Consider sanitization stations near desks and computers, if possible

Section 3: Stories from the Field

OFFERING TRADITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES VIRTUALLY

- Aarhus Public Library partnered with organizations that are offering free or volunteer-based homework help
- Vaughan Public Library is doing creative readers' advisory through blog posts, i.e. book recommendations by zodiac sign
- Mississauga Library asks what people want to read and then posts suggestions the following day using Instagram Stories
- Calgary Public Library hosts live conversations with librarians and the social media specialist to answer real time questions from followers through Instagram Live
- The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County has created a phone hotline for job seekers and small business owners and online reader's advisory
- Burlington Public Library is collecting and organizing resources for kids and families to support interactive learning from home

DEVELOPING & LEVERAGING EXISTING TOOLS TO HELP CUSTOMERS NAVIGATE LIBRARY RESOURCES

- Westport Library in Connecticut has created LibGuides to assist patrons in navigating online resources
- University of Toronto – Mississauga has created resources based on frequently asked questions about basic information literacy, learning how to search the catalogue or databases, how to access ebooks, etc.
- Leveraging collaborations and vendor help. Use existing guides and share technology help documentation and tutorials for staff and public, e.g. Niche academy “Re-opening Lives collaboration.” Toolshed, VPL to go ebooks and e-audio

WORK WITH LOCAL PARTNERS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY RESOURCES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO CUSTOMERS

- Oakville Public Library, Burlington Public Library, Milton Public Library and Halton Hills Public Library maintain the Halton Community Service Directory. COVID-19 specific topic lists have been created and organization listings are being updated regularly with service changes. HCSD information is being utilized by Halton municipalities to support pandemic planning efforts
- Hamilton Public Library Red Book staff have created topical lists that are available to the public and HPL frontline staff featuring resources about government financial support during COVID-19, resources for seniors, mental health supports, local COVID-19 assessment centres, food resources that are open for those experiencing food insecurity, and where free tax clinics are still being held in the area. Red Book staff are also continuing to provide up-to-date information to Ontario 211 about the Hamilton region
- These resources are customized, providing important information about local health and emergency services for persons experiencing vulnerabilities and who may be without digital access. New accessibility to the Toronto PL website, some new features include:
 - A new and improved Accessible Collections webpage

- Blog post on [Accessible Reading Options and Accessibility Tips](#)
- Surrey Libraries created a patron [searchable community resources sub-site](#) with COVID-19 specific resources

OFFERING ESL SERVICES & SERVICES IN OTHER LANGUAGES

- Hamilton Public Library continues to offer [newcomer services](#) through online ESL tutoring and has partnered with [McMaster students](#) to provide multilingual calls to socially isolated seniors
- Surrey Libraries uses its municipality's translation services available in more than 170 languages via phone, [language.com](#)
- Toronto Public Library's Library Settlement Partnership (LSP) has transitioned to remote. Settlement workers continue to provide services and support to newcomers by phone, email and web chat. For a more detailed description of how LSP is responding to COVID-19, see this recent [blog post](#)

CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS WHO MAY BE SOCIALLY ISOLATED

- Through the Friendly Calling Project, Hamilton Public Library staff call active library customers over the age of 75 to see how they are doing and if they would like regular callbacks. Staff listen to customer stories, provide information services and help with community referrals and online resources
- [Fort Worth Library](#) is calling all customers over the age of 65
- Toronto Public Library has printed resources highlighting essential services that have been posted at the entrances of 42 branch locations

DISTRIBUTING TECHNOLOGY

- Calgary Public Library distributed over 300 Chromebooks and another 100 are staged and awaiting distribution through a City of Calgary contact (who deploys them to various social agencies). 50 of that next 100 are designated for distribution to Indigenous users
- Saskatoon Public Library has loaned Chromebooks, WiFi hotspot, laptops to volunteers working with people who need assistance to apply for government support programs

PROVIDING WAYS FOR CUSTOMERS TO GET A LIBRARY CARD

- [Burlington Public Library](#) and [Hamilton Public Library](#) are using Quipu to verify address information through online card registration. [Surrey Libraries](#) have created an in-house model to create cards manually

OFFERING REMOTE PRINTING SOLUTIONS

- Calgary Public Library has developed [Everyone Print](#) allowing customers to send a print job from home and have staff print it by entering the library barcode
- Coquitlam Public Library offers [print services via email](#)

Section 4: 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 Re-opening 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>

FRENCH RESOURCES

- Heureduconte.ca, « un inventaire des heures du conte disponibles pour écoute en différé, un calendrier d'heures du conte en direct ainsi que des balados et livres audio pour enfants » / brings together virtual and audio storytelling hours on a single platform – Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec (ABPQ)
- QuoiLire.ca, « un service de suggestions de lecture numérique personnalisée par le biais d'un formulaire en ligne » / Personalized literary suggestions from an expert from Quebec public libraries – Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec (ABPQ)
- Infobiblio.ca, « aide pour utiliser la plateforme de prêt de livres numériques [Pretnumerique.ca](https://pretnumerique.ca) ainsi que du soutien pour accéder à l'offre de ressources à distance » / help to use the digital book lending platform [Pretnumerique.ca](https://pretnumerique.ca) as well as support to access the offer of resources remotely – Bibliopresto
- Bibliothèques et archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) – blogs / makers activities
- Bibliothèque de Frontenac (Bibliothèques de Montréal) is doing readers' advisory, crafts and games recommendations, boardgames and puzzles to print, resources for students through Instagram posts
- Bibliothèque Robert-Bourassa id.
- Bibliothèques du Plateau
- Bibliothèque Le Prévost
- Bibliothèques scolaires CSDM (Commission scolaire de Montréal). [Liste de lecture pour survivre à la COVID-19](#)
- Bibliothèque de Terrebonne. [Nouvelles ressources numériques](#)
- La Voix de l'Est. [À un clic de 1300 cours en ligne](#)
- Bibliothèques de UdeM – laptop loan

Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library

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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Programming



Snack packs

Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

PLANNING

- Which audiences and programs are priorities for public libraries at this time?
- What do our communities need in a time of pandemic, and can we create or adapt programs to address those needs?
- What is the optimal balance between digital programming, in-person programming and outreach? What mix of program models or approaches makes the best use of resources to meet community needs?
- Should all programs require registration, to ensure we are able to assist with contact tracing if necessary?
- What should the timeline look like (flexible, staged approach)?
- What changes need to be made to program policies or procedures to reflect the above?

COMMUNICATIONS

- How will we communicate new expectations to program participants?
- How will we respond if staff or patrons test positive for COVID-19?
- How will we inform the public of safety measures we are taking?
- What strategies will we use to communicate with the public and promote programs to diverse audiences, including those who are not online?
- How will we re-engage patrons and continue to engage with new patrons in a time of service limitations?

PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

- What is the effective occupancy of program rooms or spaces given physical distancing guidelines (note, a distance of 2m on all sides of a person creates a circle with an area of 12.56 square metres)?
- Can programs be held in open or outdoor spaces?
- Based on the answers to the above, how many participants can be safely included in an in-person program?
- Can children be realistically expected to observe physical distancing guidelines?
- Can programs that normally require close contact – for example, one-on-one technology help – be effectively adapted to follow physical distancing guidelines?
- Can programs that normally involve physical activity be effectively adapted to follow physical distancing guidelines?

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- How do we ensure the health and safety of staff, patrons, volunteers, partners and external presenters?
- What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be required for staff, volunteers, external presenters and patrons?
- What shared objects are typically used in a program (for example, toys, games, craft supplies / tools, technology)? Can these be effectively sanitized for safe use, or can the program be adapted to work without them?

- For programs that normally include snacks, is there a safe way to provide these or can the program be adapted to work without them?
- For digital programs, how do we ensure patrons' safety and privacy while using a variety of technology tools?

STAFF SUPPORT

- What training will staff need with respect to health and safety measures?
- What training will staff need to support them with new models of programming?
- How can we best support staff working with the public in a time of high anxiety?
- See the Staffing section of this Toolkit for further considerations.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- How do we make programs feel safe, welcoming and inclusive?
- How do we best reach and support vulnerable or underserved audiences?
- How do we best reach and support our Indigenous communities?
- How can we reduce or remove barriers to participation?
- Can digital programming content be shared with other libraries locally, provincially or nationally?
- How can we best work with community partners?

OPERATIONS

- Which new program models should be retained as libraries re-open?
- How will staffing models and staff roles be affected by the above questions?

Section 2: Best and Leading Practices

PROGRAMMING INSIDE THE LIBRARY

Planning

- Consult with local government, community partners and local agencies to identify how/if your community has changed. Base your learning on trends and follow privacy regulations.
- Determine which audiences and programs to prioritize. Priorities could include:
 - socio-economic well-being
 - community connectedness and reducing social isolation
 - school support
 - fostering literacy and creativity
 - strengthening partnerships
- Identify the objectives of your library's programming during and after a pandemic and how you will achieve your objectives
- Be ready to measure the success of your programming i.e. attendance, satisfaction, and impact: immediate/live – long term streaming archive
- Consult or create an inventory of your library's existing programming and identify programs that can be reformatted either as a virtual program, or an in library program that meets health directives, and evolving wants and needs of the community
- Identify new programs, including virtual programs by internal and external teams

- Identify programs that are no longer relevant or are no longer a priority and make a plan for phasing out these programs or putting them on hiatus
- Be flexible and ensure you are able to respond to unexpected changes or challenges.
- Before reinstating in person programming, undertake a risk assessment. Create a realistic timeline for phasing in programming and update related policies as needed e.g. <https://libraries.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Vespasiam-Warner-PL-District-Reopening-SERVICE-LEVEL-TABLE.pdf>
- Determine your library's capacity to deliver on priorities; make a case for resources as necessary
- Plan for new technology and supplies. Ensure funding is in place
- Review and update code of conduct to include virtual spaces
- Support staff as they learn new skills and health procedures
- Celebrate successes along the way

Communications

- Provide current safety guidelines and physical distancing customer service training for staff, drawing on current provincial health guidelines (Public Health Agency of Canada)
- Prepare a media alert notifying your community of available services (i.e. your library's website, virtual programming, social media, etc.)
- Use the opportunity to communicate the value of the library and reassure your community
- Be prepared for increased phone, email, web and social media enquiries during the re-opening phases

Physical Distancing Measures

- Consider open hours that best address the needs of your community and staff availability
- If proceeding with programs in open areas, look at location layout changes to programming that will support physical distancing (separating program areas with signage, floor graphics, etc.)
- Consider timed library entry for patrons, based on the capacity of your location
- Consider what security needs, if any, are required to keep staff and patrons safe
- Expand physical distancing for seating and computers as required
- Share physical distancing best practices with staff before they return to work, using provincial health directives
- Provide staff customer experience training in a physical distancing world
- Schedule staff to allow for appropriate physical distancing practices

Safety Precautions

- Provide additional sanitizing supplies and PPE for staff and appropriate sanitizing supplies for customer personal use and to disinfect surfaces (gloves, wipes, masks, hand sanitizer)
- Update instructions / communications to patrons (on-site and online) as needed
- Be aware of possible direction on quarantining collections
- Implement enhanced branch cleaning procedures

Staff Support

- Provide appropriate sanitizing supplies and PPE (gloves, masks, wipes, etc.) according to provincial health directives
- Share physical distancing best practices with staff before they return to work
- Provide staff customer experience training in a physical distancing world
- Determine cleaning protocols for work spaces and program spaces
- Provide connectivity tools (laptops, phones, etc.) for staff working from home

Program Delivery

- Phase reintroduction of in library programming by limiting group sizes, numbers of programs and limiting interactive activities
- Young children are not able to physically distance themselves safely from others. Adapt in-person children's programs for online delivery (i.e., virtual storytimes using Zoom)
- Some adult programs (i.e., technology help) require patrons and staff to be at close quarters. Limits on how help can be provided until social distancing recommendations are lifted should be considered
- Consider registration and promotion strategies for virtual programming
- Consider processes for identifying / booking community partner programs and recommendations for third party events
- Consider programming levels (events, presentations, small groups, one-on-one etc.) and if/how these programs can be safely delivered
- Consider including an engagement component as part of your virtual programming. There is a strong need for connection not just content. Extend or expand a virtual program with an activity or component that is not virtual e.g. take home or consumable program kits; weekly or monthly challenges
- Consider developing kits for safe pick-up/drop-off with collections, supplies and activity ideas for community members who are not online. Could be supported with DVD of staff doing program activity (e.g. copy of virtual program)
- Add or expand virtual library cards on library website for immediate patron access

Community Support

- Gain an understanding of how/if the community has changed during the pandemic. Identify who is in need of support from your library and the best way to provide that support
- Build/maintain relationships with local partner agencies
- Identify how your library can best support vulnerable people in your community
- Create a plan for programs based on the current and evolving situation
- Identify staffing and resources for program development and delivery

Operations

- Program times may need to be reconsidered to accommodate physical distancing guidelines
- Adapt in-person programs for online delivery (i.e., virtual storytimes)
- Consider programming levels (events, presentations, small groups, one-on-one etc.) and if/how these programs can be safely delivered
- Phase reintroduction of programming inside the library by limiting group sizes, numbers of programs and interactive activities

- Extend online renewal policies and material due dates
- Consider expanding online services (ebooks, streaming media, etc.)

PROGRAMMING OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

Planning

- Align plans with your library's Mission, Vision, and Values
- Consult with local government, community partners and local agencies to identify how/if your community has changed. Base your learning on trends and follow privacy regulations
- Programming that occurs outside the library could occur in a park, at a community event or in a partner agency's location
- Engage partners in open conversation about how MOUs may change and about health and safety practices. The partners should be willing and able to abide by your library's social distancing and safety practices
 - Determine which audiences and offsite opportunities to prioritize. Priorities could include:
 - socio-economic well-being
 - community connectedness and reducing social isolation
 - school support
 - fostering literacy and creativity
 - strengthening partnerships
- Identify the objectives of your library's programming during and after a pandemic and how you will achieve your objectives
- Be ready to measure the success of your programming i.e. attendance, satisfaction, and impact
- Consult or create an inventory of your library's existing programming. When it is safe to do so, resume offsite programming that continues to meet the evolving wants and needs of the community
- Identify new programming that meets the evolving wants and needs of the community.
- Identify programs that are no longer relevant or are no longer a priority and make a plan for phasing out these programs or putting them on hiatus
- Be flexible and ensure you are able to respond to unexpected changes or challenges.
- Before reinstating programming outside the library, undertake a risk assessment. Create a realistic timeline for phasing in offsite programming and update related policies as needed e.g. <https://libraries.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Vespasian-Warner-PL-District-Reopening-SERVICE-LEVEL-TABLE.pdf>
- Determine your library's capacity to deliver on priorities; make a case for resources as necessary
- Plan for new technology and supplies. Ensure funding is in place
- Review and update relevant procedures
- Support staff as they learn new skills and health procedures
- Celebrate successes along the way

Communications

- Provide safety guidelines and physical distancing customer service training for staff, drawing on current provincial health guidelines (Public Health Agency of Canada)
- Prepare a media alert notifying your community of available services (i.e. your library's website, virtual programming, social media, etc.)
- Use the opportunity to communicate the value of the library and reassure your community

Physical Distancing Measures

- Share physical distancing best practices with staff before they return to work
- Provide staff customer experience training in a physical distancing world
- Schedule staff in a way to allow for appropriate physical distancing practices
- Programming should not occur if physical distancing and gathering restrictions cannot be maintained

Safety Precautions

- Provide sanitizing supplies and PPE for staff and appropriate sanitizing supplies for patrons for personal use and to disinfect surfaces
- Expand physical distancing for seating as required

Staff Support

- Provide appropriate sanitizing supplies and PPE according to provincial health directives
- Share physical distancing best practices with staff before they return to work
- Provide staff customer experience training in a physical distancing world
- Determine cleaning protocols for program spaces

Program Delivery

- Phase reintroduction of in library programming by limiting group sizes, numbers of programs and limiting interactive activities with partners
- Young children are not able to physically distance themselves safely from others. Adapt in-person children's programs for online delivery (i.e., virtual storytimes using Zoom)
- Some adult programs (i.e., technology help) requires patrons and staff to be at close quarters. Limits on how help can be provided until social distancing recommendations are lifted should be considered with partners
- Consider registration and promotion strategies for virtual programming with partners.
- Consider processes for identifying / booking community partner program space and recommendations for third party events with partners
- Consider programming levels (events, presentations, small groups, one-on-one etc.) and if/how these programs can be safely delivered
- Consider including an engagement component as part of your virtual programming. There is a strong need for connection not just content. Extend or expand a virtual program with an activity or component that is not virtual e.g. take home or consumable program kits; weekly or monthly challenges
- Consider developing kits for safe pick-up/drop-off with collections, supplies and activity ideas for community members who are not online. Could be supported with DVD of staff doing program activity (e.g. copy of virtual program)

Community Support

- Gain an understanding of how/if the community has changed during the pandemic. Identify who is in need of support from your library and the best way to provide that support
- Build/maintain relationships with local partner agencies
- Identify how your library can best support vulnerable people in your community
- Create a plan for programs based on the current and evolving situation
- Identify staffing and resources for program development and delivery

Operations

- Program times may need to be reconsidered to accommodate physical distancing guidelines
- Adapt in-person programs for online delivery (i.e., virtual storytimes)
- Consider programming levels (events, presentations, small groups, one-on-one etc.) and if/how these programs can be safely delivered
- Phase reintroduction of programming outside the library by limiting group sizes, numbers of programs and interactive activities

Section 3: Stories from the Field

PROGRAMMING INSIDE THE LIBRARY

The Quick Pivot to Digital

Most libraries surveyed had moved to offering at least some programming online. Most common were family storytimes, either delivered live via Zoom or Facebook/Instagram, or prerecorded and broadcast via YouTube, Facetime, library websites, etc.

For Children & Families

- Barrie Public Library is offering “Walkabout Wednesday” a short video introduction filmed outside to encourage kids to get out for a walk and look for a scavenger hunt list of items to find using Niche
- Coquitlam Public Library is offering Mother Goose in Cantonese via Zoom
- Halifax Public Libraries created a Knowledge Challenge Online Scavenger Hunt for Kids
- Hamilton Public Library is offering Online Storytimes at Home via YouTube
- Kingston Frontenac Public Library encourages people to Sign up for Storytime Express! To receive a weekly video sent by email each Monday
- London Public Library is engaging kids in a Lego Challenge from home via Zoom
- Markham Public Library is using Google Classroom to host a Virtual Spring Reading Challenge
- Saskatoon Public Library offers a new “Dance Party in Your House” daily through Spotify while Barrie Public Library is hosting a Dance Party for kids via Niche
- Wood Buffalo Regional Library opened its own “library island” in Animal Crossing
- Virtual escape rooms provide learning opportunities for kids e.g. Halifax Public Libraries created a Harry Potter Virtual Escape Room and Milton Public Library has many digital escape room games via Breakout EDU platform
- As per the CBC, Halifax Public Libraries “is distributing “take home” snacks and activities for kids through six community partners such as food centres (activity packages for adults will be coming soon too)

For Adults

- Innovative ways of offering Book Clubs include Burlington Reads @ Home for an online community read invites participation via social media and provides related links for further exploration and featured *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice in conjunction with Hamilton Reads Book Club Online or people in Edmonton can enjoy EPL From Home Digital Book Club via Twitter
- Calgary Public Library had 140 people attend a Zoom version of their popular Think Big program series, featuring Jay Ingram and experts from the University of Calgary's Hotchkiss Brain Institute
- Coquitlam Public Library is offering Coping with COVID-19 programs held via Zoom in various languages (e.g. Mandarin)
- Guelph Public Library is using online jigsaw puzzle software to promote their e-resources available
- Hamilton Public Library is offering a Film Forum Online to discuss films from Kanopy via Microsoft Teams
- Kitchener Public Library is partnering with their local YMCA to provide employment support through virtual Effective Resume programming via Zoom
- Vancouver Public Library offered a fulsome suite of online Indigenous Storyteller in Residence programming, including a film screening, and online storytelling and discussion sessions
- Windsor Symphony Orchestra paired up with Windsor Public Library for a Read-Aloud with the WSO program is part of the #WSOatHome programming for all those in quarantine and self-isolation

Newcomer Programs

- Surrey Public Libraries offer a variety of online programs for newcomers, including English and Citizenship classes as well as employment support through foreign credential recognition, immigrant entrepreneurship, and career paths for skilled immigrants
- Various BC libraries including Surrey Libraries, Richmond Public Library, Coquitlam/Port Moody Public are offering online training for the Library Champions Project for newcomers interested in volunteering in the community to share information about library and settlement resources with other newcomers
- Halifax Public Libraries, Hamilton Public Library and Calgary Public Library are offering Newcomer Conversation group sessions on Zoom, using break-out groups for volunteers and participants

Tech & Analog Came Together

- London Public Library is offering Project Help for Elementary & Secondary Students via telephone
- Oakville Public Library delivers Stories by Phone – "...enjoy pre-recorded stories, any time of day. We are offering three different pre-recorded story options in English: poems and short stories for adults, stories for younger children (age 7 and under) and adult fiction (one chapter a week). Hamilton Public Library is also offering Story Break where staff read stories by phone one week and participants can join in a group phone chat the following to discuss. Toronto Public Library also offers Dial-A-Story for children 12 and under, available in 16 languages

- Vancouver Island Regional Library posted colouring sheets on their Facebook page for people to print
- Halifax Public Libraries posted cooking tutorials recorded in library staff members' kitchens
- London Public Library is offering Book a Librarian services via email or phone
- Wood Buffalo Regional Library posted exercise videos filmed by a library staff member in her house

PROGRAMMING OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

The Quick Pivot to Digital

Most libraries surveyed had moved to offering at least some programming online. Most common were family storytimes, either delivered live via Zoom or Facebook/Instagram, or prerecorded and broadcast via YouTube, Facetime, library websites, etc. with partners.

Outreach & Community Engagement

While most traditional outreach stopped during the pandemic, some libraries worked to find new ways to connect with their communities.

- Nine Toronto Public Library locations became food distribution centres, in partnership with local food banks
- Hamilton Public Library features Noon Hour Concerts Online for performances of local artists
- Windsor Public Library launched its Bookmobile On Demand, where patrons could contact the library to request items be delivered to their home
- In Montreal, the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec opened the Grande Bibliothèque during the day to people experiencing homelessness
- Calgary Public Library worked with social workers at The City of Calgary to distribute Chromebooks usually used by members in community libraries to partner agencies across the city, including newcomer agencies, students, Indigenous organizations, etc.
- As per the CBC, Halifax Public Libraries “is distributing” take home snacks and activities for kids through six community partners such as food centres (activity packages for adults will be coming soon too). “Food insecurity is a significant concern in our communities, especially during this time,” says Kasia Morrison, Communications Officer at Halifax Public Libraries. “In one week we provided 1,171 snack packs and 743 activity packs.”
- Saskatoon Public Library made Outreach Workers available by phone for referrals
- Greater Victoria Public Library is promoting an online storytime feature initiated by one of the Victoria City Councillors via YouTube called 8 O’Clock Storybook Reading featuring local elected officials and celebrities
- Brampton Library staff are using the Library’s 3D printers to make protective face shields for health care workers
- Kingston Frontenac Public Library developed a StoryMe: COVID-19 Edition project to collect written stories, videos, digital photographs and audio recordings of people’s experience during the pandemic
- Powell River Public Library has created a pick-up-and-go package for a physical distancing version of summer reading club – Mission Remote Summer Reading Club 2020: Explore Our Universe!

- Salt Spring Public Library has expanded their Visiting Library Service drop-off of items outside people's homes to include seniors who cannot access e-resources
- Salt Spring Public Library is incorporating social distancing measures to offer an outdoor StoryWalk program at a local park on Salt Spring Island
- Bowen Island Public Library continues to offer the loan of medical equipment as part of their Med Shed service while the library is closed
- North Vancouver District Public Library is offering Library Takeout @NVDPL to allow for holds pick-up, as well as curated picks with a pickup time coordinated by staff

Section 4: Resources

PROGRAMMING INSIDE THE LIBRARY

- IPAC CANADA PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS Toys – clear guidelines for cleaning and sanitizing toys in hospitals.
- Engaging with a digital audience – Libraries Connected
- COVID-19 program ideas – ALA Public Programs Office Ideas
- Library Programming for Teens Goes Virtual During COVID-19 – Publisher's Weekly Article April 28, 2020
- Youth Program Ideas – Presentation and slide show from Librarian.Support
- Programming Ideas – Association for Library Services to Children
- How to Run a Successful Summer Reading Program Online – TD Summer Reading Site
- CFLA COVID19 Storytime Copyright – Guidance on Fair Dealing
- List of Read Aloud Canadian Stories Publishers – Access Copyright
- Virtual Literary Legos – Programming Librarian
- Storytime Online Resources – Jbrary
- Teen Literacies Toolkit – Yalsa
- Programs HQ – Yalsa
- Old-Fashioned Connection: Phone Programming in a Pandemic – ALA Public Programs Office Article
- Older Adult Online Program Ideas – Public Libraries Online
- Truth and Reconciliation Committee Report and Recommendations – CFLA
- Suggestions For Families – Supporting Learning From Home – First Nations Education Steering Committee
- Indigenous Relations in the Time of COVID-19 – Indigenous Corporate Training
- Guide to Virtual Events in 2020 – Cvent.com
- The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Resiliency Plan – blog.cincinnati.library.org
- Museums and The Pandemic – Re-opening Considerations from American Alliance of Museums
- Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready – CDC – US

GLAM Sector Programming Examples:

- National Arts Centre created a short-term relief fund to pay artists for online performances #CanadaPerforms that also includes writers, in partnership with the Writers' Trust of Canada and CBC Books

- Open Space Gallery in Victoria is offering livestreams of weekly talks and walks online on land on Lekwungen & WSÁNEĆ territories featuring local Indigenous artists, educators, and knowledge keepers. They are also providing access to a [Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective Colouring Book](#)
- Maritime Museum of BC is offering [virtual tours](#) via Facebook Live, as well as live programs via Zoom to support school curriculum, e.g. [WWII and Women on the Home Front](#), [HBC and the Fur Trade](#)
- Vancouver's Museum of Anthropology is offering learning support to teachers and parents through [#MOAFromHome](#) as well as ways of engaging from home with [colouring cards](#) and experiments to try from home
- Royal BC Museum has regular programming for different ages that engages with curatorial staff, e.g. [RBCM@Home \(Kids\)](#) via Zoom on topics such as [Make Your Own Dinosaur Footprints](#); [RBCM@outside](#) for virtual fieldtrips; or [RBCM@home \(Office Hours\)](#) to help support teachers and parents with accessing resources and they are available online or by phone during the pandemic closure
- Royal BC Museum is also collecting [COVID-19 stories](#) for future generations. [Victoria News article](#)
- Royal Ontario Museum is offering online activities that families can do from home to support learning, e.g. [learning mining principles through chocolate chip cookie baking](#) in addition to [online storytimes](#) that connect stories to items in the ROM collection

Programming Examples from Cultural and Community Organizations:

- Pacific Opera Victoria is offering [Opera Etc.](#) online for a physical distancing alternative to opera programming
- The Calgary Zoo offers [Zoo Along with You](#), a collection of storytimes, activities, and virtual tours of the Zoo
- Barkerville Historic Town & Park is offering [free virtual field trips](#) for teachers and students
- The Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria is now providing English classes for newcomers online as well as [interactive programming online for youth](#) via Zoom

Retail & Vendor Examples

- CBC shared a [map of indie bookstores](#) across Canada that have expanded to online sales, shipping, curbside pickup and delivery
- [Hoopla Book Club Hub](#) provides an opportunity for library staff or individuals to participate in an online book club

PROGRAMMING OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

- [A Phased Reopening Plan for Libraries as COVID 19 Restrictions Are Lifted](#) – John Thill, Medium.com
- [Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Parks & Recreation Employers](#) – Public Services Health and Safety Association
- [COVID-19: Precautions When Working As A Childcare Provider](#) – Public Services Health and Safety Association
- [COVID-19: Precautions When Working As A Recreational Worker In A Healthcare Setting](#) – Public Services Health and Safety Association

- [Guidance on Health and Safety for Food Retail Sector during COVID-19 – Workplace Safety and Prevention Services](#)
- [Communities have challenges. Libraries can help. – Turning Outward to your Community: ALA](#)
- [From Project to Branch Integration and Sustainability: Community-Led Work at Halifax Public Libraries – Public Libraries Online](#)
- [Community Led Libraries Toolkit – Vancouver Public Library](#)
- [Communication and Partnerships – Tech Soup for Libraries](#)
- [Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development – Urban Library Council](#)
- [Community Reference: Making Libraries Indispensable in a New Way – American Libraries](#)
- [Considering Outreach Assessment: Strategies, Sample Scenarios, and a Call to Action – In the Library Open Access](#)

FRENCH RESOURCES

- [Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques \(FCAB\). Heures de conte en ligne : lignes directrices en matière de droit d'auteur pour les bibliothèques publiques canadiennes pendant la pandémie de la COVID-19.](#)
- [Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec. Heureduconte.ca](#)
- [Bibliothèques Longueuil. Page Facebook.](#)
- [Bibliothèque d'Alma. Page Facebook.](#)
- [Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec \(BAnQ\). Activités à heures fixes.](#)
- [Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec \(BAnQ\). Mon territoire, mon arc-en-ciel.](#)
- [Ville de Beaconsfield. Page Facebook.](#)

Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Evette Berry, Service Delivery Manager, Calgary Public Library

Karen Dahl, Senior Manager, Programming and Community Engagement, Halifax Public Libraries

Penny-Lynn Fielding, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Kitchener Public Library

Tracy Kendrick, Co-ordinator, Public Services, Greater Victoria Public Library

Carrie Kitchen, Service Design Lead, Calgary Public Library

Shauna May, Service Delivery Manager, Calgary Public Library

Jennifer Rowan, Co-ordinator, Public Services, Greater Victoria Public Library

Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Victoria Public Library

Lisa Radha Weaver, Director, Collections and Program Development, Hamilton Public Library

TOOLKIT DISCLAIMER : This Toolkit and its parts were developed by a series of working groups comprised of CULC/CBUC members in May 2020. CULC/CBUC has endeavoured to make the content relevant to most public libraries, however, all libraries operate within their own context, and any use of this toolkit must consider a library's particular governance context whether provincial, territorial, regional, or municipal, and reflect the needs

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The Built Environment



Section 1: Index of Key Considerations

CAPACITY & LAYOUT (assumptions – social distancing = 2m)

- Will the public be restricted based upon total occupant load of the building or capacity of an area/space? and how will that be done?
- What are the unique challenges of each branch? (i.e. leased space, multiple floors, co-located with other municipal and non-municipal uses)?
- Does the library need to submit a “plan” of how it is meeting public health requirements prior to opening?
- What is the decision-making framework for changes to the facility? Who signs off on plans/renovations? Will some areas need to be cordoned off? Move to closed stacks?
- Which areas in the library are high priority for modifying to allow for social distancing? Computer lab/area, service points, entrances/exits, shelving aisles- directional limits (ex. one-way aisles), meeting rooms, reading lounges/seating areas
- Where should quarantined materials be held (program room? expanded book-drop areas?)
- What work could be done prior to re-opening to improve capacity? weeding of collection?

BUILDING SYSTEMS

- Are HVAC systems maintained and working well?
- Can windows in the building be opened safely?
- Is it preferable for the AMH to be used over staff handling materials? What is the most effective way to clean your AMH machine(s)?
- What changes are required to existing contracts? (e.g. cafe, maintenance, janitorial)

FURNITURE & FINISHES

- Which surfaces and finishes are more susceptible to contamination and how long does the virus live? (research is evolving)
- How are high touch surfaces identified to ensure cleaning priority? e.g., touch screens, service point counters, door handles, washroom fixtures, etc.
- Is it possible to retrofit entrance ways so door handles are eliminated?
- If furniture/equipment/toys are to be moved, where will they be stored?

TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

- How will keyboards and mice be cleaned (public and staff use)?
- Can self-checks be set to not require touch screen use? (Bibliotheca ones can – QuickConnect) Is it possible to implement further touch free/self-service options with customers checking out items on their own devices? (AmazonGo – Bibliotheca mobile checkout)?
- Are there options for touch-free automation to reduce contact with surfaces (ex. automated hand-washing dispensers, automated hand drying, automatic doors, etc.)

MOVING THROUGH & INTERACTING WITHIN THE SPACE

- Are distance markers required for limiting the number of people allowed in at a time? For queueing?
- What strategies can be used to manage crowding in elevators, escalators and stairs?

- Is it possible to separate entrance areas from exit areas in your building?
- Do emergency evacuation procedures need to be reconsidered? What would that look like?
- Should plexiglass barriers be installed at service desks? Between public computers?
- What strategies will we use to discourage use of cash? (cards/phones with tap preferred, fine-free?)
- When will it be safe to open children's play areas? Will they have shared toys? Interactives?
- Should all shelving be done during closed hours?
- How will staff breaks be handled to allow for social distancing? Are staff areas being adequately cleaned? Who is responsible for the cleaning?
- Are there adequate hand-washing stations? Is there a need for handwashing stations in the public areas of the library? In staff (circulation) areas? More hand sanitizer stations featured more prominently?
- Should water fountains be used? Should they be redesigned? Should food and drink continue to be allowed in libraries?
- What should be measured at the facility? Gate count, material returns, WiFi use?
- What has to be procured in advance of opening? sneeze shields, foot prints – peel and stick, PPE, stanchions, signage.
- Is your library continuing curbside pickup during a partial or staged opening for people who choose it or who have compromised immune systems? What precautions need to be in place outside of buildings?
- Is there adjacent outdoor space that can be used to increase seating capacity? Can the building's WiFi be extended into that space?

COMMUNICATION

- Is there signage and communication asking customers to stay home if feeling unwell/displaying any symptoms?
- What wayfinding methods should be used to communicate new guidelines and limits to visitors and staff (signage, floor decals, PA announcements stanchions, etc.)?
- Are drawings needed to communicate what furniture is to be moved, routing of the public, stanchions?
- Is staff training required related to the physical changes to the branch?
- How are the limitations of the branch (occupant load) documented and communicated?

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

The physical space may have four phases of being open:

1. Staff only
 2. Staff with distribution of materials out
 3. Staff with limited public interaction and materials in and out
 4. Staff with full public access
- Each step should have a clear plan (ex. signage, stanchions, staff training, stakeholder communication)

- Existing contracts should be reviewed and amended at each step (janitorial, cafes, leases, etc.)

CAPACITY & LAYOUT (assumptions – social distancing = 2m)

The application of social distance guidelines will impact the capacity (number of people allowed in a branch) and the physical layout of the library. Depending on the current layout, location of furniture or equipment in the branch, the total number of people in the space may need to be reduced by up to 50%. To calculate the total occupant load, attention needs to be given to specific functional areas including staff spaces, information desks, public seating areas, computer areas and program spaces.

Think of the design of space as evolutionary as the public and staff adjust to the new layout and social cues around social distancing; be prepared to make further revisions based on observation and feedback.

For public areas, the analysis of furniture layout drawings will help managers determine the revised placements of furniture and equipment and ensure the public and staff practice appropriate social distancing. Consideration should be to the following:

- Public health guidelines and regulations that apply in your province or territory
- Safe ratio of people per square metre for all library space – staff and public spaces
- Capacity monitoring and enforced
- Consultation with staff and stakeholders with consideration to accessibility. Staff may require training related to physical changes made to the space
- Entry doors and exit doors (separate from each other where possible)
- Redundant furniture and equipment stored to avoid congestion (either onsite or offsite)
- Restricting movement of furniture from its social distance placement
- Open seating areas that allow people to be in the presence of each other while still retaining distance are preferable
- Determining whether stacks will be accessed. One-way aisles are recommended
- Relocation or reduction of shelving to provide for wider traffic routes may be necessary
- Estimating the volume of materials that will need to be quarantined. Identify dimensions and layout of the quarantine area and staff access pattern
- Using floor distance markers to guide queuing in high traffic areas

BUILDING SYSTEMS

Initial analysis of the spread of the COVID-19 virus indicates the virus is not likely transmitted via the building systems in the way that Legionnaires' disease is. The droplet form of the virus is more likely to fall on horizontal surfaces rather than remaining suspended in air and distributed by the ductwork in the building.

However, it remains recommended to maximize the air quality in the building through:

- increasing the percentage of outside air,
- improving or more frequent replacement of air filters,
- extending the operating hours of the ventilation system beyond opening hours of the location, and

- opening exterior windows.

FURNITURE & FINISHES

- Health care facilities are leaders in best practices for choosing and maintaining furniture finishes and materials. Contract furniture manufacturers are good resources for information on furniture coverings, and most textile manufacturers offer health care lines which feature upholstery that is stain resistant and has antimicrobial protection and fluid-barrier protection. <https://www.stancehealthcare.com/resources/fabrics>
- Soft and porous materials are generally not as easy to disinfect as hard and non-porous surfaces. [EPA has listed a limited number of products approved for disinfection for use on soft and porous materials](#). Soft and porous materials that are not frequently touched should only be cleaned or laundered, following the directions on the item's label, using the warmest appropriate water setting. Find more information on CDC's website on [Re-opening Guidance and Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#) for developing strategies for dealing with soft and porous materials.
- Furniture high touch surfaces to consider for increased cleaning:
 - lounge chair and task chair arms
 - chair backs
 - study table surfaces
- Consider plastic wrapping fabric upholstery for ease of cleaning
- Affix notices to each chair reminding occupants to avoid or disinfect touchpoints

CLEANING

Phase 1 & 2 – Staff only and staff with distribution out

- Ensure easy access to handwashing stations as well as adequate supplies of soap and paper towel. If there is no sink immediately accessible near the work area, a plastic jug with a spigot and a catch bucket may be used.
- When cleaning and disinfecting staff spaces:
 - prioritize cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces
 - choose a product that cleans and disinfects
 - create a cleaning procedure
- Review procedures with staff and ensure that high touch tools/equipment are not shared between staff (book trucks, work stations, phones, etc.)

Phase 3 & 4 – Staff with limited public and staff with full public

- Identify optimal locations for additional hygiene stations- is there a need for handwashing stations in the public areas of the library? In staff (circulation) areas? Should there be more hand sanitizer stations featured more prominently? Hand sanitizer / wash stations should be placed at entrance/exit to allow customers to clean hands before and after touching library surfaces, and anywhere in library where contact with frequently touched surfaces may occur
- Reduce clutter (browsing copies of magazines, flyers, papers, brochures) This will allow for easier cleaning of surfaces and removes high-touch items.
- Review customer paths through the space to identify high-touch surfaces. This list may include:

- doorknobs or push buttons to open doors
- elevator buttons
- chair arms and table surfaces
- computer keyboards
- courtesy phones or pay phones
- computer keyboards and mice
- touch screens at search stations
- touch screens on self-check machines
- photocopier screens and lids
- POS keypads
- faucets, paper towel dispensers, and stall doors in washrooms
- When cleaning and disinfecting public spaces:
 - prioritize high-touch surfaces
 - choose a product that both cleans and disinfects
 - create a cleaning procedure – consider altering open hours to allow more time for cleaning
- Outdoor areas should be clean but do not generally require disinfecting

TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

Phase 1 & 2 – Staff only and staff with distribution out

- Automated Material Handling (AMH) machines should be used for checking in/sorting material where possible. AMH machines should be cleaned regularly per vendor guides
- Audit doors and ensure those with automatic door openers are functioning as they should. Identify opportunities to retrofit with powered doors
- Ensure other automated devices (soap dispensers, water faucets, toilets, paper towel dispensers) are all functioning as they should. Identify opportunities to replace manual devices for automated ones to reduce contact with surfaces (like automated hand sanitizing dispensers, automated hand drying, automatic doors, etc.)

Phase 3 & 4 – Staff with limited public and staff with full public

- Encourage customers to use self-checks or mobile checkouts. Ensure that your self-check machines are configured to minimize touchscreen interactions. Contact your library's vendor if you need support in this
- Review point of sale procedures. Enable tap for debit or credit card transactions
- Discourage use of cash, consider waiving all fines and fees where possible. Consider overriding copier charges to enable free copying and printing

MOVING THROUGH THE SPACE

Phase 1 & 2 – Staff Only/ Staff with materials distribution to public

- Determine how staff will enter and exit the building. Provide sanitizer at each entry and exit, particularly if contactless entry/exit is not possible.
- Reorganize space to ensure that physical distancing of 2m between people can be maintained by staff at:
 - assigned workstations

- paths of travel to and from workstations
- paths of travel from collections to curbside pick-up or current method of service delivery
- paths of travel to lunch rooms and washrooms
- paths of travel to handwashing stations
- Identify potential high traffic areas and take steps to reduce congestion in these areas.
- Handwashing stations: Utilize available washrooms to designate hand washing stations and minimize traffic to each station. If staff are working outside, or there are not enough handwashing stations to accommodate staff, create a portable handwashing station. Designate a specific enclosed room to isolate any person who experiences symptoms of an illness while at work

Phase 3 & 4 – Public in the building, limited and full access

- Staff access should be limited to one point of entry, separate from public entry if possible. Public access should be limited to one point of entry, with designated “in” and “out” doors if possible.
- Set up safe queueing space outside and inside of buildings.
- Consider the use of Contact Tracing Apps, or a social distancing app such as Crowd Solo (free for attractions).
- Identify high traffic areas based on available services, and ensure that paths of travel allow for a physical distance of 2m in each direction.
- Mark safe queueing distances and directional flow using signage in high traffic areas, stanchions or floor markers. Note: vinyl floor tape is easier to remove and leaves less residue than masking or duct tape.
- Monitor types of use, and consider scheduling specific areas for type of occupancy throughout the day to reduce large groups gathering in one area (for example set up an overflow Teen Area between 3 pm and 5 pm if you see large numbers at that time).
- Implement occupancy limits for elevators to ensure safe physical distancing for passengers, ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities. In addition:
 - Prominently display instructional signage regarding healthy elevator use protocols. This may include floor stickers to establish distancing zones while queueing, passenger limits, and safe distances in the carriage
 - Consider elevator attendants to manage flow and discourage over-crowding of elevator carriages
 - Review elevator cleaning processes, and update to ensure on-going cleaning of high touch surfaces such as elevator panels / buttons
- Escalators and stairs pose fewer challenges which may be managed with signage directing passengers where to stand and not to pass. High touch surfaces as handrails will require increased cleaning.
- Review emergency evacuation procedures and local requirements, and consider:
 - reasons for evacuation, including if a person exhibiting symptoms is identified;
 - role of fire wardens during an evacuation
 - how to maintain physical distancing during evacuation and at muster points;
 - cleaning procedures before re-opening after an evacuation;

Make use of outdoor space if it is available to you. The risk of coronavirus spread is significantly lower in open air spaces. Exterior spaces should be clean, but do not require disinfecting. Add seating if possible and ensure the WiFi extends into these areas.

INTERACTING WITHIN THE SPACE

Phase 1 & 2 – Staff Only/Staff with materials distribution to the public

- Disallow handshaking, hugging, and unnecessary person to person contact
- Discourage staff from sharing phones, desks, workstations, pens, etc. with each other or the public. If equipment is shared, have staff clean the equipment with alcohol or disinfectant wipes before and after use
- If possible provide each staff with a designated laptop for work use
- When possible, encourage employees to avoid staff rooms by taking breaks and lunches outside, in their office (if applicable) or in larger areas
- Ensure employees wash their hands upon arrival, before eating, after touching a shared item, after using the washroom and before leaving at the end of the day
- Limit the interactions between staff and outside contractors, delivery people, implementing electronic signature systems and related receiving practices
- Set operating hours to allow downtime between staff shifts for thorough cleaning
- Program regular audio messages that regularly remind employees to follow hygiene and social distancing guidelines

Phase 3 & 4 – Public in the building, limited and full access

- Stacks should be accessed in a single direction and hand sanitizer placed in easily accessible locations. Public should be asked to sterilize hands and asked to place any browsed (touched) item in clearly marked baskets for disinfection/quarantine
- Reconfigure service desks to allow for fewer staff working close together. Set up more satellite service points or reduce reasons for transactions (i.e. eliminate fines)
- Modify self-serve areas (hand-outs, headphones, utensils, food) to limit shared handling of items
- Reduce meeting room capacity or limit public gathering within meeting rooms, where it is more difficult to monitor capacity. For work locations where a staff member will be in regular face-to-face contact, or where computer workstations are facing each other, consider adding a plexiglass barrier
- Provide sufficient garbage receptacles to allow for customers to dispose of their own garbage safely, including rubber gloves
- Food and drink can continue to be allowed in libraries, but encourage hand washing prior to food consumption
- Water fountains/water bottle filling stations are considered safe, although customers should be instructed to let the water run for 10 seconds before filling

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR CHILDREN'S AREAS

Each province and jurisdiction will have guidelines for safe toy cleaning and services for children. The following list outlines some considerations for libraries to follow based on best practices in child care centres and schools when re-opening spaces for children and families.

Phase 3 – Public in the building with limited access

- Remove and store toys, play materials and loose parts
- Close or limit access to fixed play structures
- Collect loose books in the area regularly and follow procedure for quarantining returns
- Arrange seating and tables to allow for physical distancing and individual family groups
- Online children's program delivery only
- Consider all surfaces in children's areas to be high-touch and increase cleaning frequency in this area

Phase 4 – Public in the building with full access

- Follow guidelines in Phase 3, and;
- Allow access to toys and loose parts, following local guidelines for daycares and schools where possible
- If toys are used, keep only enough for individual play, and remove for cleaning after each use
- Sensory tables and materials like Play-Doh, sand and water are not recommended

Section 3: Stories from the Field or Related Sectors

- Hong Kong Public Libraries re-opened the Hong Kong Central Library on May 6, 2020 and partially re-opened six others. The libraries are open for borrowing and returning of items only and public computers, study rooms, and room rentals are not available. The number of visitors to the buildings is monitored and tickets are distributed for hour long sessions. Between each session the building is closed for cleaning.
- The American Alliance of Museums has developed a Sample Reopening Plan for the Children's Museum of Manhattan, which suggests some strategies for preparing facilities and for managing the visitor experience in spaces for children.
- Crowd Solo is an app that has been developed by Holovis, an experience designer, for theme parks, zoos, museums and cultural centres to monitor capacity and ensure physical distancing is being upheld.
- Almost every major contract furniture manufacturer features products and sample office layouts that support safe distances as well as barriers between coworkers and the people they serve. Haworth, Steelcase, Teknion are three examples.
- For textiles, Healthguard, a company that specializes in anti-dust mite and anti-fungal protection for textiles, is testing a treatment that could potentially be used on soft furnishings that would kill the COVID-19 virus. Most healthcare upholstery lines feature some antimicrobial protection and there will be more research on how furniture finishes can protect people from viruses like COVID-19.

Section 4: Resources

- Coronavirus/COVID-19 Resources for Retailers – Retail Council of Canada
- COVID-19 Recovery Planning – Retail Council of Canada
- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-temp-handwashing-stations-personal-services.pdf>
- <https://www.elevatorworld.com/blogs/creativity-in-cabins-combat-coronavirus/> Elevator Guidelines

- [Quarantine Librarianship](#)
- [Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces during COVID-19 – Government of Canada](#)
- [Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of disinfectants for use against COVID-19 – Government of Canada](#)
- [How the COVID-19 Pandemic Will Change the Built Environment – Alyssa Giacobbe, Architectural Digest](#)
- [SelfCheck and CloudLibrary Configuration – Bibliotheca](#)
- [Disinfecting Bibliotheca Products – Bibliotheca](#)
- [Lyngsoe Coronavirus Updates – Lyngsoe](#)
- [Social distancing signs around the world show the new normal – Reuters](#)
- [Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19 – World Health Organization](#)
- [Latest arrangements on services of Hong Kong Public Libraries – Hong Kong Public Libraries](#)
- [COVID-19 Information Guidance For Museums And Art Galleries – Government of Alberta](#)
- [COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Guide – Restaurants Canada](#)
- [Whole Food Market's COVID-19 Response – Whole Food Market](#)
- [COVID-19 Sample Reopening Plan – American Alliance of Museums](#)
- [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Preparedness Resources – The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers](#)
- [BC Public Health Guidance for Child Care Centres Cleaning and Disinfection for Toys – Ottawa Public Health](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Daycare/Out of School Care – Government of Alberta](#)
- [Bright Tape Promoting Social Distancing Transforms Public Architecture in Singapore – Grace Ebert, This is Colossal](#)
- [Pathway Back to Work – BOMA \(Building Managers & Owners Association of Canada\)](#)
- [Guide for Reopening Your Workplace – Cushman Wakefield](#)

Section 5: Authors and Acknowledgements

Amanda Fullerton, Manager, Service Design, Halifax Public Libraries

Terry Gallagher, Senior Manager, Finance and Facilities, Halifax Public Libraries

Lisa Hardy, Facilities Design Lead, Calgary Public Library

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries

TOOLKIT DISCLAIMER : This Toolkit and its parts were developed by a series of working groups comprised of CULC/CBUC members in May 2020. CULC/CBUC has endeavoured to make the content relevant to most public libraries, however, all libraries operate within their own context, and any use of this toolkit must consider a library's particular 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.

Staffing



Section 1: Index of Key Assumptions

During a pandemic and recovery from it, how can public libraries:

- Support and accommodate staff, including those:
 - who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 once physical services resume?
 - who have child/elder care obligations?
 - who may come to work sick rather than provide medical notes?
 - experiencing mental health issues arising from, or exacerbated by, COVID-19?
- Meet their obligations to provide a safe work environment, including:
 - responding to staff fears and anxiety about safety in the workplace?
 - ensuring a safe workplace and constructively addressing work refusals?
 - determining what PPE or public health measures will be required?
- Manage the recall process for staff who are laid off/on leave?
- Contemplate continued remote work arrangements?
- Build agile workplace cultures to respond quickly and innovate rapidly?
- Promote a change positive culture in times of uncertainty and rapid evolution?
- Motivate employees and increase staff engagement in difficult times?
- Develop competencies
 - to deliver trauma informed approaches to support each other?
 - learn to collaborate, communicate and deliver services and programs virtually?
- Support leaders in identifying and developing the skills and competencies needed in an unprecedented crisis and in a time of ongoing uncertainty for staff?

Section 2: Best & Leading Practices

Note: the information below provides general considerations and some best practices related to staffing during a pandemic and recovery therefrom. In all cases, ensure that your organization is referencing your provincial occupational health and safety (OHS), human rights, and employment standards legislation and resources. Municipalities may have resources and support relevant to their libraries; it may be valuable or necessary to work closely with municipalities on developing policies and procedures.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Accommodations

- Family status, including parent-child relationships, is a protected ground under human rights legislation.
 - Consult provincial human rights legislation and related resources to ensure the duty to accommodate, and any limits that may apply to it, are well understood.
 - Some questions related to family status accommodations are:
 - Is the employee the only caregiver? Can they share responsibility?
 - What level of care is required?
 - Can childcare responsibilities be accommodated through scheduling changes or flexible schedules or work from home options?
 - Can the employee reduce their hours temporarily or make use of paid leave options?

- Some workers (e.g. older adults, those with pre-existing medical conditions) are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19. Given these heightened risks, additional measures to limit exposure may include:
 - Temporary accommodations to non-public facing roles
 - Continued remote work arrangements
 - Change of duties or schedules to provide less contact with the public
- Requiring medical documentation to support sick leave claims for COVID-19 may be prohibited under current legislation, as it is for instance in Ontario. This is in recognition that requests for medical notes place unnecessary burden on the healthcare system and increase risk of exposure. Where this requirement is part of the library's collective bargaining agreement (CBA), a letter of understanding on the topic could be produced.
- The duty to accommodate bona fide medical issues extends to mental health conditions. Given the heightened anxiety associated with the pandemic, additional support may help staff feeling heightened levels of stress. Such supports may include:
 - access to Employee and Family Assistance Programs
 - additional services (e.g. mental health support workshops) from community-based organizations such as the Canadian Mental Health Association
 - resource lists on stress reduction, resiliency, self-care, and overall wellness
 - additional communication efforts to address concerns
 - staff-led wellness practices (e.g. meditation challenge, walking meetings)

Health & Safety

- Libraries should ensure they have appropriate policies and practices related to employee leaves resulting from illness and/or quarantine. As part of recovery planning, libraries should review HR policies including attendance management programs, short term disability/sick leave policies, and other relevant programs to determine how the workplace consequences of a pandemic will be managed going forward.
- Employers have a duty to ensure a safe working environment and employees have the right to refuse unsafe work. Your organization's Joint Health and Safety team is a great forum for taking a proactive and collective approach to workplace safety. Consult provincial legislation and OHS resources for the most relevant information in your jurisdiction.
- Libraries must carefully review their obligations to provide a safe workplace, for instance by:
 - ensuring appropriate levels of cleaning of the facilities
 - providing approved cleaning supplies and training on the proper use of cleaning supplies and protective equipment
 - implementing practices consistent with direction from public health (e.g. ensuring compliance with physical distancing requirements)
- Check with your local jurisdictions and public health authorities to identify your organization's need for PPE.
 - Begin with a risk assessment of exposure and potential for transmission. Factors assessed would include frequency of contact with others and the existence of physical barriers in the workplace. Currently, PPE is seen as one tool in a broader containment plan that must include physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and cleaning protocol for surfaces.

- There may be supply chain issues related to PPE.
- Staff must be provided with training on the safe use of any PPE being used, for instance on the proper procedures for donning and doffing masks and gloves.
- The library will need to ensure safe disposal for disposable PPE.
- Staff may be permitted to use self-sourced masks/gloves, in which case the library should still have standards for safe use, disposal, and cleanliness.
- Use of masks is only recommended in combination with excellent hand hygiene, since wearing a mask is demonstrated to increase contact with the face.
- Estimates suggest that there has been a 20-30% increase in domestic violence resulting from the pandemic lockdown. Workers facing abuse and violence may struggle with performing their responsibilities and may be at risk by abusers who may follow them to the workplace. Some provinces specifically cite domestic violence in their OHS legislation. Managers should be able to recognize the signs of abuse and be familiar with the library's policies for intervening in cases of suspected domestic violence and ensure staff have access to related supports.

Staff Recalls

- The pandemic has resulted in work interruptions (e.g. layoffs, emergency leaves) in many library systems.
- In unionized environments, the CBA will typically provide recall language that must be followed for staff who have been laid off. Sometimes, these clauses will provide guidance for bumping procedures, if only parts of the workforce are to be recalled at any given time.
- It is important to keep lines of communication open between unions and management, especially in times of change and uncertainty so that there is a shared understanding for how to move forward. Shared understandings may be expressed in letters of understanding.

Remote Work Policies

- Given the public service and on-site responsibilities of many library employees, working from home will not be possible for all team members. Having said that, there may be times during the course of the pandemic when escalating infection rates and guidance from public health authorities compel or encourage employers to ensure that anyone who can work from home, does so.
- It will be important for libraries to build and implement work from home policies to promote the continuing health and safety of their team members, while ensuring that the needs of the organization are met.
- As employees return to the workplace, consider scheduling practices that reduce the risk of spread of the virus. For instance, employees in one department might be divided into teams that alternate working at home and on site, thus limiting opportunities for infection.

TEAM CULTURE & COMPETENCIES

Agile Culture

- An agile approach to project management may be productively applied to initiatives to redesign Library services in a world impacted by, and recovering from, a pandemic.

- Agile approaches involve iterations and incremental steps leading to project success. Frequently applied in the software industry, agile approaches allow for rapid deployment of solutions, followed by feedback, course adjustments, and iterations to ensure solutions are advancing and continuously improving as quickly as possible.
- Another key feature of agile approaches is ensuring that cross-functional teams are engaged, so that the right decision makers are involved at every step and empowered to move the project forward. In terms of recovery plans for public libraries, such an approach has considerable benefits, ensuring that different departments including public service, HR, IT and others are informed, involved, and contributing along the way.

Managing Change

- Strong change management is doubly important in times of uncertainty and crisis. Diverse reactions to change from team members from all levels of the organization may be magnified in this time, running the gamut from those who are energized by the opportunity to problem solve and innovate to those who are demotivated by a dynamic environment in which they are feeling a loss of control or voice. It is indispensable to be highly reflective as employees, leaders, and organization about the urgent need for change and the processes being used to advance change during a crisis.
 - Set the stage for change by communicating effectively not only the kinds of changes we will be facing together, but also the guiding principles to be used (principles like *safety first*, *supporting communities*, and *working together*).
 - Keep people informed by communicating early and often, while also giving them an opportunity to contribute their questions and concerns so that team members feel heard and respected. With fewer opportunities to gather in person, use virtual methods of synchronous (e.g. live virtual town halls, teleconferences) and asynchronous (e.g. FAQs, regular email updates) communication.
 - Work across boundaries in your organization, bringing team members from different departments into active and focussed project or action groups. This kind of involvement will help ensure that as many team members as possible are, and feel they are, engaged in the decisions being made and will help ensure that they support, or buy into, new directions which they themselves have influenced.

Motivation & Engagement

- Keeping teams engaged is more important than ever in moments of crisis.
- Promote a shared vision of the role of the Library in the community during and after a pandemic; team members are generally highly motivated to work at public libraries because of the positive difference their work makes in the community, so continuing to focus on those impacts through communication and, where possible and safe, through new programs and initiatives, can be highly motivating.
- Consider staff engagement surveys as a way to gauge the extent to which the team is feeling motivated and involved in their work and the kinds of barriers they are facing or concerns they have. Be sure to respond to survey results by sharing them widely with teams and by acknowledging concerns directly and making concrete changes to address them wherever possible.

- Recognizing team achievements during crises will assist in maintaining a positive culture in difficult times. Recognition can be as simple as personal emails from management to acknowledge staff who have given exceptional service through virtual programs or departments that have innovated new ways to work remotely or with social distancing.
- While it may seem that there is no time to invest in professional learning at this time, it may also be a unique opportunity for teams to be motivated and energized by learning new skills and exploring new perspectives, especially those relevant to the current crisis (e.g. gaining expertise in facilitating online programs).

Supporting the Development of New Skills

- There has been a shift in public librarianship to developing the skills to deliver trauma informed service models for patrons who are experiencing any number of barriers, including homelessness or mental health issues. The same tools can be used to assist patrons during or after a pandemic, the economic impact of which may well exacerbate already existing struggles being experienced by patrons.
- Related to trauma informed service models, compassion burnout can affect all levels of an organization. Consider developing a checklist that supervisors can use to monitor their teams' well-being. Modelling empathy within your organization sets the trend for your frontline workers to do the same with the public.
- Ensure we are supporting teams in developing the skills required to communicate in new, largely virtual environments, including working from home or remote locations. Video conferencing has become commonplace for remote working. There are many tutorials on using Microsoft Teams, Webex, and Zoom, available on Lynda, Percipio, and YouTube. Video and audio meeting etiquette starts with being prepared, muting your microphone when not speaking, and limiting any background distractions.
- Ensure that teams identify and gain the skills needed to deliver services and programming successfully in online environments. New skills to be developed include how to engage audiences in virtual environments and how to use the advanced features of virtual meeting software to create the best experience for attendees.
- It is important to ensure that teams have a strong understanding of copyright as it relates to the delivery of virtual story times and other related programs

Leadership

- Identifying and developing the skills and competencies of leaders during a pandemic and recovery from it is key. Seek out resources to support leaders in developing skills and expertise in such areas as:
 - leading and supporting virtual and remote teams, including supporting employees in taking care of themselves and avoiding burnout
 - coaching employees in times of change and uncertainty and at a time when the boundaries between personal and professional lives may be blurred
 - identifying what to put in place and how to communicate to ensure teams feel as safe as possible coming back to work
 - inspiring confidence in teams during times of change and disruption and supporting employees in constructively moving past self-doubt
 - understanding the varied risks confronting the organization and how to communicate and address them

- While library leaders may have networks to support them and professional learning options they can rely on individually, organizations may support library leaders in this unique time in a number of different ways:
 - consider a short needs assessment for your teams where they can self identify skills and competencies requiring development
 - tap into existing e-learning platforms through your Library's subscription (Lynda, Gale) and make time each week to develop skills (note: audited, non-certificate Coursera content is usually free, and many vendors are currently offering free training sessions and webinars, such as Vital Smarts)
 - investigate psychological safety and first aid concepts and guidelines, and how those principles can contribute to team and individual resilience
 - approach local colleges and universities to see if they can partner or assist with online leadership support, as they are often well positioned to offer this content

Section 3: Stories from the Field

- In the Okanagan Regional Library system, which covers a large geographical footprint, staffing virtual services with teams from different geographical areas gave team members an opportunity to work with colleagues with whom they would normally never collaborate; creating these relationships helped unify the team as one system.
- Having staff working away from public service points has allowed many library systems to hold all-staff town hall meetings virtually. In many locations, this opportunity for all staff to connect together has been a rarity in the past, but with the acceleration of the implementation of virtual meeting software in libraries across the country may become part of public library corporate culture going forward. Even single-location team meetings, where some employees are at home and some on site at the same time, can bring everyone together for regular updates and conversations.
- One way in which Library leaders continue to learn, particularly in times of crisis, is through collaboration among Canadian library systems. Informal and formal resource, idea, and document sharing across libraries has been an incredibly powerful way to ensure we are developing and advancing solutions as quickly as possible, without reinventing the wheel. CULC/CBUC is just one example of an organization you may be able to participate in to support your ongoing learning in the field. Provincial and regional organizations have rich resources as well.
- Many libraries have created supplemental learning calendars to augment existing training and professional learning, with a focus on emerging priorities. They have encouraged staff to evaluate the learning, share new discoveries, and completed courses may be tracked in employee records. Best practice has been to break up the learning into bite size chunks to encourage staff not to engage in webinar marathons.
- Work disruption is a potential opportunity to pilot new training on smaller staff contingents still working from home or on site. Calgary Public Library, for example, initiated Reconciliation and Diversity and Inclusion training so it could be refined prior to call backs, and new training would be ready for staff upon return.

Section 4: Resources

HR RESOURCES

- Alberta. Workplace Guidance for Business Owners.
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-workplace-guidance-for-business-owners.pdf>
- Alberta Health Services. Donning and Doffing.
https://ahamms01.https.internapcdn.net/ahamms01/Content/AHS_Website/Information_For/if-hp-ipc-donning-and-doffing.mp4
- Alberta Human Rights Commission. COVID-19 and Human Rights.
<https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/employment/Pages/covid19.aspx>
- British Columbia Human Rights Clinic. Top Ten Human Rights for Employers during COVID-19. <https://bchrc.net/top-ten-human-rights-tips-for-employers-during-covid-19/>
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. Violence in the Workplace: Domestic Violence. https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence_domestic.html
- Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail. Questions et réponses – COVID-19. <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/salle-de-presse/covid-19/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>
- Commission des droits de la personne du Nouveau-Brunswick. La Loi sur les droits de la personne du Nouveau Brunswick et la COVID-19.
<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/hrc-cdp/PDF/COVID19-LDPDN.pdf>
- DELL Technologies. Work from Home Policy.
<https://corporate.delltechnologies.com/content/dam/delltechnologies/assets/whoweare/resources/dell-technologies-flexible-work-policy.pdf>
- Goldblatt Partners. Accommodating Workers and their Families during the COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://goldblattpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/Accommodating-workers-and-families-April-17.pdf>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. COVID-19 and Ontario's Human Rights Code – Questions and Answers. http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/covid-19-and-ontario%E2%80%99s-human-rights-code-%E2%80%93-questions-and-answers-0
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. OHRC Policy Position on Medical Documentation to be provided when a disability-related accommodation request is made.
<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ohrc-policy-position-medical-documentation-be-provided-when-disability-related-accommodation-request>
- Ministry of Health, Ontario. COVID-19 Guidance: Essential Workplaces.
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_essential_workplaces_guidance.pdf
- Public Health Ontario. Mask use for Non-Health Workers.
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/2020/05/factsheet-covid-19-masks-not-healthcare.pdf?la=en>
- Workplace Safety and Prevention Service. Post-Pandemic Business Playbook.
<https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/post-pandemic-business-playbook.pdf?ext=.pdf>

- Workplace Safety and Prevention Services. Guidance on Health and Safety for Curbside Pickups and Delivery Services during COVID-19.
<https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-delivery-service-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf>

TEAM CULTURE & COMPETENCIES RESOURCES

- American Library Association ECourse: How to be a great boss during a crisis.
<https://www.alastore.ala.org/content/be-great-boss-during-crisis-ecourse>
- Association for Project Management. What is agile Project Management?
<https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/find-a-resource/agile-project-management/>
- BDO. How to Effectively Host a Virtual Meeting. <https://www.bdo.ca/en-ca/insights/advisory/human-resources/how-to-effectively-host-a-virtual-meeting/>
- Burton, Paul and Kelly O'Neill. Charting a Crisis: How to Adjust Business Continuity Plans During the COVID-19 crisis. <https://www.teksystems.com/en/insights/article/charting-a-crisis>
- Calgary Public Library. Psychological First Aid.
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Section 5: Authors & Acknowledgements

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library

Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library

Andrea Cecchetto, Director, Service Excellence, Markham Public Library

Roberta Kuzyk-Burton, Learning and Development Specialist, Calgary Public Library

Mark Reinelt, System Circulation Co-ordinator, Okanagan Regional Library

TOOLKIT DISCLAIMER : This Toolkit and its parts were developed by a series of working groups comprised of CULC/CBUC members in May 2020. CULC/CBUC has endeavoured to make the content relevant to most public libraries, however, all libraries operate within their own context, and any use of this toolkit must consider a library's particular 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.

Appendix

Public Library Services Post COVID-19 Survey Summary

SURVEY RESPONSES

Public libraries were asked to identify their priorities as they plan their return to offering services to their communities.

The top three priorities for helping communities were helping people be informed and connected, supporting people experiencing social isolation, and helping lower income families and groups.

As part of their recovery plans, libraries want to do more of the following six options: delivering virtual technology support, buying digital materials, offering adult digital programs and digital story times for children, advocating for broadband, and lending materials through curbside pickup. Sixty-five percent want to see buying of physical items continue as it had pre-COVID-19. There were no activities libraries wanted to reduce.

Respondents agreed strongly that staff health and safety are paramount in re-opening efforts. Other top considerations were community needs, responding to customers' new behaviours, and continuing to offer services the communities use most.

Focusing recovery efforts on specific target groups was controversial. Focusing on vulnerable populations was chosen by 44% while 30% chose children and families. However, many comments were received noting the difficulty of choosing to serve one group compared to another, and the desire to serve the whole community.

Survey respondents identified they need the most help with adapting library spaces and services in line with best practices for health and safety. There was a particular concern with dealing with physical materials. It was reiterated that staff need to be assured of their health and safety when returning to work.

SURVEY COMMENTS

Of all comments received, the most frequent were about library staff health and safety, and other staff concerns, such as staff morale and involvement in planning.

Next, there was a wide range of opinion on whether libraries should focus on work with specific user groups as they re-open. Some respondents were passionate about serving vulnerable individuals in new ways, while others looked forward to the return of basic services to traditional library users. Another division was seen between respondents who see opportunity in the current necessary focus on digital services, and those who hope physical formats and library visits will rebound to their previous levels.

Many respondents pondered how libraries will manage public health and safety – not only when dealing with physical materials, but library spaces and their use as gathering places. Numerous

comments were made about the timing of reopening public libraries, how it might be phased in, and what kind of framework would be helpful for the broadest range of libraries.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Respondents 1444

English responses 80%

Library staff 55%

French responses 20%

Library management 34%

Other 8%

Think Tank Steering Committee

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library

Appointed to the CEO role in 2019, Mark first joined Calgary Public Library as Director of Service Delivery in August 2014. Prior to his work at the public library, Mark had taken on a series of leadership roles in provincial and regional library systems, including at Alberta Justice, Canada Revenue Agency, and Alberta Health Services. At Calgary Public Library, Mark has been at the forefront of any number of key projects and initiatives, including expanding library service to new communities, increasing participation in libraries through enhanced virtual and mobile services and sustained growth in programming and outreach, and developing strong partnerships with key government and community groups, including Calgary's school boards.

Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library

Before joining Burlington Public Library in 2018 as their chief executive officer, Ms. Barrie held various senior level positions at Brantford and Hamilton public libraries and was the CEO of Grimsby Public Library. She holds a Master of Library & Information Studies from McGill University, a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art History) from Concordia University, and certificates in leadership from McMaster University, University of Toronto, and University of Victoria. Lita is active in the library profession as a frequent presenter at conferences and as a sessional lecturer at University of Toronto, Faculty of Information, where she also co-founded the Public Library Leaders Program in collaboration with CULC. She has also served in many senior volunteer roles with the Ontario Library Association.

Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library

Christina is passionate about the role of libraries in building communities and exploring ideas, and is fascinated by the way technology is changing how we read, learn and connect through libraries. Over the past 20 years, Christina's library roles have spanned collections, digital licensing, technology training, IT and web, project management, legal research and public service, in both public and special libraries. Christina is active in policy and advocacy both nationally and internationally in areas related to digital access, copyright and the role of libraries. She is currently vice-chair of the CFLA Copyright Committee, and a member of the IFLA Copyright and Other Legal Matters Advisory Committee and eLending working group. Christina holds a BA and an MLIS from the University of British Columbia.

Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada

Jefferson was appointed the Executive Director of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in 2008. He has served in a number of support roles for the Canadian library community for almost 30 years including work with the Ontario Library Association, Knowledge Ontario among others. He is the Principal of Gap. Point. Reach. Inc. a Canadian consultancy that works with organizations both in and outside of the library sector.

Teresa Johnson, Director of Research and Planning, New Brunswick Public Library Service

Teresa has 19 years experience in public library policy and strategic planning and oversees the research and planning of emerging services within the multi-branch system. She is a founding member of the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and current member of the CELA Board of Directors.

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries – CULC/CBUC Exec Rep

Åsa Kachan is the CEO & Chief Librarian for Halifax Public Libraries where she oversees 420 staff working across the 14-branch library system. Prior to her role with Halifax Public Libraries, Åsa spent 16 years in senior administrative roles within universities, most recently serving as the Assistant Vice-President Enrolment Management & Registrar for Dalhousie University between 2004 and 2014. Åsa volunteers her time with a number of community organizations, including serving as Chair of the Governance Committee of the United Way of Halifax. She also sits on the Advisory Board for the Faculty of Management, Dalhousie University. In 2018 Åsa was appointed to the Governing Council of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for a three-year term.

Kitty Pope, Chief Executive Officer, Windsor Public Library

Kitty was born and raised in Windsor Ontario and graduated from Western with a Masters of Library and Information Science. She has been a teacher/librarian, museum curator, broadcaster, author, adjunct lecturer, blogger and best of all a CEO. Her career has taken her from the Canadian arctic to the United Arab Emirates, to Saskatchewan, Calgary, Peoria Illinois, Guelph and now home to Windsor as CEO of the mighty Windsor Public Library.

Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Victoria Public Library

Maureen Sawa is the Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL). In her 9 years as CEO, Maureen has led GVPL through transformative change, including the establishment of GVPL's innovative community-inspired librarianship portfolio service model. Before moving to Victoria, Maureen was the Director of Public Service for the Hamilton Public Library for eight years. Prior to that, she held a variety of leadership positions at the Kitchener Public Library. The author of two children's books, Maureen holds a Masters of Information Studies from the University of Toronto. Throughout her career, Maureen has been recognized for her collaborative and non-traditional approach to library service and her pioneering work with cross-sector partnerships. She is a past Chair of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council and a founding member of the Ottawa Declaration Working Group. She continues to represent public library interests on a variety of provincial and national working and advisory groups.

Leslie Weir, National Librarian – Library and Archives Canada Rep

Leslie Weir became the Librarian and Archivist of Canada on August 30, 2019. Before coming to Library and Archives Canada, Ms. Weir was the University librarian at the University of Ottawa from 2003 to 2018. During her tenure as University Librarian, she founded the School of Information Studies in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ottawa, and was cross-appointed as a professor. Leslie has guided many transformative moments at the Canadian Research Knowledge Network and research libraries in Canada. She is one of the founding architects of Scholars Portal, the state-of-the-art research infrastructure in Ontario universities that brings together information resources and services in support of research and learning, and served as Chair of the Ontario Council of University Libraries from 2010 to 2012. Leslie served as President of Canadiana.org, where she oversaw the introduction of the Heritage Project, in collaboration with Library and Archives Canada, to digitize and make openly accessible some 60 million Heritage archival images. She also served as President of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries from 2007 to 2009 and the Ontario Library Association in 2017.

Thank you to the Working Group Members

ASSUMPTIONS & TEMPLATES

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library
Leslie Weir, National Librarian, LAC

CONSULTATIONS

Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library
Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des
Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada
Darla Muzzerall, Manager, Research and Analysis, Halifax Public Libraries

GOVERNANCE

Jeff Barber, Library Director & Chief Executive Officer, Regina Public Library
Vickery Bowles, City Librarian, Toronto Public Library
Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library
Marie D. Martel, EBSI, Université de Montréal
Pilar Martinez, Chief Executive Officer, Edmonton Public Library
Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer, Hamilton Public Library

COLLECTIONS

Mary Cavanagh, School of Information Studies, University of Ottawa
Michael Ciccone, Chief Executive Officer, London Public Library
Sharon Day, Director, Branch Services and Collections, Edmonton Public Library
Teresa Johnson, Director, Research and Planning, New Brunswick Public Library Service
Marie D. Martel, EBSI, Université de Montréal
Edmund Salt, President, Whitehots Inc.
Chantale Saulnier, Public Services Development Librarian, New Brunswick Public Library
Service

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Mary Kapusta, Director, Communications, Calgary Public Library
Carol Nelson, Director, Planning and Communications, Vancouver Public Library
Kitty Pope, Chief Executive Officer, Windsor Public Library
Daphne Wood, Director, Library Services, Planning and Engagement, Greater Victoria Public
Library
Chris Woodrow, Director, Corporate Services, Windsor Public Library

INFORMATION SERVICES

Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library
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

PROGRAMMING

Evette Berry, Service Delivery Manager, Calgary Public Library
Karen Dahl, Senior Manager, Programming and Community Engagement, Halifax Public Libraries
Penny-Lynn Fielding, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Kitchener Public Library
Tracy Kendrick, Co-ordinator, Public Services, Greater Victoria Public Library
Carrie Kitchen, Service Design Lead, Calgary Public Library
Shauna May, Service Delivery Manager, Calgary Public Library
Jennifer Rowan, Co-ordinator, Public Services, Greater Victoria Public Library
Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Victoria Public Library
Lisa Radha Weaver, Director, Collections & Program Development, Hamilton Public Library

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Amanda Fullerton, Manager, Service Design, Halifax Public Libraries
Terry Gallagher, Senior Manager, Finance and Facilities, Halifax Public Libraries
Lisa Hardy, Facilities Design Lead, Calgary Public Library
Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries

STAFFING

Mark Asberg, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Public Library
Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Public Library
Andrea Cecchetto, Director, Service Excellence, Markham Public Library
Roberta Kuzyk-Burton, Learning and Development Specialist, Calgary Public Library
Mark Reinelt, System Circulation Co-ordinator, Okanagan Regional Library

SUPPORT & ADMINISTRATION

Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada
Jennifer Marriott, Associate, Gap. Point. Reach. Inc. and Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada