

Priest Lake Public Library Reopening Plan

Introduction

Governor Brad Little recently extended the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” directive to last through April 30th. All libraries are classified as non-essential: therefore the Priest Lake Public Library will remain closed to the public and to all non-essential staff operations through April 30, 2020 (based on action by library board).

However, at some point after April 30th the library will reopen, though it is unlikely the library will immediately resume full & regular operations since there is a high likelihood that the COVID-19 virus could still be present in the community to some degree. Safety will be the top priority. The very thing we strive to achieve—engaging the community and filling up the library—is exactly what makes our library vulnerable so we must be careful during these unknown times. Therefore, the library is planning several tiers of modified operations in order to balance safety and service for staff and patrons. These tiers are based off guidelines for opening up Idaho which can be found at rebound.idaho.gov.

Governor Brad Little, with the help of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and guidance issued by President Donald Trump and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has established a data-driven approach to opening up Idaho’s economy. The approach reduces the risk of COVID-19 to Idaho’s most vulnerable population and preserves capacity in our healthcare system, while opening up businesses safely. From an economic standpoint, Idaho’s rebound from COVID-19 starts with employee and consumer confidence, which leads into business stability and growth and eventually promotion and attraction.

The Library will employ best practices developed over the COVID-19 crisis by essential businesses, including social distancing, enhanced cleaning & disinfecting surfaces, and posted signage throughout the building reminding patrons of handwashing & keeping safe distancing from others.

This document is a guide for our gradual reopening. It uses a traffic light approach, with red, yellow, and green steps as public health guidance evolves. Red is the most restrictive, while green is meant to represent the “new normal” level of service. Within each color category, content is divided to cover the library’s four main areas of operation: facilities, collections, meetings, and services. This document is subject to change as needs arise. All criteria must be met before the library advances to the next stage of reopening. We will review the criteria every two weeks to assess if criteria are met, or continue to be met, so the library can move to the next stage. **To advance to the next stage, all criteria must be met. If the criteria indicates trends are beginning to move the wrong direction, or there is evidence that a stage has adversely impacted rates, stages may have to be extended or reversed.** Dates shown in this document are estimated timelines only and are subject to change.

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Red- STAGE 1 After all criteria met

March 23rd-April 30th***

The red tier represents the library in shutdown mode. Community travel restrictions are in place, and the library is closed to nonessential business. Staff will work from home working on professional development and help plan new & alternative services. Some staff may come into the library to perform essential business.

Facilities (Red)

Library facilities are completely closed to the public. Patrons are not allowed in the building. The facility is shut down. Some staff may need to come into the building for essential business.

Collections (Red)

The physical collection is closed. The courier does not run between libraries. Due dates are automatically extended and overdue/ lost items do not block patrons from accessing digital resources. Staff working from home add to and promote our online collections like Overdrive & Freegal to provide a semi balance of our regular collection.

Programs & Meetings (Red)

All library programs and public use of the meeting rooms are cancelled. Some library programs may be offered online on the library Facebook page.

Services (Red)

Physical services are closed along with the facility. Staff will answer emails sent to the info & circulation accounts as necessary, and respond to voicemails when possible. Staff may or may not be in the building to answer calls.

Every two weeks: re-evaluation against criteria to determine feasibility to advance from one stage to the next.

*** ALL CRITERIA MUST BE MET TO MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE AND DATES ARE ESTIMATED TARGETS AND CAN CHANGE AT ANYTIME

Idaho Rebounds-Guidelines for opening up Idaho

Yellow – STAGE 2 After all criteria met

If no significant increase in cases and criteria remain met

May 1st – May 17th***

The Yellow tier represents modified operations. The library is not open as a public space, but some services are available. Curbside service is available Monday-Friday 10 A.M. - 4 P.M. Notary, copies and faxing will all be available. If you need a computer, please ask.

Facilities (Yellow)

The facility is closed to public use, but staff may return to work in the building. All vulnerable Idahoans should continue to self-quarantine. Staff will maintain social distancing, including keeping ample space at staff meetings and during the course of normal work. Staff will perform enhanced hygiene measures like wiping keyboards and workstations regularly. Masks and gloves will be made available for staff working in the building. The Book Barn is open.

Collections (Yellow)

The physical collection is partially available by curbside service only. All items returned in the book drops will be sanitized and quarantined for three days before they are checked in. Patrons with overdue items may check out with a staff override, and patrons who turn in long-overdue lost items may have those items renewed by staff & have the lost status removed.

While there is as of yet no consensus on the best method to ensure circulated material is free of coronavirus, a conservative estimate for safe quarantine of paper & plastic material (like library books) is three days. Preliminary research indicates that time is a more effective sanitizer for coronavirus than Clorox wipes. The library has inquired with the American Library Association and the Institute of Museum and Library Services for definitive guidance. The library quarantines all returned materials for three days.

Courier is running. The library fills holds for patrons. The holds feature is reactivated, and patrons may pick up items via curbside delivery. Physical item ordering resumes with new materials shipped to the library and made available to patrons.

Programs & Meetings (Yellow)

Programs and meetings remain closed. Some library programs may be offered online on the library Facebook page.

Services (Yellow)

Library staff are available to answer calls. Curb-side service only. The library will remain closed to patrons. The library will run on a Monday-Friday 10 A.M. - 4 P.M. modified schedule for the duration of Condition Yellow. Notary, copies and faxing will all be available. If you need a computer, please ask.

Every two weeks: re-evaluation against criteria to determine feasibility to advance from one stage to the next.

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Idaho Rebounds-Guidelines for opening up Idaho

Green – STAGE 3 After all criteria met

If no significant increase in cases and criteria remain met

May 18th- DATE PENDING***

The Green tier represents the “new normal” level of service. The doors are reopened to the public and business is more or less back on. Services see some modifications from previous standards with a nod to public health recommendations. Business protocols set by the governor might limit certain things.

Facilities (Green)

The building is open to the public. Depending on the criteria met, we may need to limit the amount of patrons and staff allowed in the building at a time. To start out with we will be limiting the library to no more than 10 people inside at a time. Maintaining social distancing will be important. New signage throughout the building asks people to stay six feet apart from others and not to enter if they are sick. Doors are propped open wherever possible in order to minimize unnecessary surface contact. The Book Barn is open.

Continued enhanced cleaning & disinfecting, library staff during the day will be sanitizing all frequently touched surfaces. This includes keyboards, screens, mice, and counters. Wipes are available for patrons to sanitize surfaces at public computer stations, and staff make regular sweeps when computers are unoccupied to wipe them down. Some public computer stations may be turned off or removed so that users maintain more physical distance from each other.

Masks and gloves will be made available for staff. It is possible all patrons entering the library will also need to have masks on.

Collections (Green)

The library is open for business and the courier is running.

For check-in, all incoming material is added to a repository bin and placed in quarantine space. Material won't be checked in until the quarantine period of three days is over. Patrons with overdue items may check out or use computers with a staff override, and patrons who turn in long-overdue lost items may have those items renewed by staff & have the lost status removed.

Programs & Meetings (Green)

Library sponsored programs and meetings are back open. Events scheduled in library spaces require six foot separation for social distancing. The library will follow public health guidelines for maximum group size. It is possible programs and events will be moved to outside on the lawn.

As noted below under Services (Green), some popular library programs may need to be reimagined or suspended to keep the library in line with current public health guidance on gathering sizes. We will have to go craft & book bundles available.

Services (Green)

The library is open and fully staffed. Some services are modified to respect hygiene and social distancing. Staff aren't expected to police patron social distancing.

Every two weeks: re-evaluation against criteria to determine feasibility to advance from one stage to the next.

***** ALL CRITERIA MUST BE MET TO MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE AND DATES ARE ESTIMATED TARGETS AND CAN CHANGE AT ANYTIME**

Idaho Rebounds-Guidelines for opening up Idaho

Assistance with computers will be limited to what staff can verbally explain to patrons, as sharing computing surfaces or space around screens cannot be accomplished within the limits imposed by social distancing. We don't want staff leaning over/ in front of patrons, or using their mouse for them.

Toys, games, puzzles, Legos, art supplies and other shared materials in the children's area will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Some items, like stuffed animals, may be impossible to properly sanitize and are therefore kept in a back room until they are safe to bring out again.

Summer reading could present special challenges this year and staff involved in a summer reading group will meet to determine what needs to be modified, reimaged, or eliminated for this summer. More details will come on this at a later date.

Children's programs might be modified. Online programming on the library Facebook page will remain. Staff will make sure all in-person children's programs are practicing social distancing. The library will follow public health guidelines for maximum group size. Hand-washing will be required for all who participate.

Conclusion

The library looks forward to serving Priest Lake again after the "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order has been lifted. This plan covers a variety of levels of service based on anticipated changes to the regulatory environment, although like all plans this one will likely require modification due to unpredictable circumstances. Once the local health district advises, we are eager to lift the remaining restrictions and resume normal service. We will not reopen the library until we can ensure the health and safety of our staff and patrons. Safety will be the top priority. The very thing we strive to achieve-engaging the community and filling up the library-is exactly what makes our library vulnerable so we must be careful during these unknown times. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

-PRIEST LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD AND STAFF