

White Oak Library District COVID-19 Response Plan

Governor Pritzker has issued his **Restore Illinois Plan** to describe the different levels of risk and recovery during the State's return to normalcy from this pandemic. While the library's actions are not in any way dictated by the Governor, tying the steps in the library's plan to the Governor's phases will make it easier for all to know what phase of recovery the library is in at any given time.

It is important to remember that this pandemic is fluid and at any time over the next year or more we may experience sharp increases in the number of COVID-19 cases here in Illinois. As such we need to be prepared to move up or down this ladder of phases as is dictated by common sense and the responsibility for public and staff safety.

Phase 1 – Rapid Spread

State of Illinois response: Strict stay-at-home and social distancing guidelines are put into place, and only essential businesses may remain open.

White Oak Library District response: All branches will close to the public. Staff will shelter in place at home. The only work being done within our facilities during this phase must be deemed essential / crucial by the Director and will be performed by the Director, a Manager, a Supervisor, or other staff deemed essential to the task. Only tasks of the utmost necessity will be performed at the libraries, and staff performing these tasks will distance / isolate themselves from each other while doing so. Online and virtual services will continue (as in all phases of this plan) and as always library administration will seek to enhance these services in any way possible. Due dates will be extended, fines suspended, and external book drops will remain open to accept the return of materials. All returned materials will be quarantined for 4 days before check-in and further handling (materials quarantine times are subject to change as the science behind this develops).

Phase 2 – Flattening the Curve

State of Illinois response: Non-essential retail stores may reopen for curbside pickup and delivery. All Illinois residents are directed to properly wear a face covering or mask when outside of their home. Residents may begin enjoying outdoor activities like golf, boating, and fishing while practicing social distancing.

White Oak Library District response: The Director as well as the Management Team and Supervisors will work some of their regular hours inside the buildings to accomplish essential planning and tasks while maintaining social distancing practices. Whenever possible, online tools such as Zoom will be used for meetings to keep people isolated and safe. Library administration will work to acquire necessary personal protective supplies needed for subsequent phases, including but not limited to hand sanitizer, masks, face shields, gloves, etc. Administration and staff will develop plans to launch curbside pickup service and limited patron service inside our facilities in the first instance of Phase 3. Should we backslide to Phase 2 after reaching higher phases, curbside pickup and other services will be reassessed to determine viability and best practices moving forward.

In preparation for moving upward to Phase 3, certain pieces of furniture will be moved into storage to help maintain safety and social distancing.

Due dates will remain extended, fines suspended, and external book drops will remain open to accept the return of materials. All returned materials will be quarantined for 4 days before check-in and further handling (materials quarantine times are subject to change as the science behind this develops).

Phase 3 – Recovery

State of Illinois response: Manufacturing, offices, retail, barbershops, and salons can reopen to the public with capacity and other limits and safety precautions in place. Gatherings of 10 people or fewer are allowed. Face coverings or masks and social distancing are still the norm.

White Oak Library District response: Staff will initially return to work as needed and scheduled by their immediate supervisor / manager. All staff will strictly adhere to the safety practices and procedures outlined by library Administration at all times. Good judgment will be needed among staff members. If a staff member gets to their assigned workstation and they are able to maintain proper social distancing from fellow staff members and/or patrons, it is fine for them to remove their face covering / mask so long as they are not in public view. However, at the first indication that they will not be able to maintain proper social distancing they must again don their masks. Trips to the restroom or break room should be assumed to contain dangers and masks should be worn at these times. Frequent hand washing will be the norm as well as use of hand sanitizer where appropriate. Any staff emptying the book drops should wear appropriate gloves and a mask. Any staff member working in a public area of the library should at a minimum maintain proper social distancing and wear a mask, and where necessary they should also wear a face shield and gloves depending on the situation.

Facilities staff will resume daily cleaning of our buildings. In addition to this basic cleaning, all staff will get used to following a routine of periodic cleaning and sanitizing of the most often touched objects in their department or work area.

In this phase, curbside pickup of library materials will start or resume as the case may be. Materials must still be returned by the patrons to the external book drops. All returned materials will be quarantined for 4 days before check-in and further handling (materials quarantine times are subject to change as the science behind this develops). Appropriate personal protective gear will be worn by all staff performing the curbside pickup service. Loan periods and due dates will return to normal, as will any fines or fees assessed. Outreach Services will encourage their patrons to utilize curbside pickup. For those Outreach patrons who cannot take advantage of curbside pickup, we will seek to provide home delivery service.

Staff will begin to develop virtual content such as video story times, video craft programs, online book clubs, etc. As this content is produced it will be shared online via YouTube and relevant social media platforms.

For the initial week of this phase, no patrons will be allowed inside our branch facilities. After week one, we will allow patrons to enter our facilities in a limited fashion and staff work hours will return to their normal levels. However, patrons will be encouraged to “grab and go” and not to linger in the buildings. All patrons 2 years of age or older (who do not have a legitimate medical restriction prohibiting it) will be required to properly wear a form fitting mask or other adequate face covering while inside the library buildings and when waiting to enter the buildings. Any patron refusing to comply with our instructions will be asked to leave and offered our curbside pickup service as needed and appropriate.

To control this process and best insure public and staff safety, during this phase a library staff member will be stationed at the entry door of each Branch facility at all times we are open. This staff member will admit people into the building on a metered basis. Staff will control the flow of patrons entering in order to limit each library gathering space to a safe and appropriate number totaling **10 people or less** (that number includes staff and patrons). Radios will be used for staff communication. A patron's intended use of the library will be determined, and the door person will communicate via radio with the appropriate desk / area within the building to determine if there is capacity to admit that patron. Sound judgment will be used in determining these capacities. Patrons awaiting entry into any Branch facility will be socially distanced from each other outside while awaiting admittance.

With safety in mind, during this phase all public-use computers and the online catalog computers in the Children's Departments will be unavailable for use. No one under the age of 13 will be able to enter our facilities without a parent, guardian, or responsible caretaker. Online catalog computers in the adult areas will also be shut down. Public use computers in the adult areas will be metered to make a lesser number of them available at any given time so that users can be separated and given proper social distancing space from each other. One 15 minute express Internet station will be available for use at each Branch.

Public use of library meeting rooms and study rooms will not be allowed during this phase. Processing of passports will not happen during this phase.

As this phase progresses and staff become comfortable with the new procedures and duties, very small programs may resume, such as a small book group meeting of 9 or fewer patrons + 1 staff member gathered in a large meeting room, and sitting at tables socially distanced well away from one another.

Book donations will not be accepted at the Branch libraries during this phase. Friends of the Library activity will be limited to maintaining the regular Book Nook sale areas as coordinated by each Branch Manager.

See Attachment 1 for the list of defined "gathering zones" in each branch facility.

Phase 4 – Revitalization

State of Illinois response: Gatherings of 50 people or fewer are allowed. Restaurants and bars are allowed to reopen, travel resumes, child care centers and schools reopen under the guidance of the Illinois Department of Public Health. Form-fitting face coverings or masks and social distancing are still the norm.

White Oak Library District response: Everything defined in Phase 3 will continue with the following noted exceptions:

- Age restrictions on patrons wishing to enter our buildings will be lifted, although the *Unattended Child Policy* will remain in effect as it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We will continue to control the flow of patron access, but increase the limit within each library space to a safe and appropriate level not to exceed 50 people (that number includes staff and patrons). It is important to note that many areas of the libraries cannot accommodate 50 people in the best of times.

- The encouragement of patrons to “grab and go” will stop and patrons will be allowed to spend more time in our buildings, use the study rooms, etc. Passport processing will resume.
- Library Outreach Services may resume lobby stops so long as no more than 50 people gather. Alternative service arrangements will be sought for patrons who normally frequent the busier lobby stops.
- Larger in-person programs may resume with up to 50 people in a space (that includes staff and patrons) so long as proper social distancing can be achieved.
- Public use of library meeting rooms and study rooms will be allowed during this phase so long as proper social distancing can be achieved.
- Book donations will be accepted at the Branch libraries during this phase. Friends of the Library activity may return to normal in coordination with each Branch Manager.

Phase 5 – Illinois Restored

State of Illinois response: The economy fully reopens with safety precautions continuing. Conventions, festivals, and large events are permitted, and all businesses, schools, and places of recreation can open with new safety guidance and procedures.

White Oak Library District response: All library branches and services will return to normalcy. Provisions may still need to be in place regarding facial coverings / masks, social distancing, etc. based on recommendations from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

NOTE: Anything contained within this plan is subject to change without notice as new information about this pandemic emerges and best practices are refined.

Unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees on May 26, 2020

Attachment 1 – Public & Staff Gathering Zones Defined

Crest Hill Branch Public Spaces:

Zone 1

Entryway and the “canal zone” (i.e. the book nook, hold pickup shelves, Circulation desk, A/V room, self-checkout, express Internet, and scan/fax machine).

Zone 2

Meeting Room A (or rooms A+B if not separated)

Zone 3

Meeting Room B

Zone 4

Meeting Room C

Zone 5

Quiet Reading Room

Zone 6

Adult Services Room

Zone 7

Teen Room

Zone 8

Computer Lab

Zone 9

Children’s Services Room

Zone 10

Children’s Program Room

Lockport Branch Public Spaces:

Zone 1

The entryway, the main Circulation Desk, the corridor back to/including the book nook, the express Internet station, & the hold pickup shelves.

Zone 2

A/V Room

Zone 3

Children’s Services Room

Zone 4

Children’s Program Room

Zone 5

Meeting room A (or rooms A+B if they are not separated)

Zone 6

Meeting room B

Zone 7

Upstairs Hall and Adult Services Room

Zone 8

Computer Lab

Zone 9

Quiet Reading Room

Zone 10

Teen Room

Romeoville Branch Public Spaces:

Zone 1

The entryway, the “vessel”, the main Circulation Desk, the book nook, the 15 minute express Internet station, and the hold pickup shelves.

Zone 2

Meeting room A

Zone 3

Meeting room B

Zone 4

A/V Room

Zone 5

Children’s Services Room

Zone 6

Children’s Program Room

Zone 7

Adult Services Room

Zone 8

Computer Lab

Zone 9

Teen Room

Zone 10

Quiet Reading Room

In addition to the public spaces defined above, staff should be mindful to practice social distancing and to never exceed the room capacities defined in this plan for the following shared spaces:

Crest Hill Branch – staff break room, circulation work room, adult/children’s work room, IT work room, mechanical room, and various storage areas.

Lockport Branch – staff break room, circulation work room, children’s work room, adult work room, IT work room, mechanical room, and various storage areas.

Romeoville Branch – Outreach Department office, staff break room, Circulation work room, Children’s work room, Adult work room, Technical Services Department, Administration, IT work room, mechanical rooms, and various storage areas.