



Town of Chester Public Library
Expanding Horizons

Town of Chester Public Library COVID-19 Reopening Plan (with an Emphasis on Safety)

Introduction

On 17 March 2020, the Town of Chester Public Library was closed due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic, and by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo and his Executive Order 202 declaring a state disaster emergency and Executive Order 202.6 declaring a 100% workforce reduction for non-essential personnel.

If and when the situation within New York State reaches a level that Governor Cuomo, on the advice of the State's Department of Health, decides to re-open the non-essential businesses within the State, the Board of Trustees of the Town of Chester Public Library sets forth this plan and guideline for a Phased Re-Opening of the Town of Chester Public Library.

Preliminary Conditions to be met:

- The Capital Region of New York State, to which the Town of Chester Public Library belongs, is approved to reopen when it meets the seven criteria required by the State of New York. The approval for a region to reopen is granted by the Governor.
- Upon receiving regional approval to reopen, the state's phased reopening process begins with the additional guidelines and protocols required for NYS Phase 1. (governor.ny.gov)
- Initially, libraries were listed in Phase 4 of the state's reopening process and needed to await approval for the move to Phase 4 to be approved. (Note: The professional organization, New York Library Association (NYLA), is currently lobbying for libraries to be included in Phase 2.)
- On May 20, 2020 an initiative by the New York Library Association (NYLA) in partnership with the Public Libraries Systems Directors advocating for libraries to be included in Phase 2 was approved by the Governor's Office. Warren County, as part of the Capitol Region, had been approved to begin Phase 1 reopening and as such, libraries were allowed to follow "Open-With Restrictions" guidelines. Approval for the region to enter Phase 2 was given on June 3, 2020, clearing the way for public libraries within the Capital Region to move forward with reopening plans, following state and local health and safety laws and guidelines, and relevant Executive Orders.

NOTE: NYS has articulated a 4-phase reopening plan for regions of the state. The Town of Chester Library has developed a 5-phase reopening plan. The “phases” of the state and of the library do not necessarily align or overlap. The Library’s phased reopening plan describes the key features and activities as the library progresses from being completely closed to fully reopened.

Town of Chester Library (TOCL) Phase I: Staff Only; No Public in Library

The Library will be open exclusively to staff to complete essential library work and planning for (TOCL) Phase 2 services. The Library is closed to the public. Library circulation and other public services, other than those provided online, are not yet available to the public.

- The Library Director will determine the library staff work schedule, modifying to support safety requirements
- Library staff will observe required safety procedures such as social distancing practices and required use of PPE (eg, masks, plexiglass shields dividing workstations, etc). PPE will be provided to all staff such as face masks, gloves, eye protection, sanitizers, safety vests and/or clothing covering.
- Regular library staff duties might include continuation of programs and announcements through social media, completion of administrative tasks, reorganization of the library setting and collection, and the planning and setup of procedures and schedule for future reopening phases.
- The Director will institute workable library item quarantine systems and best practice protocols for safe handling of materials and establish sanitation protocols.
- The Director will determine the date to open the outdoor book drop and the receipt of checked out items for the Town of Chester Public Library. No book donations will be accepted.
- All items returned to the book drop will be brought inside the library by staff wearing PPE. Items will be quarantined for 72 hours (or any updated length of time according to best practice procedures available at the time). When quarantine is completed, materials will be processed for return to TOC Library shelves or delivery to home library.

Town of Chester Library (TOCL) Phase 2 Curbside Service; No Public in Library

At this phase of the library’s reopening, services will be provided at curbside only, as no public will be allowed in the library yet. Patrons can request items either through the catalog or by phone; local library holdings only. Appointments will be scheduled for pickup at the designated area outside the Municipal Center.

- The Director will review and/or modify staff schedules employed in Phase 1, as necessary.
- Hours and procedures for curbside delivery, once established, will be publicly announced.
- Procedures for curbside service will be articulated by the Library Director. In terms of **ordering** items for curbside service, procedures might involve patrons requesting items either through the catalog or the phone, limiting requests to TOC Library holdings.

Patrons will be called once their request is prepared in order to arrange a pickup date and time. Library staff will write pickup dates and times on hold slips and stored with items.

- Possible procedures for **picking up** a curbside library request might include a patron calling the library when he/she has arrived at the Municipal Center. Requested items will be placed in a plastic bag and brought to the curbside pick-up location. Details of checking out library items will be determined by the Library Director with attention to procedures for known patrons and those who are not known.

- Return** of borrowed items will continue to be done through the use of the book return dropbox. All returned items will be brought inside the library by staff wearing PPE and quarantined for 72 hours (or any updated length of time according to best practice procedures available at the time), as outlined in the library's Phase 1.

- Staff will be masked when dealing with the public, wearing necessary PPE such as gloves and a mask to deliver items and washing their hands after the deliveries are made. Members of the public should be reminded to be masked for item pick-up.

(6/5, 3:00)