

Pulaski County Public Library

Our Path to Reopening – Providing Library Services in a Public Health Emergency

This document is intended to guide the Library through May 1, 2021.

We're here for you: We're working online to connect you to collections, events, public services, and our staff. We will continuously evaluate our ability to maintain a safe, healthy environment for staff and patrons.

When the pandemic is over, the renovated Library will be a fantastic place to work, study, gather, read, explore, and be creative. We are eager for that day to arrive, but it is not here yet. Pulaski County Public Library continues to adapt its operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and emphasize the safety of our staff and patrons.

While we cannot fully enjoy the renovated space without restrictions, we are inviting you to begin coming back into the building for in-person browsing and checking out library materials using self-check machines.

Meanwhile, the library renovation is wrapping up. The pandemic caused several building supplies to be back-ordered, which delayed construction progress.

We will continue to provide curbside pickup for holds, phone assistance, online activities, ebooks and other digital resources, and other opportunities to connect with the Library at home. We *want* to reopen, but we *need* to do it safely.

Things will feel different from your pre-pandemic library visits. We've created the following guidelines below to help you understand what to expect from your visit.

Patron Safety Procedures

If you come to the Library for one of the services listed below, you will need to follow our safety procedures. We may ask you to leave if you do not adhere to these guidelines. If you need special accommodations, please call (574) 946-3432 to discuss the available options.

- All patrons, over 2 years of age, must wear a mask that fully covers your mouth and nose at all times.
- Whenever possible, only one person from your household should visit at a time.
- If you or anyone in your home is not feeling well, please do not visit the Library.
- We will have a maximum occupancy of people allowed in the building at a time
- Please maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others at all times.
- Only one person or family will be allowed in the elevator at a time.
- Hand sanitizer will be available, and we encourage you to use it.
- Please follow all instructions given to you by our staff.
- Our team will maintain a 6-foot distance from you at all times.

We can only provide limited services at this time. If you do not have a mask when you arrive, we will be happy to give one to you or accommodate you with curbside delivery.

It's been a long time since we've seen you---and we've missed you! As much as we would like to shake your hand or accept the hug you're offering, this is not a practice we are comfortable with. This is difficult for us, but we are trying our best to practice safety first. Please know under our masks, we are as happy to see you back at the Library as you are to be back.

Browsing and Checking Outs

When the library is in Orange, Yellow, or Blue advisory levels, you may visit the Library for in-person browsing for specified intervals of time (15 or 30 minutes) during specified hours.

Patrons and staff should maintain physical distancing. Plexiglas barriers have been placed at service desks, and public seating options have been limited. If you wish to check things out, you will need to use the self-checkout station. You may scan your card, and then scan your library books.

Please note that due to construction, many items are still in storage. You may not find precisely what you're looking for, but our expert staff is here to help. To limit contact, our staff cannot check things out for you.

If you are looking for something in particular, please request a hold on that item for curbside pickup instead. Magazines are unavailable for browsing but can be reserved for curbside pickup. DVDs are unavailable for browsing but can be reserved for curbside pickup or requested at the circulation desk. Print newspapers are unavailable at this time.

Returning Items

Due dates for physical items will follow our normal timeframes for checkouts (two-week loans for books, etc.). Items can be renewed according to our standard loan policies.

For everyone's safety, we cannot touch returned items for several days. If you would like to return items, please utilize the outside book drops in the front or back of the Library. The book drops at the back of the Library are touchless. Due to our quarantine process, we are unable to accept book returns at the circulation desk. All returned items will be placed in a secure area for at least 72 hours before we can process them as returned. Please allow up to one week for these items to come off of your account. Any late fees will be based on the day the item is placed in the book drop; you will not be charged for the days that the item is in quarantine. Donations are prohibited at this time. Any non-library items placed in the book drop will be disposed of.

Computer Use

As of the writing of this document, the library computer lab is under construction. When the lab is available, a limited number of physically distanced computers will be available for use. Time in the computer lab will be limited to the general browsing time limit of the library's current

service level (15 or 30 minutes). Library patrons may use the computer lab for no more than one time interval in the morning and one interval in the afternoon; these intervals cannot be directly back-to-back. Weather permitting, a walk-up computer station will be provided during regular library hours, outside the front of the library. Printing is available from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

To limit contact, no "over-the-shoulder" help will be available at this time. If you need assistance with a personal device, please call to make a virtual one-on-one appointment with a staff member.

Getting Help

We know that this is a confusing time and that these are new expectations for using the Library. If our opening times do not work for you, let's figure it out together! We are willing to schedule visits by appointment as requested, subject to staff availability and any ongoing construction. Give our staff a call Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. at (574) 946-3432, or send us an email info@pulaskicounty.lib.in.us. Let's stay connected in these uncertain times.

Public Meetings and In-person programs

Unfortunately, no in-person programs or public meeting space will occur until a later date. While we can't do programming the way we used to—we are still doing programming! Visit the library website to see what online programs are coming up that might interest you or your family. Follow the Library on Facebook for online programming opportunities and library news!

Contactless Curbside Pickup

You can reserve items online or by phone at (574) 946-3432. To reserve online, log in to your library account on the library website (www.pulaskicounty.lib.in.us). Search the catalog for items you would like to check out. Click reserve.

Our team will get the requested items off the shelf and set them aside for you. Depending on when you make your request and staff availability, this may take up to 24 hours. We will try to fulfill all of your requests, but due to these extraordinary circumstances, we may not be able to fill all requested items simultaneously. When the items you requested are available, our staff will call you. Please wait until you receive that telephone call before coming to the Library. Your items will not be ready until we notify you. We appreciate your patience!

Picking Up Curbside Items

After you receive your telephone call, you will have seven days to pick them up. After seven days, any remaining items will be re-shelved. Follow the signs and park in the designated curbside pickup space.

Once you have arrived in the designated space, stay in your vehicle, and call the Library at 946-3432. We will bring your items out to your car and place them on a hook near your vehicle.

You do not need to have a car to use curbside pickup! Please call the Library when you arrive and wait by the fire hydrant near the front sidewalk. Let the staff member know that you are waiting on the sidewalk. They will put your items on the curbside hook and walk away so that you may have a contactless pickup.

Visits

Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver aged 18 or older when visiting the library. While we enjoy having children at the library and believe that the library is a great place for kids to learn, play, and grow, their safety is of utmost concern to us. From younger children touching and putting things in their mouths to older children wanting to congregate in close proximity, unattended children pose several challenges to maintaining a safe environment. Library staff is unable to supervise unattended children to ensure that appropriate safety measures are being followed. Children who wish to browse for books or use the computer are welcome to visit with an adult.

Are my books safe?

As libraries and museums around the country considered resuming operations and reopening to the public, they recognized the need for clear information on best, safe practices. The Institute of Museum and Library Services joined with other industry leaders to conduct medical research on how long the COVID-19 virus survives on materials prevalent in libraries, archives, and museums. This study is called the Reopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums (REALM) project. (<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html>)

Our team has been following the project's results and have based our safety protocols on their findings. Viruses dry up quickly on paper, and we ask that book pages not be sprayed, wiped, or otherwise made wet, as that would damage the book. You are free to use a disinfectant wipe on the plastic book cover and "quarantine" your books before use. Further, please wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, and not cough or sneeze on the books.

Staff Safety Procedures

- Library staff are required to wear face masks while in the Library's public areas but may remove their masks when working alone in a closed non-public office space.
- Employee Health Screening: Library staff is asked to take their temperatures before each work shift and not report to work if they have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher.

Staff who are experiencing a fever or other CDC-recognized symptoms of COVID-19 are asked to remain at home and contact their health provider.

- Upon arriving at work, staff are instructed to wash their hands for 20 seconds or use sanitizer when a sink is not available.

The Library Board of Trustees and Executive Director have worked diligently to develop a procedure to protect the staff, equipment, and library services during this time. Providing a safe environment is our top priority. We are working with the local health department, local hospital leadership, and following CDC best practices.

All staff members have received training on COVID-19 safety and sanitation protocols, with more comprehensive training taking place as needed. Proper hygiene and frequent handwashing are vital in helping to combat the spread of the virus. With this in mind, the Library has installed a handwashing sink at our circulation desk to allow staff another handwashing option. All staff members have received personal protective equipment and are following the latest expert guidance from the CDC. The Executive Director provides regular communication with staff on expectations and provides additional COVID-19 training opportunities.

Cleaning Products and Protocols

The Library will use cleaning products and protocols that meet CDC/EPA guidelines and are approved for use and effective against viruses, bacteria, and other airborne pathogens. We have worked closely with vendors, distribution partners, and suppliers to procure these resources. The frequency of cleaning and sanitization is increased in high-traffic areas, emphasizing service points, and shared equipment.