The Grey Bruce Health Unit entered Stage 3 of reopening on July 17. In keeping with the gradual approach to reopening the province, Ontario will continue to monitor key public health indicators and some Stage 3 restrictions will be further eased over time when it is safe to do so. In Stage 3, indoor gathering limits increased to a maximum of 50 people. Outdoor gathering limits increased to a maximum of 100 people. In all cases, individuals are required to continue to maintain physical distancing of at least two metres with people from outside their households or social circles.

In Stage 2, libraries were permitted to resume limited on site services. In Stage 3, libraries may reopen for all on-site services, as long as materials that are circulated, returned or accessed within the library are disinfected or quarantined for an appropriate period of time before being recirculated.

This guidance document provides recommendations for libraries as they develop local operating procedures. It is subject to change as new information and guidelines become available.

**Health and Safety Guidelines**

Find sector-specific guidelines and posters to help protect workers, customers and the general public from COVID-19 by visiting the [Resources to prevention COVID-19 in the workplace](#) page.

**Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Library Employers**

**COVID-19 Precautions When Working As A Library Worker**

**Staff Training**

Version 3: July 17, 2020
Before implementing additional services, adequate health and safety training should be provided to staff. This includes:

- Outlining potential risks associated with services offered.
- Proper cleaning and disinfection practices, including handwashing, use of alcohol-based sanitizer or disinfecting products for surfaces.
- Proper procedures for material handling.
- Proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), if deemed necessary
- Library staff should also follow general health and safety guidelines when providing services to the community.
  - Staying home if feeling ill.
  - Physical distancing of two meters from people in public and within the library building.
  - Washing hands frequently OR using an alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water is not available.
  - Wearing a face covering when interacting with the public or anytime physical distancing is a challenge.
- Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- Redesigning spaces and interactions to make them safer by making it easier to maintain a 2 metre distance from people, this includes workspaces within the library.

**Support Physical Distancing and Face Coverings**

- Ensure computer stations or workstations are separated by at least 2 metres.
- Limit the number of people in the library building so that physical distancing can be maintained.
- Use signage to direct people flow and provide a reminder of public health measures, such as physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- Encourage staff and members of the public to wear a face covering or cloth mask when physical distancing is a challenge. Follow your organization’s policy for masks and face coverings.
Support Hand Hygiene

- Provide access to handwashing stations or alcohol-based hand sanitizer at the entry and throughout the library building.

Clean and Disinfect Frequently Touched Surfaces

- Patrons are not permitted to handle books or materials on shelves.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and shared equipment, such as door handles, washrooms, countertops and computers. See the [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) resource from Public Health Ontario for more information.

Screening

- Share information to support self-screening among staff and patrons.
- Post screening signage at the entry to the library building.

Guidance for Pick-up Services:

- Consider continuing to offer curbside pick up services, even if the library building is open.
- If arriving by vehicle, patrons may stay in their vehicle and remotely open the trunk. Staff should deliver items to the trunk and wash their hands after each delivery.
- If patrons arrive on foot, a table could be set up outside the library. Any materials and surfaces should be disinfected between each patron.
- For staff and patrons entering the building, provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer, have signage and ensure that the space allows for physical distancing.
- The choice of packaging may include paper bags, cloth library bags or plastic bags that are labelled with the person’s name on the bag.
- In terms of timing, the library could set appointment times for pick-up or set aside a specific time for the pick-up. For example, from 4 to 6 pm Monday to Thursday.
- Where waiting is required, library staff will mark the area to encourage physical distancing.
Guidance for Delivery Services:

- Equip delivery personnel with alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, and disinfectant wipes to clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., car door handles, steering wheel) and provide them with instructions on their appropriate use and disposal.
- Delivery personnel should use alcohol-based hand sanitizer between deliveries.
- Wherever possible, deliveries should be contactless, with items left at the door of the customer.
- Materials can also be delivered to patrons using Canada Post Library Book/Materials Rate.
- [Guidance Document for Postal and other Delivery Services Workers](#) is available for more information about delivery.

Guidance for Returning Materials:

- Libraries may promote returning material through drop boxes to ensure contactless handling of that material.
- It is recommended that returned materials be quarantined for a period of 24 hours.
- Libraries may choose to delay materials return depending on space and capacity to quarantine materials.

Communicating Service Protocols

Once services are in place and appropriate protocols have been developed, it is important to communicate these protocols to your users in order to ensure the safety of all. Methods of communication include:

- Library website or partner websites
- Social media
- Email
- Telephone
- Radio
• Local newspapers and other print sources
• Posters on exterior doors or other places outside the library where users might look for information
• Printed pamphlets to accompany materials that are picked up or delivered

**Everyone can help make a difference by:**

• Maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres from people outside of your household or social circle
• Wearing a face covering in indoor and outdoor public spaces where physical distancing is a challenge
• Washing your hands frequently with soap and water
• Using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
• Practising good hygiene (covering a cough and sneeze and avoiding touching your face)
• Cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often
• Limiting indoor gatherings to a maximum of 50 people, or less, to maintain physical distancing
• Limiting outdoor gatherings to a maximum of 100 people, or less. to maintain physical distancing
• Staying at home and away from others if you are feeling ill or have symptoms of COVID-19
• Downloading the COVID Alert app, when launched, to be notified if you have been in contact with anyone with COVID-19
• Working from home or remotely as much as possible
• Minimizing travel and self-isolating for 14 days after all international travel
• Protecting the most vulnerable by following public health advice
• Getting tested if you are worried you have or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19
Additional Resources

Guidance on Health and Safety for Curbside Pickup and Delivery Services during COVID-19 – Workplace Safety and Prevention Services

Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings – Public Health Ontario

A Framework for Reopening our Province: Stage 3 – Government of Ontario

Regulations: Rules for Areas in Stage 3 – Government of Ontario