



AURORA TOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY REOPENING PLAN

The Aurora Town Public Library, a member of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System (B&ECPL), has formed a plan and put precautions in place for staff members as well as our community to minimize the risk of infection while strategically scaling operations. This plan does not need to be submitted to a state agency for approval but must be retained on the premises of the business and must be made available to the New York State Department of Health (DOH) or local health or safety authorities in the event of an inspection.

I. NEW YORK STATE REOPENING PLAN

A. New York Forward

Governor Andrew Cuomo of the State of New York has developed *New York Forward: a Guide to Reopening New York & Building Back Better* as a plan which focuses on getting people back to work and easing social isolation, without triggering renewed spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). He has indicated New York will reopen on a regional basis as each region meets the criteria necessary to protect public health. A *New York Forward* Reopening Advisory Board has been created with representatives from Western New York.

Once the criteria has been met regionally, businesses may be able to open following the strategies as determined by the State of New York as set forth below:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines:

Based on CDC recommendations, regions must experience a 14-day decline in hospitalizations and deaths on a 3-day rolling average. Regions with few COVID-19 cases cannot exceed 15 new total cases or 5 new deaths on a 3-day rolling average. A region must have fewer than 2 new COVID-19 patients admitted per 100,000 residents per day.

2. Phasing Strategy in Accordance with the Governor of the State of New York (5/4/2020):

- **PHASE ONE:** Construction, manufacturing and wholesale supply chain, select retail using curbside pickup only;
- **PHASE TWO:** Professional services, finance and insurance, retail, administrative support, real estate and rental leasing;
- **PHASE THREE:** Restaurants and food service, hotels and accommodations;
- **PHASE FOUR:** Arts, entertainment and recreation, education.

3. "Business Precautions" per New York State as of 5/4/2020:

Each business and industry must have a plan to protect employees and consumers, make the physical work space safer and implement processes that lower risk of infection in the business.



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- Adjust workplace hours and shift design as necessary to reduce density in the workplace;
- Enact social distancing protocols;
- Restrict non-essential travel for employees;
- Require all employees and customers to wear masks if in frequent contact with others;
- Implement strict cleaning and sanitation standards;
- Enact a continuous health screening process for individuals to enter the workplace;
- Continue tracing, tracking and reporting of cases; and
- Develop liability processes.

B. Other Considerations

1. Western New York, per Governor Andrew Cuomo, may enter Phase I of *New York Forward*, effective **5/19/2020**.

2. In addition, it must be noted that a multitude of studies have been released in an effort to provide guidance for reopening based on “science-driven data.” On 4/18/2020, the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security issued a report offering science-based guidance for state officials including governors on how to safely reopen communities. The report offered a risk assessment for various types of businesses and public spaces, with advice on how to best ease out of social distancing without creating a spike in coronavirus cases. The 4/18/2020 report listed libraries as a “low risk” entity for the spread of the coronavirus. This report was amended on 4/20/2020, stating that “libraries that incorporate social activities or community gatherings into their services should refer to the ‘community centers’ category, which subsequently changed the risk-factor to moderate.

II. B&ECPL GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING

A. Pre-opening Planning

The first priority of the B&ECPL toward reopening is the health and safety of staff and patrons.

1. **ALL libraries within the B&ECPL System will:**

- Follow guidelines as set forth in New York State’s *New York Forward* plan;
- Develop Business Reopening Safety Plan and make available (post) for public and staff;
- Follow additional/supplemental guidelines, beyond New York State as set forth by the County of Erie;
- Follow additional/supplemental guidelines, beyond New York State and the County of Erie as set forth by local municipalities where applicable;
- Develop a plan for staged reopening in accordance with Federal, State, County and local guidelines;
- Follow screening and reporting protocols as set forth in the B&ECPL’s *Personnel Policies and Procedures: Protective Measures to Reduce Risk of Exposure to COVID-19*;
- Follow *Handling Materials During COVID-19* (effective 5/13/2020) as set forth by the B&ECPL System; and



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- Follow public computer guidelines set forth by the B&ECPL System.
2. **The B&ECPL System will provide the following (to all B&ECPL and Contract Libraries prior to reopening:**
- Hand sanitizer;
 - Tissues;
 - Disposable gloves for employees;
 - Disposable masks for employees;
 - Reusable masks for employees;
 - Reusable face shields – priority for employees working with the public;
 - Cashier-style protective shields for public service desks – up to 4 per library*;
 - Touchless thermometers;
 - Health screening questionnaires and privacy notices for employees;
 - Social distancing floor signage;
 - Social distancing “Enforced Here” signage;
 - “Masks required upon entry” signage; and
 - Cleaning/sanitizing products in accordance with recommended CDC standards.

*Consideration for the System to purchase additional panels will be made on a case-by-case basis.

3. **The B&ECPL System recommends a staged approach for returning staff to onsite work and for reopening library operations to the public. Timeframes for each of the STAGES are not noted. Timeframes are dependent upon continued expansion of *New York Forward* and authorization from the County of Erie. Prior to STAGE I the System will:**
- Monitor *New York Forward* requirements, seek guidance and authorization from the County of Erie and report results to Contract Library Directors.
 - Seek permission from County of Erie to determine if libraries may operate under the auspicious of Phase One of the *New York Forward* plan and provide Walk-Up Services.

B. Aurora Town Public Library Stages of Reopening

1. STAGE I ~~(25%—of staff allowed in building: 5-10)~~

Western New York, per Governor Andrew Cuomo, may enter Phase I of *New York Forward*, effective **5/19/2020**. Per the State of New York, a maximum 50% workforce restriction is in place.

Per Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, **5/19/2020**, B&ECPL libraries, those that are municipal libraries, may begin to return staff to work in preparation of reopening to the public. Municipal libraries are asked to consider walk-up/curbside pickup. Determination to participate in such service is at the discretion of the local library Board of Trustees. Association libraries are not municipal organizations and, therefore, must wait to open until authorized by the State of New York.



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During STAGE I, the Aurora Town Public Library will remain closed to the public. If approved, the Aurora Town Public Library may provide transactional Walk-Up Service to public.

The Aurora Town Public Library will review and refine services and operations in STAGE I as permitted under federal, state and local laws.

STAGE I Building Preparation:

- Thoroughly clean building with hospital grade disinfectant cleaners – including all surfaces, door handles, restrooms, telephones, copy machines, computers, printers, etc.;
- Develop procedures for continued disinfectant cleaning;
- Confirm supply of cleaning/disinfecting products, hand sanitizer, tissues, gloves, masks, face shields for employee use;
- Install casher-style protection shields at public service desk;
- Denote proper social distancing using System-provided floor and other signage denoting social distancing will be enforced in both public and staff areas;
- Remove chairs, rope/block off areas where social gathering typically occurs, arrange seating and computer access to employ social distancing;
- Remove all stuffed animals and any toys/games/puzzles that cannot be cleaned using disinfectant cleaners;
- Ensure adequate office supplies and eliminate sharing items;
- Confirm supply of hand sanitizer and tissues for public and staff areas;
- Review/implement cleaning/disinfecting protocols; and
- Other as determined required by State, County and local mandates.

STAGE I Operational Preparation:

- Develop Business Reopening Safety Plan;
- Determine if Aurora Town Public Library can provide Walk-Up operations (if yes, see also Walk-Up Service);
- Review employee schedules:
 - Determine shift design;
 - Determine work location – remain at home/return to library;
- Develop/determine/modify work processes to meet required social distancing guidelines;
- Review/implement health screening processes for employees per *Personnel Policies and Procedures: Protective Measures to Reduce Risk of Exposure to COVID-19*;
- Review/implement *Handling Materials During COVID-19 (effective 5/13/2020)*;
- Open drop box:
 - **Returned Materials – Quarantine Procedure (Book Drop to Be Unloaded Once a Day at 9:00 a.m.)**



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1. Retrieve returned materials from the book drop and place onto book truck/cart.
 2. Disinfect the drop box.
 3. Move the materials to the Meeting Room for a 72-hour quarantine.
 4. Label the truck/cart, shelves, or boxes, etc., with today's date/time, as well as the date/time, 72 hours (3 full days) later, that the items can be safely handled again.
 5. Disinfect any surfaces that may have been used during the procedure (e.g., a book truck/cart).
 6. Remove and dispose of gloves, and promptly wash hands.
 7. After 72 hours, use the Discharging Bookdrop wizard to backdate items to the return date recorded in step 4.
 8. Items may be shelved, set in delivery bins, or placed on the holds shelf.
- Begin materials ordering;
 - Resume delivery of supplies/materials;
 - Continue virtual/online program offerings;
 - Inform staff of requirements to operate businesses under *New York Forward*;
 - Post and inform staff of ***Business Reopening Safety Plan***
 - Inform staff of schedules, work location, new workflows (if applicable); and
 - Follow all State, County, local COVID-19 guidelines pertaining to employee health and safety.

STAGE I Walk-Up Service:

Western New York, per Governor Andrew Cuomo, entered **PHASE TWO** of *New York Forward*, **June 2, 2020**. The 50% onsite workforce restriction continues.

Should the Aurora Town Public Library wish to proceed in opening transactional drive-through services, the Library must:

- Secure permission from local authority regarding traffic flow;
- Inform the System* of the intent to provide Walk-Up operations;
- Update their respective portion of the B&ECPL website and SIRSI calendar to denote hours of operation for Walk-Up Service;
- Follow guidelines as set forth by B&ECPL regarding processes associated with Walk-Up Service;
- Adhere to *Handling Materials During COVID-19 (effective 5/13/2020)* as set forth by B&ECPL; and
- Follow all State, County, local COVID-19 guidelines pertaining to employee health and safety.



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2. STAGE II ~~(50% staff allowed in building: 10)~~

In STAGE II, physical libraries open to the public – for limited services (see Operational Preparation). This stage should occur only when allowable by *New York Forward* and the County of Erie.

The System will continue to monitor *New York Forward* requirements, seek guidance and authorization from the Erie County Executive and report results to Contract Library Directors.

In an abundance of caution, during STAGE II, the Aurora Town Public Library will not immediately reopen to the public. If approved, the Aurora Town Public Library may continue to provide Walk-Up Service. However, at the discretion of the Aurora Town Public Library Board of Trustees and Director, following the entry of Erie County to Phase II of *New York Forward*, the building may be deemed ready to for modified hours and limited services.

The Aurora Town Public Library will review and refine services and operations in STAGE II as permitted under federal, state and local laws.

STAGE II Building Preparation:

- See STAGE I

STAGE II Operations and Operational Preparation:

- See STAGE I;
- Determine hours of operation;
- Review employee schedules:
 - Determine shift design;
 - Determine work location – remain at home/return to library;
- Open drop box:
 - **Returned Materials – Quarantine Procedure**
 1. Retrieve returned materials from the book drop and place onto book truck/cart.
 2. Disinfect the drop box.
 3. Move the materials to the Meeting Room for a 72-hour quarantine.
 4. Label the truck/cart, shelves, or boxes, etc., with today's date/time, as well as the date/time, 72 hours (3 full days) later, that the items can be safely handled again.



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5. Disinfect any surfaces that may have been used during the procedure (e.g., a book truck/cart).
 6. Remove and dispose of gloves, and promptly wash hands.
 7. After 72 hours, use the Discharging Bookdrop wizard to backdate items to the return date recorded in step 4.
 8. Items may be shelved, set in delivery bins, or placed on the holds shelf.
- No onsite programs scheduled, virtual programs and curbside kits will be made available;
 - Meeting room use restricted to limitations as set forth by State and County officials;
 - Review/implement health screening processes for employees per *Personnel Policies and Procedures: Protective Measures to Reduce Risk of Exposure to COVID-19*;
 - Review/implement *Handling Materials During COVID-19 (effective 5/13/2020)*;
 - Review/implement building clean/disinfecting protocols in public areas;
 - Begin materials ordering;
 - Inform staff of requirements to operate businesses under *New York Forward*;
 - Post and inform staff of *Business Reopening Safety Plan*; and
 - Inform staff of schedules, work location, new workflows (if applicable)
3. **STAGE III (~~75% staff allowed in building; 15~~)**
Western New York, per Governor Andrew Cuomo, entered PHASE THREE of New York Forward, June 16, 2020. Effective 6/16/2020, per Executive Order, the 50% onsite workforce reduction is lifted for local governments (this includes municipal libraries). Social gathering restrictions also modified from a maximum of 10 persons to a maximum of 25 persons. Other restrictions continue to apply to social gatherings.

In STAGE III, the physical plant of the Aurora Town Public Library ~~will~~ may reopen to the public – library operations will expand beyond Walk-Up Service. **Operations shall remain transactional, i.e. circulation, computer use (limited), reference questions.** Walk-up may cease or continue based on the discretion of the Aurora Town Public Library Board of Trustees and Director. This stage should occur only when allowable by *New York Forward* and the County of Erie.

The Aurora Town Public Library will enter STAGE III following Western New York moving to PHASE III of *New York Forward*.

The Aurora Town Public Library will review and refine services and operations in STAGE III as permitted under federal, state and local laws.

STAGE III Building Preparation:



- See STAGE I

STAGE III Operations and Operational Preparation:

- See STAGE I & II;
- Hours of operation may be limited;
- Services may be limited pursuant to restrictions set forth by Executive Orders;
- Virtual programming continues;
- Walk-Up Service assessed – determination made to cease or continue

The Aurora Town Public Library will resume onsite operations and open for modified hours, with limited services, following the entry of Western New York to **PHASE THREE** of *New York Forward*.

4. STAGE IV (~~100% staffing restored within budgetary limits: 20~~)

In STAGE IV, the physical plant of the Aurora Town Public Library will open to the public or have an announced reopening date/schedule. Operations, services, and hours increase.

The Aurora Town Public Library will enter STAGE IV after Western New York moving to PHASE IV of *New York Forward*. Timeframe and services are dependent upon lifting of Gubernatorial Executive Orders regarding gathering, social distancing, occupancy, etc.

The Aurora Town Public Library will resume onsite operations and open for modified hours, with limited services, following the entry of Western New York to **PHASE THREE** of *New York Forward*.

When the Aurora Town Public Library opens for modified hours and limited services:

- Transactional services begin i.e. circulating materials;
- Public access computers open for reservation (limited) - social distancing and cleaning after every use required;
- No group gathering (tutors may meet with a student 1:1 if both the tutor and student are wearing masks);
- Develop/determine/modify work processes to meet required social distancing guidelines;
- Review/implement health screening processes for employees;
- Review/implement System Materials Handling Guidelines;
- Review/implement building clean/disinfecting protocols in public areas;
- Begin materials ordering;
- Inform staff of requirements to operate businesses under *New York Forward*; and
- Inform staff of schedules, work location, new workflows (if applicable).



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STAGE IV Operations:

- See STAGES I-III
- Hours of operation reinstated to meet New York State Minimum Standards for Public Libraries**;
- Staffing reinstated within budgetary limits;
- Walk-up services assessed – determination made to cease or continue;
- Reinstatement meeting room use when able***;
- Reinstatement onsite programs when able – children’s programming such as storytimes might not yet resume due to the difficulty of enforcing distancing protocols with this age group**;
- Reinstatement gathering***; and
- Reinstatement outreach***

**System should be notified if library is unable to meet Minimum Standards for Public Libraries.

***Operation may occur at the discretion of the Aurora Town Public Library’s Director and Board of Trustees, pursuant to any social distancing and/or gathering restrictions as set forth by New York State and County of Erie.

5. STAGE V: Post Pandemic

In STAGE V, the physical plant of the Aurora Town Public Library will open fully to the public. Operations, services, and hours will be restored without restriction once the pandemic has deescalated.

STAGE IV Operations:

- Hours of operation reinstated to meet New York State Minimum Standards for Public Libraries;
- Reinstatement meeting room use;
- Reinstatement onsite programs;
- Reinstatement gathering; and
- Reinstatement outreach;

III. SCALING DOWN SERVICES OR SECOND CLOSURE SCENARIO

The Aurora Town Public Library ~~could~~ may return to STAGE III, II, or I, or revert to a full-scale closure depending on the recommendations by New York State and County of Erie officials. If a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the building, the Library will close for two days to be cleaned and sanitized.

Scaling Down Preparation:



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- See STAGES I-III

Second Closure Preparation:

- Aurora Town Public Library Board of Trustees meet with Director to pass a resolution to close building;
- Inform B&ECPL administration of decision;
- Notify all employees of closure and advise to check e-mails for updates;
- Follow Emergency Closing Procedures;
- Limit book drop hours, or lock up;
- Instruct for building to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized

Second Closure Off-Site Operational Preparation:

- Essential staff work remotely and onsite at the designation of the Director
- Assign employee(s) to take care of building, mail, financials, and book drop if applicable;
- Enlist librarians to offer online/virtual programming;
- e-mail, phone, text, hold meetings via online platform to communicate with staff and delegate tasks
- Use social media and news media to connect with community
- Remind patrons to manage their accounts by going to www.buffalolib.org and logging into My Account. They can also contact the library at eau@buffalolib.org or on the Library's Facebook page.
- Encourage patron usage of free digital databases, resources, and downloadable eBooks, eAudiobooks, music, and more at www.buffalolib.org.
- Publicize that residents of Erie County, 13 years old and over without a library card, may fill out an application for an eLibraryCard to gain access to Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's downloadable eBooks, eAudiobooks, music, and more here: <http://vf.buffalolib.org/vufind/OnlineSignup/Home/>
- The B&ECPL as well as the Director and Trustees of the Aurora Town Public Library will monitor the situation, prioritizing the health and safety of employees and patrons.
- When sanctioned by the State of New York and the County of Erie, the Aurora Town Public Library will begin the phased reopening process again, following guidance from the B&ECPL. See STAGES I-IV.