

Galway Public Library

Temporary Safety Practices Policy for Reopening the Library After Closure Due to New York Orders During the COVID-19 Crisis

The Galway Public Library is committed to serving the community at all times. The year 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges to our nation, state, and service area. To continue to serve our patrons during this difficult time, while placing the health and safety of our community at the forefront, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted a Temporary Safety Practices Policy.

The board's authority to adopt these measures is found in our charter, bylaws, New York Education Law sections 255, 260, 226, 8 NYCRR 90.2, and Article 2 of the Not-for-profit corporation law. We also consider it our duty to develop these measures to keep our services accessible during this time of crisis.

Staff at the Galway Public Library have the authority to enforce these measures as they do any of the Library's policies and rules. Concerns about this policy should be directed to the Library Director. Thank you for honoring these measures, which are designed to keep our community safe, while allowing access to the library.

Scope of Temporary Safety Measures:

The Galway Public Library operates per relevant law and Executive Orders, including those pertaining to mandatory workforce reductions. Therefore, the temporary practices in the policy may be further modified as needed to conform with relevant Orders.

Adherence to these practices shall be enforced as a requirement of the Library's Code of Conduct until such time as this temporary policy is revoked. Per ADA, in the event that a safety requirement is not practicable on the basis of a disability, please contact the Library Director to explore a reasonable accommodation.

This reopening plan has been written with the best recommendations as of 5/15/20, and it is subject to change as necessary.

There are 5 Phases of the Reopening Plan. The length of each phase may vary depending upon conditions. The plan is dependent on adequate supplies and staffing.

Until the board votes to revoke this temporary policy, safety practices will be required and the following activities will occur during the phased reopening plan:

Stage 1: Staff, Board, Select Volunteers Only – No Public Allowed in Building

Following the guidelines of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS), the precedence of member libraries, and government and public health recommendations, the Library Director will establish a re-opening date for the Galway Public Library, in coordination with the Board of Trustees. To prepare for this opening date, staff will report to the library building to work a schedule to be determined by the Library Director (this may be a modified schedule due to the tasks that need to be performed or a decrease in normally scheduled hours in order to reduce health risks to staff). Staff may still do additional work at home as necessary to complete required tasks. Phase 1 may last from one to two weeks, depending on necessity and guidelines from SALS. While working in the building, staff will perform tasks including, but not limited to, cleaning surfaces, processing returns, establishing quarantine system for returns, answering calls and messages from the public, handling administrative tasks, reorganizing furnishings and preparing the building for public access, performing other tasks as required, and continuing collection development and planning exercises/preparation for virtual programming.

Every effort will be made to maintain social distance while at work. Face masks and gloves will be provided to staff. Keyboard covers will be used to facilitate disinfection of the keyboard surface. Stations will be disinfected at the start of each shift throughout all the phases of reopening. Signage will be posted to remind employees of necessary protocols of behavior during this crisis.

The public will be encouraged to return materials to the outdoor book return during this time. All returned items will be removed from the book drop by staff wearing masks and gloves and will be quarantined for a minimum of three days, per SALS requirements, before being checked in and returned to the shelves or the loaning library. This practice of quarantine will continue until SALS no longer requires it. No materials will be loaned out during this time.

Stage 2: Curbside Service – Some public services restored, no public allowed in building. Timing will be coordinated with SALS to set a consistent opening date for all member libraries in Saratoga County.

At this stage, services will be provided at curbside only, as no public will be allowed in the building. Galway Library patrons can call, email, or place hold requests through the catalog to ask for items that Galway Public Library has in its collection. There will be no hold request deliveries through SALS at this stage. Messages will be checked every day we are open. All patrons will be called once their requested item is available (even those who normally receive email notices) so that we can arrange a pickup date and time. Pickup times may be limited to only certain hours of the day. Pickups will take place outside the library in the parking lot. Pickup times will be written on hold slips and stored with the items. When a patron arrives for their pickup, they should call the library to alert the clerk, and staff will bring checked out items

to their vehicle and request to view ID. If patron does not have a cell phone to alert staff of arrival, other arrangements can be made at the time of request.

Patrons will be asked to make all returns in the outdoor book return box. All returned items will be emptied from the box by staff wearing masks and gloves and quarantined.

Staff will be masked when dealing with the public. They can wear provided gloves to deliver items and/or wash their hands after every delivery made. It is requested that members of the public will also be masked. Every effort will be made to keep contact very limited.

A modified staff schedule may still be in place, although it may differ from the hours in phase 1, depending upon the needs of curbside pickup, staff availability, and limiting staff contact.

Stage 3: Open to the Public, Limited – Public allowed in building. Stacks closed.

Public access to the building will be limited to the foyer, one restroom, and the area by the circulation desk only. Other areas may be blocked off. Pick up of requested materials will either be done at the circulation desk or at curbside as in phase 2. Additional services now available (for staff to complete for patrons to limit contact on machines) are: faxing, copying, and printouts via eprint. Notary services will be available by appointment. The public will have access to the PC catalog to place requests, or they can continue to request items as they did during Phase 1.

All patrons will be required to wear masks or some form of protective face covering for the nose and mouth, but the library will not provide these. Patrons inside the building will be asked to maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and others whenever possible to follow social distancing guidelines. Due to the small space by the circulation desk and recommendations from the government concerning capacity limits, patrons may be asked to wait in a queue. Signage will be posted to remind patrons of social distancing protocols.

Those who are immune-compromised or elderly are encouraged to use curbside service or contact the library for special arrangements. Staff schedules will be determined by the Library Director but may include some work from home to limit staff contact. Staff will be provided with masks and gloves and social distancing guidelines will continue to be followed to the best of our ability.

All returns will be requested to be done via one of the book drops. Quarantine of materials will still be required.

Hand sanitizer will be available on the desk. Tape may be used to highlight restricted areas and suggested social distancing spaces. Acrylic sheet barriers will be used on the front desk to protect the safety of both staff and patrons interacting at the desk.

General cleaning and disinfection of the building will be increased during phase 3 and 4 to maintain the safety of the patrons and staff while the exposure risk is increased. A cleaning log will be maintained by the staff.

Public meeting space will not be available, nor will library programs be held on the premises.

Stage 4: Open to the Public with Precautions – Library open to public with precautions in place to enforce social distancing. Normal staff schedules in affect.

In this phase, the public will be allowed access to all areas of the collection, but casual browsing will not be allowed unless quarantining of materials is no longer required. If a state mandate still limits the number of people allowed in the building, staff will monitor the number of people and may ask patrons to queue in the foyer and outside for a time. Public computer use will be allowed, but limited to only 2 PCs at a time, on opposite ends of the table to encourage distance. Library seating will be separated to encourage social distancing. At this stage, we want patrons to use the library, but not linger. Masks and social distancing will still be required for all patrons. Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, and keyboard covers will be provided.

Any in-person programs will limit the number of participants. It is possible that these programs may only be allowed to be held outside (while still maintaining social distance) or continue virtually online. The public will not be allowed to reserve rooms to use at this time.

No toys or children's non-circulating items will be out for use until public health officials give the all-clear on resuming normal activities.

Returns will still be only accepted in the book returns. Curbside service will still be available by appointment for patrons who are more comfortable using the library in this limited capacity.

Staff will continue to be masked for all interactions with the public. Acrylic sheet barriers will still be in use at this stage.

Stage 5: Normal Operations – all normal operations resume.

Approved by the Galway Public Library Board of Trustees on May 20, 2020.

Addendum: Per Executive Order 202.17, masks are required for entry into the library.

Approved 8/19/20 by Galway Public Library Board of Trustees.