

**The Thetford Libraries
Latham Memorial Library and George Peabody Library
Phased Library Services and Re-Opening Plan**

Purpose: This document provides guidance for library service operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. It describes the levels of services that may be provided at different stages. It addresses the library services and operations that can be provided based on current conditions, and what will be needed to safely open the library spaces to the public.

We are entering into Phase 2 starting in May 2021.

At all times, the key consideration is the level of risk to the library staff, volunteers and the public, since the highest priority is to keep the community safe. Other key considerations in both physical library spaces are the lack of air circulation, the size of the spaces available, the differing risk levels and needs of patrons, and the lack of custodial staff at the level needed to provide a safe environment during a pandemic.

This is a guiding document that will be adapted as needed to more closely reflect the current recommendations and state orders. The librarians and members of the Latham and Peabody Boards will continue to consult the [Vermont Department of Libraries Reopening Information](#), the Town of Thetford Emergency Management Director, and the Community Nurse to ensure that practices are appropriate to the situation at the time for our community members. All library operations must adhere to the orders put forth by the Governor of Vermont.

Key documents consulted are listed on the [Vermont Department of Libraries, Agency of Administration, COVID-19, Coronavirus Information web page](#), and include but are not limited to:

- [Vermont Department of Health - COVID-19 Page](#)
 - [Cloth Mask Guidance](#)
- [Agency of Commerce and Community Development - COVID-19 Page](#)
 - [Restart Vermont Resources](#)
- Center for Disease Control - [Broad information on COVID-19](#) | [Reopening Guidance for Public Spaces](#)
- World Health Organization - [Info for the Public](#) | [Myth Busters](#)

PHASE ONE – Curbside Pick-up Service (March 18, 2020 - May 2, 2021)

Decision due to advice from public health officials, continued spread of COVID-19, lack of vaccine, limited Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), limited testing, and high risk populations impacted by library operations.

- Latham Memorial Library and George Peabody Library buildings closed to all visitors.
- Volunteer hours suspended.
- All on-site meetings & indoor programming suspended.
- Library Director and Youth Librarian work regular hours.
- Library licenses Zoom for meetings and programs

- Borrowers encouraged to phone or e-mail in requests which are labeled and placed in the Latham Library drop box outside for pick-up.
- All returns are surface-sanitized and quarantined for 3 days.
- Librarians wear gloves while sanitizing items for circulation.
- Surfaces are regularly sanitized.
- Inter-library loan service available.
- Receipt of book donations suspended.

Operations:

- Staffing:
 - Preferably one staff member in the buildings at a time; if more are needed at one time, separate by at least 6 feet.
 - Board members doing critical on-site work are allowed when they can work at a distance from others.
 - Volunteers are only allowed in the buildings when they can work at a distance from others, to assist the librarians due to the additional workload of ensuring a safe environment and remote programs.
 - All work spaces and high-touch areas must be sanitized.
- Public Building Access: No public access.
- Public Services Provided: Advertise and help patrons with online resources, virtual programming, remote staff assistance, patron outreach, curbside pick-up of library materials at Latham Library, giveaways, and printing orders.
- Book Returns: If patrons are healthy, they may return items to Latham Library at their convenience.
- Curbside Pick-up: Available during business hours at Latham Library. Patrons can request items by phone or email at Thefordlibrarians.org.
- In Person Programming: Suspended.
- Meetings, workshops and programs: held via Zoom
- Signage and communications: regular updates to keep the community aware of the library collections, services and conditions of use.

Needed

- Some remote work for all staff.
- Adequate cleaning supplies necessary to sanitize incoming library materials.
- Face masks for staff, Board members and volunteers doing work even if at a distance in the buildings.
- Face shields for staff.
- On-going communication with the community and clear signage.
- Recognition of the extra staff time required for maintaining a safe environment and remote services.

PHASE TWO – in person outdoor programs, limited browsing (May 3, 2021 -)

Start date for limited on site browsing: May 3, 2021

Start date for outdoor programs: Late May

The timing of this phase is subject to change according to public health updates, but state orders allow for some access into library buildings, while social distancing and health precautions remain critical, and is based on these factors:

- **for outdoor programs, rates of positive tests in VT must be at or below 4%**
- **for indoor, limited access by appointment, rates of positive tests in VT must be at or below 3%**
- **continued access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
- **continued access to testing**
- **ability to separate different populations to protect high risk populations impacted by library operations**
- **ability to clean and air out spaces**
- **back-up plan for staffing in case staff become ill**

Requirements:

- **[VOSHA training](#), an online self-paced presentation, is required for all staff and volunteers offering in person services and programming in this phase. Current staff have completed this.**
- Signage, per State directive “Work Smart & Stay Safe”, is posted re: occupancy limit, social distancing, masks, wellness status checks, and hand-sanitizing.
- Any patron attending an in-person program or being on-site in the buildings has to sign a COVID-19 waiver form, releasing the Thetford Libraries from liability.
- Masks are required (and supplied free if needed) upon entering.
- Patrons are asked wellness check questions and to check their temperature before entering; possible installation of an infrared thermometer at the entrances.
- All work is done by Library Director or Youth Librarian, who do daily health self-screening via temperature checks, and wear masks.
- One public access desk top computer will be available by appointment for 20 minute intervals. The keyboard and mouse will be swapped out for sanitizing after each use.
- Browsing the collection in 20 minute intervals follows social distancing protocol with no congregating.
- Curbside loans will continue; Latham includes the Peabody collection in the curbside service at Latham.
- In-house meetings and programming are suspended.
- No public access to the basement/downstairs spaces is allowed except for browsing the collection there.
- Outdoor programming options, such as reading groups, are available, with suitable distancing and masks required.
- Frequently-touched surfaces are sanitized at the end of the day.
- All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Operations:

- Staffing: Preferably one staff member in the buildings at a time; if more are needed, separate by at least 6 feet.
- Due to increased workload for the staff to maintain safe conditions in two buildings, in-person hours in Peabody may not be feasible.
- Board members doing critical on-site work are allowed when they can work at a distance from others.
- Volunteers are only allowed in the buildings when they can work at a distance from others, to assist the librarians due to the additional workload of ensuring a safe environment and remote programs.
- All work spaces and high-touch areas are sanitized when leaving the buildings.
- Public Building Access: Limited building access to the upstairs and downstairs stack areas are permitted to community members, by appointment only.
- Maximum capacity (patrons and staff) for Latham Library is 6 people, unless there is a family group that is larger than 5. Maximum capacity for Peabody Library is 4 (patrons and staff, unless there is a larger family group)
- No lingering or gathering allowed.
- The meeting rooms are not available.
- There are no toys out.
- Most seating is not available due to being moved to make more room for adequate spacing and walkthrough access.
- Signage to list maximum capacity and rules for entering, to prevent symptomatic people from entering the library.
- Signage indicating that social distancing and masks wearing are required.
- During open hours, windows and doors are kept open if possible.
- Staff wear masks.
- Patrons older than 2 are required to wear masks.
- Patrons are asked to sanitize their hands before passing the Front Desk.
- Outdoor book sales at both Latham and Peabody require precautions in handling books and money.

In Place Now:

- Some remote work for all staff.
- Recognition of the extra staff time required on site for maintaining a safe environment and remote services
- Adequate cleaning supplies.
- Hand sanitizer available for patron use at the door.
- Masks available for those who do not have one.
- Face shields for staff if wanted.
- Infrared thermometers for health checks.
- Signage to limit access to the lower level.
- Signage to indicate the doors to be used.
- Shield on the circulation/reference desk.
- Air purifiers near librarians work areas to improve the ventilation situation locally.

PHASE THREE – Full On Site Services Resumes, following State guidelines.

Increased building access during this stage will depend on:

- **little spread of COVID-19**
- **vaccination rates in the local population**
- **abundant supply of PPE**
- **100% staff, volunteers, Board members, and library user population tested and a high percent vaccinated**
- **ability to separate different populations to protect high risk populations impacted by library operations**
- **ability to clean and ventilate spaces**
- **back-up plan for staffing in case staff become ill**
- **school and after school program reopening plans and protocols indicate confidence in providing after school options for youth and children**

Operations:

- Building Access: Normal open hours and building access restored.
- Staffing: May resume normal staffing levels in buildings, with consideration to increased workload to keep buildings safe.
- Guidelines may be relaxed to allow for more lingering/ limited gathering.
- Computer stations and check out procedures will remain altered to maintain 6 foot distance.
- Signage to prevent symptomatic people from entering the library, encourage hand washing and social distancing.
- Infrared thermometer at doors for temperature checks.
- When multiple people are in the buildings, windows and doors will be kept open if possible.
- Staff and patrons will wear masks until those are no longer recommended.
- Hand sanitizer will be available to patrons at the door.
- Public Services Provided: Advertise and help patrons with online resources, virtual programming, remote staff assistance, patron outreach, curbside pick-up of library materials, giveaways, and printing orders.
- The library buildings are open normal hours with all in-building services available if possible with current staffing, given there is still additional work to do to operate in this environment.
- In Person Programming: may begin to restart small group programming and small meetings in the community room in accordance with current health recommendations.
- Programs will be designed to separate populations to protect at risk populations.
- Cleaning: Professional cleaning services will fully resume. Staff to sanitize high-touch areas regularly while patrons are in the buildings, and sanitize work stations before staff changeovers.

Needed

- Ventilation for all the spaces in Latham Library; this part of a major project for the Bicentennial Building, led by the Thetford Library Federation
- Adequate ventilation in Peabody Library
- Adequate cleaning supplies
- Hand sanitizer available for patron use at the door.
- Masks available for those who do not have one.
- Face shields for staff and those working at the front circulation/reference desk if wanted.
- Infrared thermometers
- Sneeze guard- in place currently at Latham only

PHASE FOUR: Full Public Access Restored: No Estimated date based on Pandemic being over

- Staffing: Normal staffing levels.
- Buildings Access: Full patron access.
- Public Services Provided: All regular virtual and in person services resume.
- Book Returns: Patrons may return books inside the library or in the book drop outside of the library. No extra sanitation precautions are necessary.
- Curbside Pick-up: Curbside pick-up service ends.
- In Person Programming: In full force.
- Interlibrary Loan: Up and running. No extra sanitation precautions are necessary.
- Cleaning: Professional cleanings are scheduled at normal 1-2 cleanings per week. No extra sanitation precautions are necessary.

Needed

Budgeted funds to resume full operations. Time to catch up on tasks that had to be dropped due to the extra time required for maintaining a safe environment and remote services. Full ventilation system installed, tested and working.

Updates and Version History:

This document will be updated as needed

Version History:

Drafted 7/17/20

Version 1.0, 7/23/20; small changes in Oct and Nov

Revised 4/24/21