



## Restoring In-Person Services in California’s Libraries

June 9, 2020

California’s more than 1,120 local libraries provide important programs and services to the state’s residents whether library buildings are open to the public or not.

During COVID-19, libraries have continued to serve a diverse cross-section of California by offering online job coaching, storytimes, adult literacy, K12 tutoring, homework help, ebook lending, and 3D Personal Protective Equipment, among other services.

These programs – a fraction of those offered by libraries in California - reflect the unique combination of resources, people, and space inherent to libraries and help explain why more Americans visited a library in 2019 than visited a movie theatre, live sporting event, live music event, or museum.

The State of California included guidance for libraries to begin curbside services, including precautions to take in managing the return of materials, in the [Industry Guidance for Retail](#), on May 19, 2020. Beginning June 12, many libraries may begin expanded services. This document provides guidelines to follow and a framework for approaching the resumption of services, including continuing to recommend online programming when feasible. In addition to differences in the types of programs and services libraries offer, their sizes and budgets vary, as do the needs and interest of the communities they serve. These variances will undoubtedly shape the type of services libraries begin making available in-person at this time and the pace with which they make these decisions. This document is intended as a guide, recognizing that libraries will often make decisions about what to offer and how to do so in collaboration with other city and/or county departments and local stakeholders.

### Table of Contents

Restoring In-Person Services in California’s Libraries.....	1
I. Purpose .....	2
II. Background .....	2
III. Planning to Restore In-Person Programs and Services .....	4
IV. Programmatic Considerations.....	11
Appendix A: Recommended Timing to Restore In-Person Activities.....	14
Appendix B: Temporary policies, procedures, and plans to consider .....	15
Appendix C: Resources & Plans.....	17
Appendix D: Industry Guidance for Retail .....	19



## I. Purpose

This document incorporates currently published library re-opening plans, related public health research, feedback from library directors across the state, and guidance published by the State of California for [industries](#) that share like issues.

It also provides additional considerations to support libraries as they stand-up and modify programs and services, recognizing that libraries across California are currently at different programmatic places.

Though this document focuses on public libraries, academic and research libraries will find particular guidance to be useful in their decision-making processes. Use the portions of this document that are most helpful to where your library is now along the re-opening spectrum.

For ideas about how libraries are creating or updating programs for online delivery, please see [this tool on the California State Library's webpage](#).

## II. Background

### Status

As of today (6/9/2020), the following are open with modifications in California:

- Essential services;
- Retail, which includes libraries, shopping malls, stores and movie theaters;
- Related logistics and manufacturing;
- Office workplaces;
- Limited services (dog walking, car washes, appliance repair, etc.);
- Outdoor museums;
- Schools, day camps, child care;
- Outdoor museums;
- Music, film and TV production; and
- Places of worship.

Dine-in restaurants, hair salons and barbershops, and casinos are currently allowed to open in counties approved to move further in the [Resilience Roadmap](#). In counties that have met the criteria for a variance, the following may open, but are encouraged to wait until June 12, 2020: family entertainment centers, restaurants, wineries and bars, zoos and museums, gyms and fitness centers, hotels (for tourism and individual travel), cardrooms and racetracks, and campgrounds and outdoor recreation. See an up-to-date list of all open and closed industries here: <https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/#open>.



County variance information is available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/#track-data>. Note that counties may still have local requirements that are more restrictive than state requirements.

Libraries may currently reopen for curbside pick-up or other “to-go” services, subject to County Public Health rules, and the state’s [Industry Guidance for Retail](#). Additionally, libraries located in counties that have met the criteria for a variance may choose to open additional services, subject to the Industry Guidance for Retail and related parts of the Industry Guidance for [Office Workspaces](#) and [Museums, Galleries, Zoos, and Aquariums](#), and are encouraged to wait until June 12, 2020 to do so.

In evaluating resumption of in-person library services and programs, libraries are encouraged to consider first whether the program or service:

- Can be accomplished as effectively and equitably online; or,
- If not, if it is possible to achieve the goal of the task or activity in an in-person manner that adopts physical distancing guidelines (described below). If neither of these are possible, libraries may:
  - Implement an alternative program or service that can be conducted online or in-person while adopting physical distancing guidelines; or
  - Postpone the task or activity until physical distancing is no longer recommended, with the knowledge that this could be until a vaccine is widely adopted.

For the most up-to-date statewide information, visit [covid19.ca.gov](https://covid19.ca.gov).

## Assumptions & Constraints

- Libraries are independent authorities, or operate under the authority of local government, and may open/close and determine which programs and services to offer on their own.
- Libraries serve a diverse cross-section of the community, including many high-risk populations and library use has historically increased during recessions or other economic downturns.
- Staff will have health and safety concerns about returning to a physical location and/or interfacing with members of the public.
- Patrons will have health and safety concerns about using on-site library services.
- Public health authorities will also continue to recommend as much telework as possible for those who are able.
- Library staff may not have access to their previous school, daycare and childcare enrollments/arrangements. This may reduce the capacity of the library to offer certain services.

- The availability of masks, disinfectant and gloves has been in limited supply. Some items may be prohibitively expensive for some jurisdictions.

## Principles Guiding this Work

The ideas in this document are grounded in the following principles:

- The safety of staff and the public is paramount.
- Equity is more important than ever and we must ensure those who need library services receive them, online or in-person. Libraries have and will continue to help dismantle the economic, health and digital inequalities in our communities.
- Programs are not limited to physical spaces, as libraries have already demonstrated, and we must strive for comparable or improved outcomes in all virtual or other physically distanced programming.
- Libraries may need to significantly reimagine service delivery models to adopt the guidance, including determining how to serve far fewer patrons in the library building at one time.
- As in previous economic downturns, libraries will likely see an increase in use by a wide variety of residents, including but not limited to job seekers, families, people experiencing homelessness and seniors.
- Libraries share many common features, but are also unique to their location and constituency. This will impact how and at what speed individual libraries offer certain services and programs.

## III. Planning to Restore In-Person Programs and Services

As stated on [covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance](https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance), before reopening, California requires all facilities, including libraries, to:

1. Perform a detailed risk assessment and implement a site-specific protection plan
2. Train employees on how to limit the spread of COVID-19, including how to [screen themselves for symptoms](#) and stay home if they have them
3. Implement individual control measures and screenings
4. Implement disinfecting protocols
5. Implement physical distancing guidelines

It's important that employees with COVID-19 know they should stay home. Your sick leave policies need to support that. See information on:

- [Government programs supporting COVID-19 sick leave and workers' compensation](#)
- [Family friendly practices for employers \(PDF\)](#)
- [Support for working families \(PDF\)](#)

In coordination with your local health department, determine when to have staff return and begin readying the facility for onsite services to the public. This could last for one day or up to a week or two, depending on the size of your staff and facility.

## Guidance Documents

Guidance for libraries is located in the [Industry Guidance for Retail](#), including additional specific information related to curbside pick-up protocols, including quarantining items, for libraries.

Though some of the Retail Guidance uses different language -- "customers," "shopping hours" and so on -- the information is still applicable to library staff and patrons.

Libraries should also adopt relevant elements from the [Industry Guidance for Office Workspaces](#) and [Industry Guidance for Museums, Galleries, Zoos, and Aquariums](#). This additional guidance is specified below.

The Retail, Office, and Museums et al. Guidance documents are structured in the same way. The first two sections in all three are identical: [Creating a worksite specific plan](#) and [adopting/implementing employee training](#).

In the three other sections of the Office Workspace Guidance and Museums et al. Guidance -- [Individual Control Measures and Screening](#); [Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols](#); and [Physical Distancing Guidelines](#) -- are some recommendations applicable to libraries. They're specified below:

## [Individual Control Measures](#)

*From the Office Workspace Guidance:*

- Employers must take reasonable measures to remind workers that they should use face coverings.

*From the Museums et al. Guidance:*

*(While very similar to Retail Guidance, this Guidance discusses volunteers, interns and visitors/patrons.)*

- Conduct temperature and/or symptom screening of "docents, interns, volunteers, etc."

- ❑ Encourage workers, volunteers, and visitors who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- ❑ Provide and ensure workers and volunteers use all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves where necessary.
- ❑ Face coverings are strongly recommended when employees are in the vicinity of others. Workers and volunteers should have face coverings available and wear them when in shared work areas, such as offices and other areas on the property. Face coverings must not be shared.
- ❑ Take reasonable measures, including posting signage at entrances, in strategic and highly-visible locations, and in reservation confirmations, to remind the public that they should use face coverings, practice physical distancing, to not touch their face, to frequently wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds, and to use hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Display a set of clearly visible rules for guests at entrance(s) that are to be a condition of entry. The rules could include instructions to use hand sanitizer, wear face coverings during the visit, maintain physical distance from employees and other guests/groups, avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces, contact information for the local health department, and changes to services. Whenever possible, the rules should be available digitally and include pictograms.
- ❑ Screen guests and visitors for symptoms upon arrival, ask that they use hand sanitizer, and that they wear a face covering. Face coverings should be provided to guests who arrive without them. Babies and children under age two should not wear face coverings, in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidelines.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

#### *From the Office Workspace Guidance:*

- ❑ Avoid sharing phones, other work supplies, or office equipment wherever possible. Never share personal protective equipment.
- ❑ Disinfect between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, the following: shared office equipment such as copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, surfaces in reception areas, shared work stations, etc., with a cleaner appropriate for the surface.
- ❑ Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed.

#### *From the Museums et al. Guidance:*

- ❑ Avoid sharing phones, tablets, two-way radios, other work supplies, or office equipment wherever possible. Never share personal protective equipment.

- ❑ Frequently clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as grab bars, railings, placards, interactive exhibits, light switches, door handles, etc. Operators should identify and disinfect surfaces that children are more likely to touch, such as sections of windows and fence posts closer to the ground.
- ❑ Perform thorough cleaning of any outdoor and indoor areas that employees or the public are likely to use or occupy. This should include high traffic areas and shared workspaces (offices, meeting rooms, break rooms, etc.), and areas of ingress and egress (handrails, stairways, elevator controls, etc.)
- ❑ Where such items must be shared, disinfect between shifts or uses with a cleaner appropriate for the surface, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment, such as copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, terminals, ATM PIN pads, staplers, staple removers, surfaces in reception areas, shared work stations, audio and video equipment (microphones, microphone stands, mixer boards, TV monitors, etc.), walkie talkies, tables and chairs, penny machines, photo booths, vending machines, etc.
- ❑ Instruct employees to wipe down and disinfect equipment that passes between employees and guests such as pens, reusable maps, etc.
- ❑ Equip workplace terminals with proper sanitation products, including hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.
- ❑ Ensure that sanitary facilities for employees and guests stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Provide hand sanitizer and portable sinks for visitors where possible at high traffic areas such as entrances.
- ❑ Follow the [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#) recommended by the California Department of Public Health.
- ❑ Take steps to ensure that all [water systems](#) and features such as drinking fountains and decorative fountains are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water.

### Physical Distancing Guidelines

#### *From the Office Workspace Guidance:*

- ❑ Utilize telework options and modified work schedules.
- ❑ Redesign office spaces, cubicles, etc. and decrease the capacity for conference and meeting to ensure workspaces allow for six feet between employees.
- ❑ Close or restrict common areas, using barriers, or increasing physical distance between tables/chairs where personnel are likely to congregate and interact,

such as kitchenettes and break rooms, and discourage employees from congregating in high traffic areas such as bathrooms, hallways, and stairwells.

- ❑ Establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic, if possible, to eliminate employees from passing by one another.
- ❑ Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator and ensure the use of face coverings. Post signage regarding these policies.
- ❑ Utilize work practices, when feasible and necessary, to limit the number of employees at the office at one time. This may include scheduling (e.g. staggering start/end times), establishing alternating days for onsite reporting, returning to the office workspace in phases, or continued use of telework when feasible.
- ❑ Discontinue nonessential travel and encourage distance meetings via phone and internet.
- ❑ Require employees to avoid handshakes and similar greetings that break physical distance.
- ❑ Dedicate staff to direct guests to meeting rooms upon entry to office space rather than congregating in lobbies or common areas.

*From the Museums et al. Guidance:*

- ❑ Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between workers and guests and between people waiting in lines. This can include use of physical partitions, Plexiglas barriers, or visual cues (e.g., floor markings or signs to indicate to where employees and guests should stand).
- ❑ Designate separate routes for entry and exit through exhibits, galleries, viewing areas and employee workspaces to help maintain physical distancing and lessen the instances of people closely passing each other, if possible. Establish one-way directional walkways, passageways, hallways, etc. for foot traffic, if possible, to minimize crossflow of people moving around exhibit and workspaces.
- ❑ Display signage at entrances, waiting and viewing areas, and throughout exhibit spaces to remind people of physical distancing, face coverings usage, and proper hand hygiene at every opportunity.
- ❑ Consider implementing timed and/or advanced reservation ticketing systems to stagger patron visits and help maintain physical distances.
- ❑ Limit customer groups entering the facility to a household unit. People from the same household do not need to physically distance from one another.
- ❑ Rearrange seating areas, tables, chairs, benches, etc., and/or remove seats to allow for a minimum of six feet of physical distance between users. Post signage at shared, immovable seating (benches, etc.) to remind guests to physically distance from others outside their party
- ❑ Close indoor playgrounds, play areas, climbing structures, etc., in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidelines.



- ❑ Redesign parking lots to limit congregation points and ensure proper separation (e.g. every other space or row, contactless payment, etc.)

## Additional Issues to Address before Reopening

### Budgetary Requirements

- ❑ Request budget changes required to implement new policies and/or digital resources.
  - Discuss with city/county officials (or university officials) and then determine cleaning procedures and costs (who is responsible and when) in order to resume services and programs.
  - Discuss if security costs may increase to support physical distancing guidance or to manage other temporary changes in library procedures due to COVID-19, including limitations in how long patrons may stay in the building and for what purposes, recommendations or requirements on patron face coverings, etc.
  - Consider only reopening certain branches at first, to ensure proper staffing and security.

### Cleaning Library Spaces

*This information is in addition to the Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols section above and the Industry Guidance for Retail*

- ❑ Clean library spaces before reopening. Even though the physical building has been closed for more time than the coronavirus can live on surfaces, other issues, such as dust, may need to be addressed.
- ❑ Consider whether a staff person should be designated for sanitation coordination, COVID-19 related purchases, etc.
- ❑ Consider suspending or modifying use of site resources that necessitate sharing or touching items. For example, consider suspending use of drinking fountains and instead encourage the use of reusable water bottles.
- ❑ The [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\), in collaboration with OCLC and Battelle](#) is testing and developing guidance for cleaning and disinfecting of library materials.
  - On March 30, the institute held a [webinar \(transcript\)](#) with Dr. David Berendes and Dr. Catherine Rasberry from the Centers for Disease Control. Libraries that participated asked questions about the ability of the coronavirus to live on the surface of typical library materials.

- Note the specific timing requirements on Page 10 of the [Industry Guidance for Retail](#), which states, “Libraries may also accept returned items in carts or other containers that can be **isolated and remain untouched for at least three days before handling or re-shelving.**”

#### Other Notes

- ❑ Given current Centers for Disease Control guidance, materials that have been left untouched since staff have been working from home **do not** need to be cleaned in any way that they would not ordinarily be.
- ❑ Consider postponing accepting new donations until existing materials are processed and a plan is in place for donation intake.
- ❑ For areas of the library only accessible to staff, libraries should request the same cleaning schedule as other city/county departments.

#### Staffing and Telework

- ❑ Plan to continue telework, as much as possible. If full telework is not available, consider part-time or rotating telework to decrease the number of staff in the library at any one time.
  - Have some staff indicated that they have long commutes, rely on public transportation, have childcare limitations because of school/camp closures, are part of a vulnerable population or live with someone who is? In these cases, is it possible to further support part-time or full-time telework?
  - Are the non-teleworkable jobs also primarily non-librarian jobs or specific types of librarian jobs? If so, is it possible to provide these staff with more teleworkable duties?

#### Training

- ❑ In addition to Topics for Employee (and Volunteer) Training information in the Industry Guidance for Retail, also:
  - Develop a plan to train/orient staff and volunteers to modified procedures;
  - Cross-train staff to take on critical responsibilities in the event of a staff shortage; and
  - Consider incorporating or adopting the [Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Model](#) (See Resources Appendix at the end of this document).

#### Temporary, Modified Policies/Operations

- ❑ In addition to the policies that may need to be implemented as a result of the above documents, also determine:

- Which paper processes can be completed electronically. Use of e-signatures, for example.
- If city/county/university guidelines for leave, return-to-work policies for vulnerable populations, or other guidelines require changes to accommodate conditions unique to libraries.

### Communication

- ❑ Post signage outside the library indicating upcoming changes in service, including if only staff may enter/exit.
- ❑ Share plans with community organizations, local businesses, schools and other stakeholders. Ask for help in sending out information about the library's services and review translations for cultural appropriateness, etc.

### Specific Issues for Medium/Large Library Buildings

- ❑ Consider organizing staff teams that only work in one part of the building to avoid physical contact with other teams.
- ❑ Bring staff back to the building in small groups.
- ❑ Weigh the feasibility of adding temporary handwashing stations for staff.

## IV. Programmatic Considerations

In evaluating resumption of in-person library services and programs, libraries are encouraged to consider first whether the program or service:

- ❑ Can be accomplished as effectively and equitably online; or,
- ❑ If not, is it possible to achieve the goal of the task or activity in an in-person manner that adopts physical distancing guidelines (described below).
- ❑ If neither of these are possible, libraries may:
  - Implement an alternative program or service that can be conducted online or in-person while adopting physical distancing guidelines; or
  - Postpone the task or activity until physical distancing is no longer recommended, with the knowledge that this could be until a vaccine is widely adopted.

### Restarting In-Person Services

We encourage libraries to begin restarting in-person services incrementally.

### Initial Programs/Services outside the Library Building

Below are examples of services libraries may initially offer as they begin to re-open their in-person services:

- ❑ Open the bookdrop and encourage the return of materials as well as plans for future in-library and online services.
- ❑ Extend Wi-Fi to the parking lot if not already offered; consider extending Wi-Fi further -- if applicable or if federal e-rate guidelines permit.
  - Identify if there is a community need to increase hotspot lending programs, alone or in conjunction with device lending programs. If not doing so already, consider making information about low-cost broadband subscription programs readily available on the library website or through reference services.
- ❑ If feasible, redirect library volunteers to remote volunteering opportunities. Continue or start contactless pickup services (curbside, trunk, etc.)
  - See specific information on Page 10-11 of the Retail Guidance.
  - Note that some libraries have included food distribution as part of this effort, in coordination with local activities.
- ❑ Home Delivery: Offer contactless delivery such as "Zip Books."

During this period, libraries should continue online services (job coaching, tutoring, ebook checkout, etc.).

### Initial Library Programs/Services inside the Library Building

As libraries reopen buildings, their role as a free, welcoming public space is as important as ever. Protecting the health and safety of staff and patrons will often require making changes beyond what is required by the worksite plan, training, individual control measures, physical distancing guidelines and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

During this time, consider strengthening partnerships with other local government departments and nonprofits in preparation for future requests related to job search, business loans, food insecurity, housing, etc.

Initially, consider adopting an appointment system -- to limit the number and duration of people in the building -- which can be accessed online in advance or in-person outside the building. Prioritizing certain in-library activities over others may be important to maintain physical distancing guidance.

- ❑ Follow the Retail Guidance and adjust maximum occupancy rules based on the size of the facility to limit the number of people inside at one time, using no more than 50% maximum occupancy.
- ❑ Examples of computer-based activities to consider prioritizing: benefit sign-up, job applications and training, and catalog use for those that do not have broadband or a device at home. This may differ based on local needs.
- ❑ Bookmobiles: Consider using bookmobiles to provide free Wi-Fi services in local neighborhoods; bring tables and chairs that can be spaced to meet physical distancing guidelines. Consider whether it is possible to loan devices from the bookmobile. No public entrance to the bookmobile.

After evaluating the success and limitations of initial in-building activities, consider expanding services. For example,

- ❑ Expand an appointment system, allowing both more people in the library at one time and for broader purposes.
- ❑ Re-start certain programs, such as in-person literacy services, with appropriate physical distancing in place and adaptations such as masks, acrylic shields or other tools.

**Note: Libraries with rentable meeting rooms, other areas for private events, etc., should keep those areas closed until large gatherings are allowed to resume modified or full operation through a specific reopening order and guidance.**

#### *Supporting physical distancing while providing services:*

- ❑ Provide remote technology assistance that does not require face-to-face support.
- ❑ Allow printing, but consider a paid email and release system, which some public and academic libraries employ today. This will decrease the likelihood of printers malfunctioning in a public area and questions/confusion on payment. Clean after each use.
- ❑ Develop and communicate policies for the following:
  - Patron screening and entry.;
  - Enforcement practices including social distancing and hygiene; and
  - Reporting of patrons with known or suspected COVID-19, if or as recommended by local or public health guidance.
- ❑ Identify if certain bathrooms will be made available for staff only.
  - If bathrooms are not close to where a staff member works, provide additional break time to account for extra travel.
- ❑ Practice physical distancing between staff and patrons. There are multiple strategies to accomplish this:
  - Use of smartphone applications that notify a person who is within six feet of someone else;
  - Installation of acrylic shields at desks; and
  - Floor markers and signage indicating appropriate spacing.

#### *Other potential changes*

- ❑ Consider reducing library building hours, particularly if many staff are members of vulnerable populations and must telework and/or the building and materials need to be cleaned more frequently.
- ❑ Consider special open hours for vulnerable populations, similar to the special hours many grocery stores use for seniors or those community members who are immunocompromised.

## Appendix A: Recommended Timing to Restore In-Person Activities

*Always consider first whether the same results can be achieved virtually*

Programs & Services	Initial	Next	Future
Bookdrop Open	Yes		
Parking Lot Wi-Fi	Yes		
Curbside Pick-up/ Home Delivery	Yes, Limit loans on games, toys	Yes	
Bookmobile	Yes, For outside Wi-Fi access	Yes, To enter with physical distancing	Yes
Interlibrary loan	Maybe, Depending on capacity	Yes	
Summer Reading	No	Yes, If distancing and disinfecting is possible	Yes
Appt System	No	Yes	
3D Printing Lab/ Makerspace	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Summer lunch	No	Yes, If distancing and disinfecting is possible	Yes
Appt System for more expansive uses	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Technology training	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity and size limits	Yes
Public Programming (Storytime, Book Clubs, Teen Gaming, Cultural, Fitness, etc.)	No	Yes, Depending on library physical distancing capacity	Yes
1-1 literacy, K12 tutoring	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Census 1-1 help	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Reference	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Readers' Advisory	No	Yes, Depending on library capacity	Yes
Outreach services	No	Yes, Depending on size limits, population	Yes
Room reservations	No	No	Yes

## Appendix B: Temporary policies, procedures, and plans to consider

- ❑ Staff
  - Emergency preparedness plan that includes contingency staffing.
  - Provision of masks, gloves, etc., if needed.
  - Determine if breaks for frequent handwashing are allowed/encouraged and how this impacts staffing needs.
  - Determine paper processes that can be completed electronically (e.g., e-signatures).
  - Determine if city/county/university guidelines for leave, return to work policies for vulnerable populations, or other guidelines require additions to accommodate conditions unique to libraries.
  - Updated leave policies to reflect current health risks, existing contracts or decisions by local government/universities, if applicable.
  
- ❑ Physical Space
  - Library floorplan reconfiguration
    - For staff who must be on site, reconfigure staff desks to support social distancing requirements.
  - Implementation of one-way markers.
  - Elevator and stair use.
  - Use of restrooms and common areas (staff and patrons). This may also include one-way markers.
  - Update signage with information about handwashing and ensure there is adequate soap, or secondarily, hand sanitizer.
  
- ❑ Services
  - Contactless pick-up (if implementing).
  - Extended check-out, particularly for existing/new Wi-Fi hotspot and device lending programs.
  
- ❑ Health and Safety:
  - Procedure to support social distancing between staff and between staff and patrons.
  - Procedure to support frequent handwashing.
  - Procedure to clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items shared by staff.
  - When patrons begin entering the building, develop a procedure to clean and disinfect computers or other commonly touched public surfaces.
  - Updated library use policy (meeting the library's mission with social distancing measures, prohibited actions, general conduct), and role/limitations of additional security, if necessary.

- Patron screening and entry. Consider other public health outbreaks that may be taking place within your community.
- Patron education on hygiene and social distancing while at the library, including whether and how masks or gloves are provisioned.
- Enforcement practices including social distancing and hygiene.
- Procedures if staff or patrons with known or suspected COVID-19 become ill.
- Procedure for reporting a staff person with known or suspected COVID-19 (if not already done)
- Communication
  - Post signs on entry/exits clearly explaining what services are available and how to access
  - Signage providing location of soap and hand sanitizer
  - Outreach to
    - Local government
    - Taxpayers
    - People for whom your essential services are targeted
    - Typical patrons
      - Explain how services are different (hours, access, processes) and how they are the same. Explain in plain language.
      - Share how the library experience will be different, but that we are in this together.



## Appendix C: Resources & Plans

### Online Resources:

#### State Of California

- California's Main Website for COVID-19 Information: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>
- County Reopening Information: <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/#track-data>
- General Reopening Guidance for ALL Industries: <https://covid19.ca.gov/industry-guidance/#top>
- Retail, includes library curbside services: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-retail.pdf>
- Offices: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-office-workspaces.pdf>
- Schools: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools.pdf>
- Zoos and Museums: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-zoos-museums.pdf>

#### State Library:

- General Information: [www.library.ca.gov/covid-19](http://www.library.ca.gov/covid-19)
- Online and Remote Programming Resources: <https://www.library.ca.gov/services/remote-resources/>
  - Submit additional ideas: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OnlineProgrammingResourcesforCALibraries>
- State Library and California Library Association Joint Information: <https://www.cla-net.org/page/7-1>

#### Institute of Museum and Library Services

- IMLS, OCLC, Battelle Partnership
  - <https://www.imls.gov/webinars/mitigating-covid-19-when-managing-paper-based-circulating-and-other-types-collections>
  - <https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html>
- <https://imls.gov/blog/2020/05/wi-fi-wheels-how-and-why-libraries-are-bringing-their-services-communities>

#### Selected Resources from Other States

- Montana's Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Model: <https://www.njstatelib.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Montana-State-Library.pdf>
- Indiana: <https://blog.library.in.gov/considerations-for-reopening-if-the-library-board-or-staff-still-have-concerns/>

- National: <https://programminglibrarian.org/articles/serving-patrons-experiencing-homelessness-covid-19-shutdown>

#### Plans

- A Phased Reopening Plan for Libraries as COVID 19 Restrictions Are Lifted, John Thill, April 20, 2020. <https://medium.com/@john.alan.thill/a-phased-reopening-plan-for-libraries-as-covid-19-restrictions-are-lifted-2d96885c0c1d>
- Nevada’s draft re-opening guidance: [https://nsla.nv.gov/ld.php?content\\_id=54756912](https://nsla.nv.gov/ld.php?content_id=54756912)
- Indiana Library Federation’s draft reopening guidance: [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ilfonline.org/resource/resmgr/2020\\_pandemic\\_resources/planelementsphasesofpandemic.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ilfonline.org/resource/resmgr/2020_pandemic_resources/planelementsphasesofpandemic.pdf)
- Wyoming State Library’s staged re-opening plan: <https://library.wyo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Staged-Reopening-Plan.pdf>
- Cook County’s re-opening plan: <https://www.cooklib.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-04-21-rev.pdf>
- Midlothian Public Library’s re-opening plan: [https://www.ila.org/content/documents/tentative\\_reopen\\_plan\\_midlothian\\_pl.pdf](https://www.ila.org/content/documents/tentative_reopen_plan_midlothian_pl.pdf)
- Summary of several re-opening plans in the Chicago suburbs: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/park-ridge/ct-prh-library-reopen-planning-tl-0423-20200416-abc7cznvs5gobdc2mytltqhh3e-story.html>



# COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Retail

May 19, 2020

[covid19.ca.gov](https://covid19.ca.gov)



## OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by employees (where respiratory protection is not required) and customers/clients,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training employees on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

## PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for retailers to support a safe, clean environment for workers. The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any employee rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.<sup>1</sup> Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their [Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus webpage](#). CDC has additional guidance [for businesses and employers](#) and for [food and grocery retailers](#).



## Worksite Specific Plan

- Establish a written, worksite-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every facility, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas, and designate a person at each facility to implement the plan.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the facility is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among employees.
- Train and communicate with employees and employee representatives on the plan.
- Regularly evaluate the workplace for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected employee and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive employee(s) and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.



## Topics for Employee Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).
- The importance of not coming to work if employees have symptoms of COVID-19 as [described by the CDC](#) such as a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).

- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when employees cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per [CDC guidelines](#)).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
  - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
  - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
  - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Face coverings should be washed after each shift.
- Ensure temporary or contract workers at the facility are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary and/or contract workers.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information [on government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including employee's sick leave rights under [the Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).



## Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the establishment. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with workers to the extent possible. Both screeners and employees should wear face coverings for the screening.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker leaving the home for their shift and follows [CDC guidelines](#), as described in the Topics for Employee Training section above
- Encourage workers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- Employers should provide and ensure workers use face coverings and all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves where necessary. This includes protections for cashiers, baggers, and other workers with regular and repeated interaction with customers.
- Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.
- Employees should also be provided and use protective equipment when offloading and storing delivered goods. Employees should inspect deliveries and perform disinfection measures prior to storing goods in warehouses and facilities when there are signs of tampering.
- Face coverings are strongly recommended when employees are in the vicinity of others. Workers should have face coverings available and wear them in retail facilities, offices, parking lots or garages, or in company-owned vehicles. Face coverings must not be shared.
- Retailers must take reasonable measures, including posting signage in strategic and highly-visible locations, to remind the public that they should use face coverings and practice physical distancing.



## Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning in high traffic areas, such as break rooms, lunch areas and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, escalators, handrails, and elevator controls. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces, including shopping carts, baskets, conveyor belts, registers (including self-checkout), scanners, register telephones, hand-held devices, counters, door handles, shelving, ATM PIN pads, customer assistance call buttons, handwashing facilities, etc.
- Clean and sanitize shared equipment, including but not limited to, pallet jacks, ladders, supply carts, time clocks, payment portals, and styluses between each use.
- Clean touchable surfaces between shifts or between users, whichever is more frequent, including but not limited to working surfaces, tools, and stationary and mobile equipment controls.
- Equip customer entrances and exits, checkout stations, customer changing rooms with proper sanitation products, including hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes, and provide personal hand sanitizers to all frontline staff (e.g., cashiers).
- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed.
- Provide resources to promote employees' personal hygiene. This will include tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, adequate time for hand-washing, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, disinfectants, and disposable towels.
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer's directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves and other protective equipment as required by the product instructions.
- Adjust or modify store hours to provide adequate time for regular, thorough cleaning and product stocking. Stagger stocking so that associates are in different aisles.



- Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employees' job duties. Procure options for third-party cleaning companies to assist with the increased cleaning demand, as needed.
- Install hands-free devices, if possible, including motion sensor lights, contactless payment systems, automatic soap and paper towel dispensers, and timecard systems.
- Encourage the use of debit or credit cards by customers, for example, through signage, encourage customers to clean their reusable bags frequently through in-store signage, and require customers who bring reusable bags to bag their own purchases.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices and other spaces.



## Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Retailers should create clearly-marked curbside or outside pickup points that maintain physical distance with visual cues or other measures, and have purchased goods available there or available through home delivery.
- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between workers and customers. This can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, or signs to indicate to where workers and/or employees should stand).
- Take measures at checkout stations to minimize exposure between cashiers and customers, such as Plexiglas barriers. Employees should also wear face coverings and customers are strongly recommended to wear face coverings as well. Some jurisdictions already require face coverings outside the home. Display signage at entrances, checkout lanes, and registers to remind customers of physical distancing at every opportunity.
- Consider offering workers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (e.g., managing inventory rather than working as a cashier or managing administrative needs through telework).
- Adjust in-person meetings, if they are necessary, to ensure physical distancing and use smaller individual meetings at facilities to maintain physical distancing guidelines.

- Place additional limitations on the number of workers in enclosed areas to ensure at least six feet of separation to limit transmission of the virus.
- Stagger employee breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Close breakrooms, use barriers, or increase distance between tables/chairs to separate workers and discourage congregating during breaks. Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade covers and seating that ensures physical distancing.
- Close in-store bars, bulk-bin options, and public seating areas and discontinue product sampling.
- Dedicate shopping hours for vulnerable populations, including seniors and those medically vulnerable, preferably at a time following a complete cleaning.
- Increase pickup and delivery service options for customers to help minimize in-store contact and maintain social distancing, such as online ordering and curbside pick-up.
- Provide a single, clearly designated entrance and separate exit to help maintain physical distancing where possible.
- Adjust maximum occupancy rules based on the size of the facility to limit the number of people in a store at one time, using no more than 50% maximum occupancy.
- Be prepared to queue customers outside while still maintaining physical distance, including through the use of visual cues.
- Encourage employees to practice physical distancing during pickup and delivery by talking with the customer through a passenger window, loading items directly into the customer's trunk without contact, or leaving items at their door.
- Make some locations pickup- or delivery-only to minimize employee/customer contact, where possible.
- Install transfer-aiding materials, such as shelving and bulletin boards, to reduce person-to-person hand-offs where possible. Wherever possible, use contactless signatures for deliveries.
- Expand direct store delivery window hours to spread out deliveries and prevent overcrowding.
- Ask non-employee truck drivers, delivery agents, or vendors who are required to enter retail locations to have their employees follow the guidance of local, state, and federal governments regarding wearing face coverings and PPE.



## **Additional Considerations Drive-In Retail, Including Drive-In Movie Theaters**

- For drive-in operations, such as movie theaters or restaurants, vehicles must be spaced at least six feet apart and no gatherings outside of vehicles should take place. Parking spaces for viewing at drive-in theaters must be limited to either every other spot or reconfigured to ensure adequate distancing between vehicles.
- Each vehicle may only be occupied by members of the same household who have already been in close contact with each other. If not utilizing restroom facilities or picking up concessions, patrons must remain in their vehicles. Patrons cannot sit outside of their vehicles, e.g., to view a drive-in movie near their vehicle.
- There must be regular cleaning and sanitizing of on-site restrooms for drive-in retail facilities and drive-in movie theaters.
- Cashless and touchless transactions systems are preferred wherever possible. If available, orders, reservations and payments for the drive-in business should be made in advance online or over the phone.
- Drive-in movie theater concessions should be ordered online or over the phone, if possible, and be available for curbside pick-up. Walk-up concession services should be available for pick-up of pre-ordered items. Patrons should wear face coverings when picking up pre-ordered items from the concessionaire. If pre-ordering items is not possible, ensure that customers maintain proper physical distancing when waiting to order food items.
- Drive-in movie theaters should suspend double-feature offerings to limit the amount of time patrons spend on-site and avoid the need for intermissions.
- Any playgrounds, outdoor eating areas, picnic tables, or other amenities at drive-in movie theaters should be closed.



## Curbside Pick-up for Libraries

- Libraries can offer curbside pick-up for items patrons place on hold or through another type of reservation-based system. Patrons should place a hold in the library's online catalog or make an appointment in order to make use of the curbside pick-up service. Libraries should consider how to support equity issues for patrons without mobile devices or internet access at home. For example, promote a phone number for readers' advisory services and check-out.
  - In addition to making materials like books and movies available, libraries may consider single-use projects (like take-home craft kits) that can be linked to a library's online programming.
  - Libraries should limit loans of games and toys.
- Once the library item is available, patrons should receive an email or phone call indicating that the item is ready for curbside pick-up. Libraries should put signage in appropriate, clearly-marked places to indicate the curbside pick-up instructions, e.g. where to park.
- Libraries may have patrons call the library when they arrive at the curbside pick-up location.
- Libraries should institute a contactless curbside pick-up system. For example, this could involve staff placing the pre-ordered items on a table or in a cart near the parking lot or designated curbside pick-up location with instructions that patrons wait to retrieve the items until library staff and other patrons have left the area. Items should be placed in labeled bags for ease of pick-up and to avoid unnecessary contact with the items.
- If a patron has mobility issues, libraries should provide accommodations, such as placing bagged items on the hood or in the trunk of a patron's vehicle. If this is not the contactless method the library is already instituting, patrons should request this when calling the library upon arrival.
- If feasible, libraries should implement contactless return system. Libraries may also accept returned items in carts or other containers that can be isolated and remain untouched for at least three days before handling or re-shelving.
  - The federal [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#), in collaboration with OCLC and Battelle, is creating and distributing science-based information and recommended practices designed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors who

are engaging in the delivery or use of museum, library, and archival services.

- This research will include testing and developing guidance for cleaning and disinfecting of library materials. Visit [oc.lc/realm-project](https://oc.lc/realm-project) to receive project updates.
- Libraries should consider additional steps when instituting curbside pick-up, including:
  - Discuss if security costs may increase to support staff entering or exiting the facility or to manage temporary changes in the library procedures.
  - Consider only offering curbside service at certain branches first to ensure proper staffing and security.
  - Consider supporting physical distancing for staff in the building by implementing one-way markers in the library stacks.
  - Share plans with community organizations, local businesses, schools and other stakeholders. Ask for help in sending out information about the library's services and to review translations for cultural appropriateness.
  - For medium/large library buildings, weigh the feasibility of adding temporary handwashing stations for staff if needed to support frequent handwashing.
- The California State Library will produce additional guidance on other services libraries can perform in future phases of the roadmap.

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<sup>1</sup>Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. The retail industry must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, employers must be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.

