

**Gardiner Public Library COVID-19 Policy on library use:  
(DRAFT): June 29, 2020**

As the State of Maine begins opening sectors of its economy, public libraries have begun doing the same. The Gardiner Public Library serves a population of 18,000 spread out over 6 towns. Since March, the library has been closed as per the practice of Gardiner City Hall. Public libraries were not designated as a business sector even though data shows that millions of people walk through Maine public libraries in a year. Many of these people come from out of state as libraries offer archival and genealogical services. A library is a unique business; people come in to use computers, check out items, read magazines and newspapers and visit with staff. Libraries are often called the “third place” for many senior citizens and for community children. Libraries also need items returned so that they may re-circulate.

The following COVID-19 policies address the opening and operations of the Gardiner Public Library: This policy will be updated as more information becomes available about this coronavirus.

- **Employee Hours of Work and Customer Service Hours**
  - Full-time staff members will work Monday – Friday, 9:30-5:30 with a .50 hour unpaid lunch period.
  - Staff members may be asked to adjust work time so that the library may offer one day of evening takeout service.
  - Part-time staff members will work Monday – Friday as assigned by the library director or designee.
  - Customer Service will be window service only and will be opened 11AM – 5PM on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday or by a pre-arranged appointment. The window will remain opened until 6PM on Wednesdays.
  - The staff of the library will begin allowing limited inside visits in or around July 13, 2020.
  
- **Public Library Services:**
  - Other City employees may gain entrance into the building. They will be required to wear a face mask.
  - Upon re-opening the library, visitors inside the building will be limited. Wearing of a face mask is mandatory and anyone who cannot comply with this policy may make an appointment for alternate library services. If meeting with a staff member outside the library, the staff member must wear a mask.
  - Staff will ask all visitors to use hand sanitizer before moving about the building.
  - Visitor capacity will be determined by COVID-19 standards.
  - The staff of the library cannot guarantee that the building will be cleaned after every visit.
  - The Archives Room will remain closed except by appointment only. The appointments for this room will be managed by the Archivist.
  - Library users will have a 30 minute time limit for their visit. This will have to be managed by staff gatekeepers at the back entrance door. The front door will remain locked and visitors will be asked to come and go through the back door.
  - Use of the upstairs Children’s Room will be by appointment only. The Children’s Librarian will maintain entrance and exits from that floor. In the early stages of opening, staff will only allow one family into the Children’s Room at a time.
  - The Hazzard Reading Room will remain closed and staff will use the space for storage of all furniture that may encourage longer stays in the building.
  - We will continue takeout window service so that people who are concerned about coming into the building may still have access to library services.
  - The director will curtail hours to weekdays only as the small opening time on Saturday does not allow for the building to be cleaned after being opened all day Friday (Custodial staff leaves early on Friday during the summer).

- Staff will set up a gmail account so that people needing copier or faxing service may have access to copier/fax services without staff having to touch these items.
  - There will be no computer services offered in this phase of re-opening.
  - The Director may need to purchase a few iPads that could be handed off to people needing to do Internet research. Studies indicate that the COVID virus may stay on surfaces for up to 72 hours.
  - Late fees or printing fees will be suspended as the library does not take credit cards.
  - The Director will work out a schedule so that custodian may come down multiple times a day to wipe down public spaces.
  - The bathroom will remain closed to everyone except those with an immediate need. After use, the room will remain closed until the custodian can get down to the library and disinfect it.
  - Beginning on or about June 1, 2020, library staff will light up local reserve requesting on the MINERVA system. Users may request, in advance, any items that are locally held at the library.
  - People requesting new library cards will be asked to come into the building to fill out an application. If any person does not wish to enter the building, they will be handed an application by staff with a stamped envelope returnable to the Gardiner Public Library. A new library card will be mailed via the USPO to the applicant in no later than 4 days.
  - The outside item drop boxes will remain closed so that staff can manage the returns.
  - Beginning on or about June 1, 2020, the library staff will notify the public when the return bins are opened via a Facebook post, in a voicemail message and on the library website ([www.gpl.lib.me.us](http://www.gpl.lib.me.us)). Depending on data determining the lifespan of the COVID-19 virus; these bins will have limited accessibility.
  - All writing utensils, handouts, magazines and newspapers will be removed. Magazines and newspapers may be checked out by users.
  - Until the statewide delivery service is resumed and the Interlibrary Loan System lit up, library staff may only circulate locally owned titles.
- **Public Meetings**
    - Until further notice, the continuation of public meetings will be held via Zoom (library has an account) or another form of meeting program.
- **Personnel Management and COVID-19**
    - Any individual that co-habitats with a person that has a confirmed case of COVID-19 will require a medical release and/or be tested for COVID-19 before returning to work. Until further notice, if an employee travels outside the state they will be required to self-quarantine for the mandatory fourteen (14) days or be tested for the virus. New Hampshire and Vermont visits are currently exempted per the Governor's order. If more areas are exempted; visits to these places will not require testing and/or quarantining. This time will not be 'covered' by the city, but must be taken as unpaid time off, sick time, or vacation time.
    - Any employee that displays symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) should be sent home immediately. Fire Chief Nelson will contact the employee to evaluate the symptoms and exposure. All health information collected will be kept in strict confidence. If the employee is sent home, the City will treat the absence as paid time until they are able to return symptom free and/or have completed the recommended fourteen (14) day quarantine. Normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place for all other illnesses.
    - If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, has been exposed to COVID-19, or needs to take care of a family member that has been diagnosed, the employee will not be allowed to return to work until they have completed the fourteen (14) day quarantine.
    - If the city is open for business and the employee chooses not to report to work due to general concern of contracting COVID-19, the employee will be required to use accrued time. There are certain situations that fall under the CARES Act or FMLA; please see HR Director Brown for specifics.