Plan Outline in Phases *from Library Closure to Reopening* – COVID-19 Global Pandemic

This **WORKING document** is developed through networking and sharing meetings with Indiana's Public Library Director community, facilitated by Indiana Library Federation. Networking and sharing sessions are open to all Indiana libraries, regardless of ILF membership, for this crisis period. This document is intended for **Library Administration-level planning and policies and NOT for programming ideas**, as they are posted elsewhere. This does not include any legal advice, and information contained in this document is subject to change with each phase based on evolving COVID-19 emergency and guidance from CDC and state officials. Library directors may suggest specific CREDIBLE sources or samples by emailing ILF for posting at www.ilfonline.org/page/covid-19. Latest version 4/24/2020.

This document outlines five possible phases from emergency closure to reopened full library services, describing key questions, considerations, and observations, based on key areas in each phase. At time of initial publication (3/22), most libraries were in Phase 1 or 2, closed for emergency, assessing staff and library resources, and defining essential services. Where available, resources are suggested.

Phase 1: **Activate Emergency Closure** (similar to weather event closure; goal is to stop community spread)
Phase 2: **Assess Resources and Define Terms for Extended Closure to the Public** (Assess library staff and resources. Define essential services.)
Phase 3: **Provide Essential Services while facility is closed to public and stay-at home order and/or shelter in place remains community priority**. (Focus is on eResources, support for patrons in need (families at home, isolated, government units, and nongovernmental organizations.)
Phase 4: **Reopen Certain, Limited Areas of Building**; most library services resumed, though may be with different processes. (Focus is on allowable library services and responding to community needs, i.e. helping residents with benefits; offering new programs to meet emerging needs).
Phase 5: **Reopen Library Spaces to Public**, likely with different space/seating/labs/meeting room rules, a designated Sanitation Officer and new processes for handling of physical connections. (Focus is on provision of library services, whatever that may require-TBD.)

Phase	Key Areas	Key questions, considerations and observations	Resources
Phase 1: Activate Emergency Closure *(timeline 3/16-3/23)*	1.1 Event, Consultation with, or direction by Officials	The first guidance from Governor Holcomb on the COVID-19 global pandemic was issued on 3/12/2020 limited meeting sizes to 250 persons. Guidance grew more aggressive in social distancing over days.	Use www.ilfonline.org/page/covid-19 for all posts and links
1.2	Exercise **Emergency Closure Policy**	• Weather emergencies allow the library director to determine closure. Is existing policy broad enough for the director to decide or does it need board action? • Depending upon timing of board meeting, approve a pandemic or health emergency policy. **Observations:** Most public libraries closed and are paying staff if scheduled to work during emergency closure, just as in a weather emergency. Some closed facilities to the public, with certain or all staff were reporting during the emergency closure. Remote work options and pay differentials are used in some libraries, depending	See Governor Holcomb's Executive Orders, specifically 20-04 related to public meetings (3/16), and ISL Memo (3/19) explaining public meetings.

Plan outline for phases of Public Library Response to COVID-19 Global Pandemic, a working document tool provided by Indiana Library Federation.
Learn more at www.ilfonline.org/page/covid-19.
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		upon responsibilities and in-library, remote work, or minimal work expectations. Management team is handling key areas.	See sample policies on www.ilfonline.org/page/covid-19
1.3	Exercise **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), also called Business Continuity Plan**	A **continuity of operations plan** will typically include: 1) **Strategic planning and procedures** – Under what circumstances would you exercise alternative business practices (natural or manmade disasters or health emergencies that impact ability to carry out mission and routine operations)? 2) **Organization/community** (people) What are the roles and responsibilities for staff? Describe lines of authority and delegation of responsibilities/authority. 3) **Core business processes** – What is absolutely essential to continue during different types of natural, manmade or health disaster events? (management team, IT to support eResources and system, payroll, etc.) 4) **Communications and information technology** (systems, applications) – Who has laptop or remote access? Secured connection? Logins and passwords? Emergency contacts and method of notifying all (phone, email, text)? 5) **Essential/vital records** (data/records management) – Consider payroll, timekeeping, and remote work access. If facility is damaged or working remotely, how are they accessed and protected? 6) **Facilities and security** – Who is checking on buildings and systems (utilities, IT), deliveries, mail, etc.? Do county/city emergency personnel have your plan and contact info? **Observation about plans:** Most libraries had prior experience with the concepts and practices in a continuity of operations plan, but may not have a formal COOP or Business Continuity Plan documented, approved by the board, or trained with staff. Additionally, libraries need to maintain core COOP documents, including board, staff, and vendor contact lists with key personnel offsite.	FEMA offers a template business continuity plan. Learn more about COOP.
1.4	**Communications** and **Notifications**	Communicate with key stakeholders about closure. Post notices on facilities, in print and electronic media. Communicate with board and staff. If needed, suspend deliveries, mail, vendor work (repairs, construction, installations). Contact all scheduled for meeting rooms and events. Contact other units of government, bus/transportation services, key service provider partners (i.e. child care centers, group homes, others with regular visits) etc.	Examples on ILF COVID-19 page
1.5	**Other** considerations	Make provisions for library pets/animals.	

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Phase 2: **Assess Resources and Define Terms for Extended Closure of facility to the Public** *(timeline 3/20 through [last date of your stated closure])*	**2.1 Board update closure policy to include pandemic/health emergency**. Adopt related policies.	**Pandemic/health emergency policy** varies from general emergency preparedness policy, as serious infectious disease outbreak may require extended period of limited services by library. Policy may include: • how closure is determined based on levels of infection control, impact on library, or direction by local/state officials; • human resources considerations such as absences, remote work, and compensation; • communicate with staff; • sanitation measures, social distance practices, other guidance from officials; • use of library facilities (building, parking lot) or other library assets (communications, website, staff) during disaster. Examples might include facility/parking for use by government units (county, National Guard) or nongovernmental organizations (Red Cross, hospital)? May your healthy staff volunteer to serve in other areas if being paid by library?; • determine different levels of essential services, based on staffing/resource availability (online presence only; limited staff only in building; limited services by appointment, etc.). **Observations:** Many libraries amended sick leave and remote work policies, making allowances for 14-day quarantine. Policies also addressed travel restrictions, remote work, pay differentials, cancellation of planned PTO during closure, etc. (This was before federal legislation requiring sick pay.) Most libraries focused on eResources and online services (Ask-a-librarian, social media, Wi-FI) only for public service during emergency closure, while a few tried curbside service. Most policies require staff to work remotely as able, with certain staff reporting to library in limited ways.	See full CDC guidance for employers. (Because it is overwhelming to review all resources, ILF excerpts most requested tools for your convenience). See sample tools and policies on ILF COVID-19 page, including Sanitation Measures and Facilities Tips Vendor links include John Auld- re HR compliance and more RE Sutton /Brown and Brown See resources from Bose McKinney Evans LLP on ILF page
2.2	Emergency logistics	Not knowing how long closure will last, what are the most urgent items that key staff need immediately for first days/week of emergency closure? • provisions for emergency access to laptops, paper files, things to take home for remote work (open library certain hours of day for certain staff to come in shifts to retrieve items) • staff prepare laptops, User ID/Passwords for remote work (laptops, hotspots, what files if no VPN) • reminder for staff about home internet security if no secure connection or library-provided laptops • processes for managing deliveries, mail, payroll, bill paying, trash removal, book drop, and vendor work while communications is under way	

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2.3	Internal Communications	• Determine regular communications with staff (i.e every day/MWF/TR, all staff will hold a conference call/online meeting at 2pm; all staff should check email by 9am for instructions) • Be clear on expectations for staff check-in. Relay short status report--what you know *and* what you don't know. • Check in on health, safety, and watch for mental health concerns. If time, try personal check-ins with each staff member at least weekly, or designate managers to do so. • Provide regular short status updates to Board. **Observation:** Should a staff member become ill, follow legal guidance on what you are allowed to share or ask.	See HR webinar provided by Jackson Lewis PC for AIM 3/17. See CDC Managing Stress
2.4	External Communications	Determine who, including a backup person, is communicating with key external audiences: • Local units of government • Vendors • News Media • Patrons, students, key community partners • Social media Determine core messages for reinforcing throughout all messages, including (as applicable): • Physically closed for health safety of public to reduce community spread • Do not return materials; book drops are closed temporarily. • Fines are suspended until DATE • eResources (describe) are available online at WEBLINK • Staff are available through [Ask-a-librarian, telephone, email, weblink] • We will see you when we can serve you safely. Determine signage for parking, doors, and throughout building. **Observations:** ILF urges libraries to update their websites to describe how while the facility is closed, CERTAIN (describe) library services are continuing. and how to use them. Explain online resources. Some libraries are issuing specific regular email updates to patrons and external audiences. Some libraries are offering direct mail, or even reaching residents/patrons through radio (especially in areas with poor cell service and limited internet availability).	Sample closure messages and social media messages posted at www.ilfonline.org/page/covid-19

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2.5	Staff Health and Safety, including Mental Health	Physical health • Staff with compromised health or risk factors should shelter in place. • Offer training / and post reminders about handwashing, not touching face, and sanitizing door handles, buttons, etc. • If healthy staff without are going into library during closure to public, develop process for sanitizing surfaces, maintaining physical distance in work space, and not sharing any physical items like pens, computer mice, keyboards. • Remind staff who report feeling sick, or how have someone in the home sick to self-quarantine. Mental health • Create opportunities for telephone or online connection for light, social, non-work, non-pandemic conversation. (One library offers weekly guided meditation.) • Discuss openly the challenges of new stressors, mental health, anxiety, and depression. Working remotely and not working can feel isolating. • Allow time and space to listen. During a crisis, people often lose their own coping skills, judgement, and confidence in decision-making or action. Often, people just need to be heard and to hear themselves to be reminded of their own skills. • Refer for professional help if prolonged or heightened.	See ILF compilation on Sanitation Measures. See CDC guidance or FSSA links for Indiana mental health and addiction resources. For more serious concerns, the national suicide prevention hotline, 1-800-273-8255, has trained volunteers and staff who can talk through issues and assess if additional help is needed.
2.6	Planning – **Assessment** of Essential Services and Library Resources	Most libraries announced closures until early April, though a stay-at-home order might be extended until late April. During this extended emergency closure of public facilities, take time to assess what possible library resources and essential services may be extended if health officials require extended closure of facility to the public. 1) **Honestly assess staff resources**. If a majority of staff is in risk groups, with compromised immunity or other caregiving responsibilities, or have limited or no ability to do remote work, the library services your library can offer will be limited. If a critical mass or majority of your staff is healthy and not otherwise compromised, start planning for to move to Phase 3 with limited, essential services. 2) Assess what **internal library functions** may be required even if closed to public (IT, security, trash removal, admin, HR, landscaping, etc.). 3) Assess what **public-facing services the community misses most** by the facility closure. (computers, Wi-Fi, circulating physical collections; meeting space; librarian reference; social connection with librarians; social connections with other patrons; assistance with COVID-19-related unemployment and SNAP applications). Assess whether and how these are essential to your services, and	See sample Assessment guide on ILF COVID-19 page, as well as blood drive and other info. Note that IC 5-10-7 permits employee interchange programs between state and local agencies for purposes of intergovernmental cooperation.

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		whether or how they could be offered under prolonged physical distancing and sanitation recommendations. 4) Assess what **library resources may be needed for community-wide response**. Are there ways to support other local units through use of online meeting accounts, training, meeting rooms for government staff without internet at home? May healthy staff be deployed to open in limited circumstances or to be deployed through employee interchange to help other units of government (helping with processing unemployment, eligibility benefits online or over phone; delivering food) or nongovernmental units (Red Cross)?	
Phase 3: Provide Essential Services while facility is closed to public and stay-at-home remains community priority; pilot new ("Essential" may include pilots of curbside, appointment only for assistance apps, local unit collaboration, doc services)	3.1 **Provide essential services** *(timeline 4/6 [or whatever date you currently have listed as your closed to date] through 5/1 or may mirror timeline for schools and/or public events less than 10 people)*	Depending upon assessment during the phase above, and additional guidance from CDC and state officials, determine what essential services are maintained while public may not access the full library building. Actions during this phase are still developing, and may include the following additional considerations. • **Staffing / Personnel** o Possible change from emergency closure/pandemic policy to regular staff policy where employees o Staff reallocation and reassignment o Possible furloughs or layoffs o Assignment of contained staff teams or pods where staff teams will access certain parts of building and not others to avoid physical contact with other staff teams. May designate restrooms and access for different pods. Model after healthcare teams to minimize exposure should one team member become ill or have been exposed. o Training in safe handling, proper way to put on and take off gloves and if/when gloves are needed versus handwashing, proper way to clean o May bring staff back to building in small groups to prepare facility and processes. • **Programming/Services** o Continuation of eResources, Ask-a-librarian, Reference, and other services that may be conducted through remote work. o Continuation of virtual programming developed in Phase 2 o Development of modified collection handling processes, including sanitation measures, 24-hour hold before handling, re-shelving	

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		- Develop possible safe curbside service, contactless document services, contactless assistance for unemployment, SNAP, TANF, health coverage, e-government, and more. - Community Information page **Physical Space / items** – Consider how you *balance staff and patron safety with the overall goal of a user-friendly, welcoming environment*. Consider how certain items impact the culture of the library and - Designated limited entry for a limited period - Designated foot path through facility with 6-ft markings on floor - Limited people in building (i.e. 5 people for every 1000 sq ft) - Consider ordering necessary PPE (esp. gloves) and EPA-approved cleaning supplies - Consider carefully whether the library seeks to provide sneeze guards or plexi for areas—is this for staff or patron safety or for the perceived safety? - Order sanitation supplies, including ways to cover/sanitize keyboards, self-check stations, computer areas, handles, etc. - Order additional cameras and set up computers to enable online assistance with individuals using computers rather than close-contact assistance - Makers make face masks for all staff and patrons Any temporary policies/procedures needed? - Enhanced cleaning/sanitation - All staff are asked to wear masks in common areas and when outside their private offices/work spaces	
	Internal Communications	- How will new online programming be registered and tracked for statistics? - How will library staff share information with each other if some continue working remotely? - If temporary or pilot policies and practices are developed, how are these communicated to all staff? - How will new required trainings be documented? - How are you addressing staff anxiety in communications? Repeat messages in multiple methods (writing, one-on-one, online meetings, etc.) as the stressed brain takes longer to process new info.	

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	External Communications	What signage and messaging is needed in parking, on doors, and throughout building? How does your signage / messaging communicate how you are taking care to keep staff/patrons safe and how you remain welcoming, friendly, and here to serve? How does your communications plan address different external audiences: • Local units • Taxpayers • People for whom your essential services are targeted, but without driving demand beyond capacity • 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 as we are in this together.	
	Planning and Budget Considerations	Due to focus on eResources, possible reconfiguration of physical space to allow distancing, and/or staff reallocation to reflect new/different services, libraries may need to reallocate budget expenditures for 2020. Depending upon the length of phase 3 with very limited services and/or anticipated revenues in 2020 and 2021, library may need to initiate reductions. **Observations:** Library directors with long tenure recall the delays and reductions to property tax and Local Income Tax (LIT) after the 2009 recession. Note that ILF is offered special session on 4/20 so that directors may understand ILF's financial analysis completed late 2019 as a part of the PL 2030 initiative. ILF is concerned for libraries with low reserves.	
Phase 4: Reopen Certain, Limited Areas of Building;	*(timeline may start when State stay-at-home order is lifted—currently 5/1, though some people with compromised immunity either opt*	During this phase, community spread has flattened and some services are resuming due to availability of broader testing and treatment. This phase is uncertain at this time, as we monitor the spread, availability of testing and treatment, and guidance from state and local officials. Indiana libraries understand that library reopening dates may vary, as it is a local decision, based on local capacity, local needs and state and local health guidance, once the stay-at-home order is lifted.	

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begin new processes	*to, or are ordered to, remain at home.*	The key considerations for Phase 4 include availability of staff (library staff are the most valuable resource) to provide hours of operation (may need to reduce hours), availability of PPE for staff and sanitation supplies and processes, and the ability to transform the physical layout for safe traffic flow for grab-and-go service or appointment only application assistance. A significant number of library staff are in risk categories or are immunocompromised, which impacts library reopening and hours. Another
		
		In addition to considerations listed in Phase 3, other considerations might include:
		• Differentiating staff with risk factors and staff without.
		• Modified collection handling processes, including sanitation measures, 24-hour hold before handling/reshelving/availability for curbside and home delivery.
		• Designated foot path through facility with 6-ft markings on floor.
		• Anticipating what the community needs and finding ways to respond to those needs in augmented service delivery and/or new services altogether
		• Stronger partnerships with local units of government and nongovernmental organizations. Examples might include:
		   o library staff assist residents with online application processing - Unemployment, SNAP food, TANF cash, healthcare coverage, township trustee assistance, SBA loans, BMV processing, May 10 property tax payments, election ballots.
		   o Library provides online meeting, computers, space, to local government partners while public access to facility is limited.
		   o Library provides space for blood drive, food distribution, etc.
		
		As this and the next section are developed, we will add areas for logistics, updated policies, evidence-based practices, health and safety for staff and patrons, internal and external communications, etc.	

Phase 5: Reopen Library Spaces to Public	*(timeline TBD depending upon developments; anticipated by or in summer, subject to change)*	During this phase, community spread is managed or coronavirus has mutated. Library services resume, though services may evolve with temporary and permanent changes to services: • Health and sanitation officer/practices for every building • A level of distance seating as standard practice • Certain training for all staff on safe handling procedures	

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		• Reallocation funds and supportive services for print and electronic collections • Expanded home delivery program, with expanded eligibility criteria for patron participation, and possible health/risk factor screening for volunteers • Additional focus on instruction, especially online options • Additional pressures and considerations for ways libraries serve vulnerable and special populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, low-income and at-risk children, homeless, people affected by family violence. • Response to recession effects, including additional staff training and programming related to eligibility programs (SNAP, TANF, Medicaid), healthcare enrollment, unemployment insurance, legal/bankruptcy issues, financial management, stress management, job training and search, workforce development. • Increased efforts related to community building in new environment. • Additional efforts with IN Dept. of Child Services, related to anticipated increase in abuse and neglect • New partner organizations, unique to community needs	