



## LIBRARY REOPENING: PHASED PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

Like much of our community, we have had to adapt to the rapid series of changes during the COVID-19 situation. On March 18, 2020, we closed our facilities to the community and began to look for other ways to support patrons. While challenging, we have worked hard to provide new virtual programming and digital services and will continue to do so. We are committed to providing needed services to our community and have been deliberating greatly on what this will look like in the coming months.

It is now time to begin working toward our “new normal”. This plan for bringing back in-person services will occur in stages, while ensuring that the library continues to be mindful of the health and safety of both patrons and staff. Additionally, this plan is designed to be flexible to adapt to information as it becomes known and is based upon local, state, and federal guidance and borrows from the Nevada State Library Archives and Public Records/Nevada Library Association’s guidelines for Nevada Libraries on the best practices for reopening.

We are continuing to closely monitor the official recommendations from county, state, and federal agencies and will continue to update our plan and our communications as we have further information.

We know that our community has missed the library, as much as we have missed helping patrons, so we will continue to adapt and provide the best services we are able. This has been a learning experience, and we hope that the changes we make in the next few months prove beneficial and exciting.

On behalf of the Elko-Lander-Eureka County Library System Board of Trustees and staff, thank you for your patience while our buildings have been closed to comply with the State of Nevada’s Stay-At-Home Order. We look forward to welcoming you back into our buildings and working to rebuild a sense of normalcy.

Visit our website for up-to-date information and digital resources at <http://www.elkocountylibrary.org/>.

## GOALS

- Refocus immediate priorities to provide access to critical services
- Evaluate return of Bookmobile services based upon budget and local risks.
- Enforce social distancing and limits on gatherings (per NV Governor and local guidelines)
- Post signage for social distancing and proper hygiene throughout the library
- Provide ways to assist vulnerable/at-risk staff and customers (seniors, underlying health conditions, compromised immune systems)
- Implement safety measures including enhanced sanitization, barrier installation, various quarantine methods, and personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff
- Flexibility to move forward or backward, and flexibility to determine reduced or limited hours to allow for cleaning, sanitizing, and re-shelving.

## PHASE DEFINITIONS

These phases are meant as a guideline for library services as our communities begin to reopen. These phases are meant to be flexible and services may be changed and adapted as time goes on based upon staff and community needs. While the re-opening process has begun, it is a possibility to see a spike in cases or change in circumstances that results in a return to prior phases.

The Library Director may adjust services within a phase and if necessary, move services backward or forward based on new information or challenges.

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### PHASE 0

**Timeframe:** Began March 18, 2020.

**Context:** Stay-at-home order given by state and local authorities. Physical distancing is required. Infection risks are high. Supplies are limited and restocking ability is uncertain. Stay at home

**Summary:** Library buildings are closed to the public and all ILL's have been suspended statewide. Library access is limited to supervisory staff and remote work is encouraged when possible.

**Measures:**

External book drops closed at all locations

Increase in virtual services, including digital story times and crafts

Issuing temporary digital library cards for patrons to access online services

External WIFI access on during shutdown

Due dates for materials extended and late fines waived.

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## PHASE 1

**Timeframe:** Began May 18, 2020.

**Context:** Stay-at-home order is lifted by state and local authorities but does not include community hubs. Physical distancing is recommended, and infection risks are still high. Supplies are limited and restocking ability is uncertain. Consistent and sustainable downward trajectory of COVID-19 cases and decrease in the trend of COVID-19 hospitalizations over a 14-day period.

**Summary:** Library buildings remain closed to the public and scheduled staff start working onsite (under specific safety procedures) to prepare spaces, collections and technology for re-opening the buildings. Materials are subject to strict quarantining and cleaning guidelines.

**Measures:**

External book drops are open at all locations.

Virtual programming and services continue

Continue issuance of digital cards as needed

WIFI access still available at certain locations

Due dates for materials extended and late fines waived.

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## PHASE 2

**Anticipated Date:** dependent on local and state assessment of risk; library phases may not align with State of Nevada reopening phases.

**Context:** Physical distancing is recommended. Infection risks can be controlled through testing and contact tracing. We have enough supplies to comply with safety recommendations for public and staff, but supply needs and availability are uncertain.

**Summary:** Possibility for limited building access, but with reduced hours, as the intention is to provide access to materials (with possible curbside holds/materials pickup offered during specific hours and contactless home delivery), but not to encourage extended stays or gatherings. Branch locations will open on a case by case basis. Other services are limited or restricted.

**Measures:**

Seating is removed from the public floor.

No reservations for quiet rooms or meeting rooms are accepted. Book sale room closed.

Computer access may be offered but will be limited to reserved sessions that will be time limited.

Specific hours for vulnerable patrons may be established.

There is still limited face-to-face staff/public interaction. Staff assist through chat, phone calls, and emails.

Virtual programming continues.

Continued WIFI use during off hours.

Not accepting book donations at this time.

Due dates for materials extended and late fines waived.

Restrooms will remain locked.

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**PHASE 3**

**Anticipated Date:** dependent on local and state assessment of risk; library phases may not align with State of Nevada reopening phases.

**Context:** Physical distancing is still recommended, but infections risks are declining. Supply needs are predictable, and supplies are plentiful.

**Summary:** Additional library services are added and we begin to work to return to regular hours. All branches now allow for limited access to patrons.

**Measures:**

Home delivery services may expand to include new patrons, prioritizing seniors, families with young children and patrons without internet access.

Some seating is re-introduced but configured to allow for physical distance.

Evaluate accepting reservations for quiet rooms or meeting rooms (but with enforced social distancing/group size limits). Book sale room remains closed.

Computers are accessible at socially distant intervals and may still be limited by time in order to ensure fair access.

Desk staff are available on the service desks but still encourage social distancing.

Due dates for materials extended and late fines waived.

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## PHASE 4

**Anticipated Date:** dependent on local and state assessment of risk; library phases may not align with State of Nevada reopening phases.

**Context:** Physical distancing guidelines have been relaxed to allow for smaller group gatherings. Large group gatherings are still considered a risk.

**Summary:** The majority of library services are reintroduced, and all locations reopen with precautions. Some services may still have limits to allow for enhanced cleaning and social distancing.

**Measures:**

In person programming may begin again but may include strict hygiene guidelines and limited participation.

There may be limitations on larger group gatherings for meetings and programs.

All computers in operation.

All seating areas are back on the floor.

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## PHASE 5

**Anticipated Date:** dependent on local and state assessment of risk; library phases may not align with State of Nevada reopening phases.

**Context:** Infection threat is considered low or non-existent or there is a vaccine.

**Summary:** Full Service - return to “our new normal”. Larger group gatherings of all ages for meetings or library programs are allowed in meeting spaces at all locations.

**Measures:** N/A

*Approved May 28, 2020*

*Elko County Library Board of Trustees*