

# Re-Opening Your Lethbridge Public Library



During the COVID-19 pandemic Lethbridge Public Library's commitment has been continuity of library services to the community. Our first priority is to keep the risk of exposure to the virus as low as possible for our staff, customers, and community. Our provision of services have been, and will remain, consistent with the direction and guidance of public health authorities, the Government of Alberta, and the City of Lethbridge. As we move forward with re-opening and providing additional services, restrictions on use of Library spaces and changes to the way we provide service may be required to comply with public health guidelines and public library best practices. Our ultimate goal is to continue to meet community needs and provide as much service as we can, provided we are doing so safely; however, an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. Restrictions put in place, and services provided, may change based on the evolving situation, and will be reviewed on a regular basis. During the pandemic and the post-pandemic recovery period we will focus our services and programs on helping our community face new challenges and supporting individuals and communities to recover.

## Re-Opening Your Library One Chapter at a Time:

Each phase (or chapter) will be implemented after a period of evaluation of the prior phase, and will be dependent upon the local situation and the ability of the Library to operate within current public health guidelines.

### Chapter 1 – beginning June 16, 2021

#### **Grab and Go Library Materials**

- Curbside Pick Up will remain operational at all branches during designated hours
- Customers can choose to enter the Main or Crossings branches to pick up holds or Surprise Me Grab Bags. Customers will be encouraged to use self-check machines where possible, with staff assistance available as needed.
- Entrance to the branches for this service will be limited to:
  - Main Branch – Children's Entrance
  - Crossings Branch – North Entrance
- Borrowing collections will be limited to Print and A/V material initially. Special collections, such as Toys and Physical Literacy Kits, may also be made available during this stage
- Access to the stacks will not be available
- Access to the building will be limited to 1 adult per family; customers are encouraged to use curbside pickup where possible if attending the Library with children or multiple people

#### **Public Computing and Printing – Adult and Teen**

- A limited number of public access computers will be available in 45 minute time slots. Booking is required – details will be available on our website

- Technology assistance will be available via remote solutions and/or by appointment
- Printing will be available and managed by staff. The first 5 pages per day will be free to reduce the requirement for cash transactions
- Public Wi-Fi is available on library property outside the building; proper physical distancing is required
- Internet on the Go service is available

### **Exam Invigilation**

- Exam invigilation will be available by appointment

### **Programming**

- Streaming and online programming will continue

### **Bookmobile**

- The Bookmobile will be available for Curbside Pick Up only

### **Materials Return**

- Library materials may be returned at the Main Branch via the book drop at the Children's department entrance (south end of parking lot), and at the Crossings Branch via the book drop on the south side of the building and in atrium on the north side of the building.
- Returned materials will be quarantined for 24 hours

## **Masks and physical distancing requirements will remain in place in Chapter 1.**

### Chapter 2 – date TBD

### **Browse and Go**

- Access to collections for browsing library materials will be available at the Main and Crossings. Customers are encouraged to limit their time in the Library. Access to some collections may be limited.

### **Room Bookings**

- **Main Branch:** Room bookings for the Community Meeting Room, of groups of 20 or less, and within acceptable activities will be accepted during regular hours of operation. Limits on the number of bookings may need to be imposed to assure proper set-up and cleaning in between bookings. Bookings are subject to all other guidelines.
- **Crossings Branch:** Bookings of the Richardson Board Room for individuals will resume.  
See *Room Booking Guidelines amid COVID-19* document for more information.

### **Programming**

- Online programming will continue

- Outdoor programs, which follow public health recommendations (including the requirement to physically distance) may be provided where appropriate.

## Chapter 3 – date TBD

### **Programming**

- Limited in branch programming for all age groups will resume, with online programming possibly continuing in a limited capacity. Program registration and limits on attendance numbers may be required

### **Public Computing – Children’s**

- Access to children’s computers will resume

### **Room Bookings**

- Expanded public bookings of meeting rooms, based on recommended gathering sizes and public health guidelines, will resume

### **Social Spaces**

- Use of in branch reading tables, seating areas and other gathering spaces will resume, with restrictions based on current public health guidelines

### **Video Gaming Stations**

- Use of video gaming stations at the Crossings Branch will resume, with restrictions based on current public health guidelines

### **Bookmobile**

- Full Bookmobile services will resume

Changes to hours of service, access to specific services and spaces, and procedures may be required on a long term basis. The above constitutes an outline for re-opening, with detailed policies, procedures and specifics to be developed and communicated with the opening of each chapter.

### **LPL and You:**

Lethbridge Public Library implemented the “LPL and You” model in 2018 to provide a consistent customer service and decision making model to staff, and is built off of the DisneyU model. This model emphasizes organizational priorities in decision making and providing excellent customer service. This is the model we will continue to use as we move forward with re-opening and decision making related to service offerings:

## 1. SAFETY

Lethbridge Public Library will provide as much service as possible to the community, but only when and how it is safe to do so for both staff and the public. Re-opening of services will be phased and based on risk-informed decision-making guidelines provided by various levels of government and public health authorities. Our standards will meet or exceed public health recommendations. Detailed information on services currently being provided can be found on our website at [lethlib.ca](http://lethlib.ca) or by calling one of the branches.

A hierarchy of controls has been used in decision making around when to re-open services. Where it makes sense to eliminate or substitute the service (temporarily) we have done so. Where elimination or substitution of the service is not possible to meet community needs, engineering controls, followed by administrative controls, followed by use of personal protective equipment will be implemented.

Increased or enhanced health and safety measures:

1. Group activities, including programs, room bookings and social gathering, may be restricted or disallowed in library spaces in accordance with public health guidelines.
2. Access to all areas of the building – including washrooms, stacks and meeting spaces - may be restricted in order to comply with public health guidelines and recommended building capacity.
3. Hours of access may be revised to allow access to specific groups at certain times or to accommodate phased re-opening of services.
4. Increased cleaning and disinfecting throughout the building with specific focus on shared equipment and high touch surfaces.
5. Use of personal protective equipment by staff, including gloves, masks and Plexiglas protectors at service desks, where appropriate. Customers may be required or encouraged to wear masks based on public health guidelines.
6. Updates to Library policies, including the Customer Code of Conduct, to help us enforce physical distancing and other public health guidelines.
7. Limiting the use of cash – customers will be encouraged to use debit/credit whenever possible, however we will do our utmost to ensure this does not create undue barriers to individuals.
8. Quarantining returned library materials for the minimum recommended time (as applicable) before they are put back into circulation.
9. Modifications to Library spaces including:
  - a. Demarcations and signage for physical distancing
  - b. Directional arrows through spaces where appropriate
  - c. Increased space between seating at tables and in reading areas as well as public computers
  - d. Removal of fabric furniture; replaced where possible with furniture that is easily sanitized
  - e. Increased space between workstations where appropriate
  - f. Decreased meeting room capacity, in line with public health guidelines, once meeting room bookings resume
  - g. Decreased overall capacity of buildings based on public health guidelines
10. Communication with customers in regards to new guidelines, processes and procedures, as well as information on reducing the risk of virus transmission in Library spaces and via Library materials.
11. Increased training and communication with staff in regards to safe work practices and new procedures.

## **2. COURTESY**

Lethbridge Public Library's mission to be a welcoming and inclusive space that connects and strengthens community is at the forefront of our service approach. One of the key questions we ask ourselves is "How can we help you the customer in these challenging times?"

Some of the ways we will meet this priority at this time:

- Elimination of overdue fees (effective January 2021)
- Providing the first 5 pages free for printing/photocopying for a limited time
- Extension of loan periods for people who must self-isolate
- Continuation of no fee memberships throughout 2021
- Providing alternative service options
- Clear and consistent communication of physical distancing guidelines, and updated policies and procedures including our Customer Code of Conduct

## **3. SHOW**

Lethbridge Public Library always strives to keep well-maintained services, collections and facilities. This priority is more important than ever to ensure that our customers feel confident about the safety and cleanliness of the Library.

The Library ensures:

- Facilities are regularly cleaned and sanitized and free of clutter – increased cleaning and disinfecting as described above.
- Hand sanitizer available for customer use. Masks will be available upon entry to the Library.
- Collections are well maintained – library materials that are outdated, in disrepair or poor condition are removed or replaced from the collection.
- Increased displays and outward facing collections to help people find what they need while reducing contact with materials.
- Equipment is maintained in good working order and alternative options are available as needed.

## **4. CAPACITY**

One of the key goals of the Library's Board, management and staff is to determine how we can continue providing service in new ways to our community, within the limits and considerations of evolving public health guidelines.

Alternative service options being provided include:

- Curbside pick up at the Main, Crossings, and Bookmobile branches.
- Internet on the Go service at the Main branch.
- Online programming and activities, including: live streams, pre-recorded videos, asynchronous book clubs, digital escape rooms, book voting tournaments, online classes, and more.
- Additional investment in digital resources including more ebooks and audiobooks and the new Creativebug online resource.
- Homebound delivery options – and coinciding volunteer opportunities – for those who cannot make it to a branch.

- Online memberships for new members, and phone renewal options for existing members.
- The Surprise Me grab bag service for those who want reading recommendations from staff, and are not able to browse the shelves.

The Lethbridge Public Library is committed to Connecting YOU, to information and ideas, to community resources, and to each other. How we connect in the post-pandemic era may look a little different, but Library Board and staff are committed to continuing to serve the needs of our community and to be the community's choice for the pursuit of literacy, leisure, learning and innovation.