IFLA GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 AND THE GLOBAL LIBRARY FIELD @ USTM

Some restrictions: There are more cases, and governments are beginning to act in order to limit larger events, as well as actively encouraging people to take extra measures to protect hygiene. In this situation, libraries are, for example:

- Reconsidering programming such as story times or workshops, especially for groups at risk such as older users. Additional efforts to ensure hygiene, including through disinfecting hard surfaces. Removing riskier items such as toys or virtual reality headsets from circulation.
- Considering whether to close study spaces where people may spend a longer time in the company of others.
- Preparing for potential further restrictions, for example by ensuring that all staff have the skills and tools to work remotely (if this is possible) and that services, as far as possible, can still be provided digitally.

Minimal service: In many countries there are stricter measures still, with tougher limits on public gatherings, specific warnings for people at risk, and closures in the most affected regions. In these situations, libraries are, for example:

- Fully closing spaces and only offering the possibility to borrow or return books at a counter, or via a book drop. Some countries are experimenting with drive-through pick-up and return of books. Others are only allowing visitors who have pre-booked.
- Implementing quarantine policies on returned books (see below for further details).
- Implementing plans to offer remote services for example eLending, eLearning, or support to remote teaching
- Finalising and testing measures for all staff to work remotely and allowing those who can to do so already.
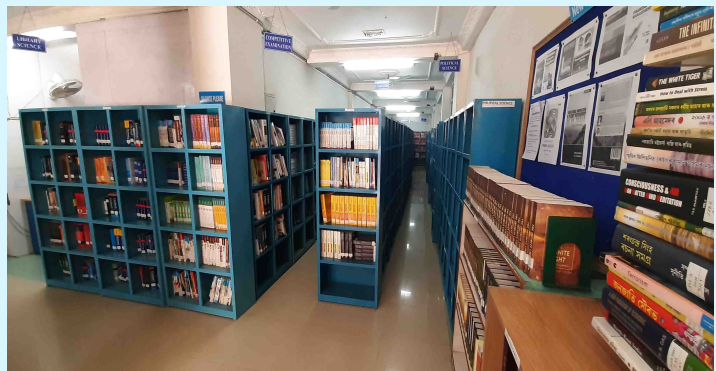
Full closure: Where measures are strictest, libraries have either been forced to close, or have chosen to do so following consideration of the risks to users and staff. In these situations, libraries are, for example:

- Ensuring that all staff work from home unless completely necessary. Where staff are coming into work, ensuring that they can do so while respecting rules around social distancing
- Librarians are being reassigned to other duties in other departments within their municipalities, for example using information management skills to support health and social services

- Providing ongoing communication with users about opportunities to use library resources or services
- Organising digital story-times where copyright permits
- Promoting use of digital libraries and other tools - including potentially investing in more content/licences
- Offering an amnesty on borrowed physical books, and increasing the number of eBooks users can borrow
- Making library spaces and equipment available for other activities, such as printing personal protective equipment.
- Raising awareness of digital offers, both on the front pages of their websites, and through putting up posters in the windows of library buildings.

IFLA: The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession.

Source: https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-libraries