



Chelsea Public Library
COVID-19 Closure Policy and Phased Reopening Plan
(Updated March 29, 2021)

To protect patrons and staff from community spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, the Chelsea Public Library Board of Trustees made the decision to close Chelsea Public Library to the public on Monday, March 16, 2020. This decision was made with guidance from Governor Phil Scott's "Stay home, stay safe" order, the Vermont Department of Libraries, the Vermont Library Association, the New England Library Association, and the American Library Association. The Board of Trustees and Director continue to evaluate the situation and guidance from these authorities in making decisions about the services that can be offered during this time. Any updates will be posted on our website and outside the library in the poster case.

Our mission is to "... provide information, resources, and services that meet the educational, cultural, technological and recreational needs of the community." Given the current situation, we best serve the Chelsea community by stopping the spread of the virus, which includes keeping the physical space closed. However, we still serve the educational, cultural, technological and recreation needs of the community through online resources, our public WiFi, and by making digital and physical materials available.

- I. The following are services which are available to the Chelsea community and Chelsea Public Library patrons during the COVID-19 closure:
 - a) Our website, www.chelsealibrary.com, is updated with relevant resources that are free to use.
 - b) Patrons can use their library card to download audiobooks and eBooks using Listen Up Vermont!
 - c) Patrons may utilize the free, public WiFi available outside the library 24/7.
 - d) Patrons may pick up books, DVDs, audiobooks, and magazines from our collection by filling out the Item Request Form on our website or by contacting the library. Items are placed in a paper bag with the corresponding name on it and put in a plastic bin outside the library for pickup.
 - e) Patrons may email or call the library with any reference questions they have, as well as to chat with the librarian.
 - f) Virtual programming – The library has offered virtual book clubs and will offer a summer reading program. Any other virtual programming ideas are encouraged, please contact the librarian.

g) Giveaways – The library has and will continue to offer craft/activity bags, book giveaways, and prizes.

II. The following are services which are currently suspended due to COVID-19:

a) All in-person programs, events and services – In order to practice social distancing and prevent community spread of the virus, Chelsea Public Library has cancelled all in-person events, which includes the Chelsea Chili Challenge, Story Hours, the Annual Plant Sale, the Annual Book Sale, and Friday activities at the Chelsea Farmers Market.

Library Reopening Policy

Chelsea Public Library will gradually reopen after guidance is given by appropriate authorities. Please be aware that **we do not know when each phase will start and how long it will last**. This policy may be changed and updated at any time as we learn more about COVID-19. The library will only be able to operate in each phase if **all necessary supplies are available** to ensure patron and staff safety. Staff will fill out a health log each day they enter the library; if staff is experiencing illness and/or a temperature the staff member must stay home, and the library will be closed. The Board of Library Trustees has granted Megan Campbell, Chair, the power to close the library in the event of an emergency.

The following is our phased reopening plan:

PHASE ONE: Pickup Service

Patrons may request materials that belong to Chelsea Public Library. See information about pickup service (Section I, subsection d). Staff is permitted in the building during this phase to fulfill orders, work on projects in the library, clean, and to call patrons. Staff must wear a mask if more than one person is in the library at one time and sanitize shared surfaces in the Town Hall building.

Returns

There is evidence that the virus may live on plastic and cardboard/paper for up to 24 hours, therefore we will take measures to ensure returned items are safe for circulation before they are returned to the shelf. All items will be left by patrons in the drop box outside the library. Staff will use gloves to transfer items inside, where they will be sanitized, checked in, and quarantined. Quarantined items will be placed on designated tables grouped by the dates they were sanitized for a minimum of 24 hours before they are shelved or can circulate.

PHASE TWO: Pickup Window

Update 10 of the Be Smart, Stay Safe Order on May 29th, 2020 gives Chelsea Public Library the ability to extend services. Following guidance from the Vermont Department of Libraries,

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Chelsea Public Library will provide a pickup window in which patrons can directly circulate materials, ask reference questions, and ask the librarian to make copies/scans/faxes.

- Pickup window will be open Monday through Friday 2-6 PM and the first and third Saturday of the month from 10 AM – 2 PM. Hours will be evaluated and may be updated due to usage.
- Chelsea Public Library may resume interlibrary loan requests and the courier system.
- The Director may resume purchasing new books, DVDs, and audiobooks for the collection.
- Signs will notify patrons where the window is located and guidance on using this service.
 - Patrons must social distance.
 - Masks required for patrons and staff.
 - Staff required to use hand sanitizer and/or clean gloves when filling requests.
 - Consistent sanitization of pickup window area will occur by staff.
- Patrons can still request items online and utilize the pickup bin outside library hours.

PHASE THREE: Appointments

- The library will be open to the public by appointment only from 1 - 6 PM on Monday through Friday and 9 AM – 2 PM the first and third Saturday of the month, apart from contracted holidays.
 - Each appointment will be for a duration of 15 minutes and will be scheduled every 30 minutes.
 - This will allow staff 15 minutes between appointments to sanitize and maintain the pickup window.
 - Patrons can request to borrow a Chromebook outside the library if needed.
- Patrons will be able to browse, check out materials, use the printer/fax machine, use a public computer, utilize historical resources that do not circulate, and make interlibrary loan requests.
- Any material that has been touched by the patron but not checked out should be put on the shelving cart to be quarantined before returning to the shelf. Signs will notify patrons of this.
- The books on the free shelf in the vestibule, along with any “high touch” items in the library, will be removed. This includes any games, toys, or puzzles.
- Masks will be required for both staff and patrons.
- No food or drinks will be allowed.
- The public bathroom in the vestibule of the Town Hall will be closed to the public. This is determined by the Chelsea Selectboard.
- The Town Hall door will remain locked until each appointment. The library door will be propped open.

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- The librarian is responsible for sanitizing door handles, surfaces, equipment, and quarantining materials that have been touched.
- Patrons should not enter if they are experiencing any symptoms of illness or if they have any reason to believe they could have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Patrons must participate in contact tracing as required by Governor Scott. All contact tracing records will be confidential unless mandated by the VT Department of Health to report possible exposures. All records will be permanently destroyed after 30 days.

PHASE FOUR: Limited Walk-In Service

- The library will be opened to a limited capacity of patrons at one time.
 - This number will be determined by guidance from Governor Scott, the Chelsea Fire Marshal, and the Vermont Department of Libraries.
 - The limit is currently 1 person per 100 sq. ft.
- Patrons may use public computers for a duration of 30 minutes.
 - Patrons are required to wipe down their computer station after use.
- Patrons may use the copier and fax machine.
- Patrons will be asked to place any items they have touched on a separate shelf to be disinfected or quarantined.
- Mask, food/drink, and bathroom restrictions still in effect.

PHASE FIVE: Extended Computer and Workspace Allowance

All parts of Phase Three are still in effect, except

- Patrons may use computers and public workspace for up to one hour if no one is waiting, for up to 30 minutes if there is a wait (as stipulated in Library Policy).
- Public programs may resume if participants are able to social distance. A limit on the number of participants may be enforced.

PHASE SEVEN: Reopen at normal capacity

- No limit on patrons in the library at one time.
- No limit on computer stations unless there is a wait.
- Public programs may resume without social distancing restrictions.
- Puzzles, games, and toys are available for children.
- Masks are not required.
- Chelsea Public Library's normal operating policy is in effect.

*Please note that the library may choose to go back to a previous phase if necessary or guided by appropriate authority. If you have questions about how these decisions or phases were developed, please contact the library or a member of the Chelsea Public Library Board of Trustees. Information is also available at libraries.vermont.gov/covid19/reopeninginformation.