

A Letter from the LIBRARY DIRECTOR



Dear Community,

According to Governor Holcomb's **Back on Track Indiana** plan, public libraries in Indiana can phase in services according to local needs, staff capacity and the community's situation.

Like many other public settings, opening a library is a logistical challenge amid a pandemic. Our timeline for fully reopening our buildings may look a little different from the governor's timeline for the rest of Indiana. Governor Holcomb understands this and made special provisions for libraries to open according to their local needs, staff capacity and the community's situation. Executive Order 20-26 of the Back on Track Indiana plan states "Public libraries may reopen when allowed by their own policies but subject to social distancing and sanitation measures being employed. Local units of government or political subdivisions will continue to decide how and when to reopen and provide services."

Until May 11, library staff were subject to the stay-at-home order and essential staff worked inside the building. Our library employees have been working, remotely, throughout the pandemic. Leadership staff were called back to work in the building on May 11, and all part-time staff returned beginning on May 18. The Library Board followed the intent of the federal legislation to keep people employed and working remotely rather than to move them to taxpayer-funded unemployment and eligibility assistance programs.

Since our closure, Library staff have worked to provide traditional library services in new ways including: applying for a library card online, free WiFi access in our parking lots, remote assistance via email and phone, created eResources guide to assist with eLearning, enhanced our digital resources, developed virtual programming for all ages, and implemented three contactless curbside services: material pick-up; computer stations equipped with free printing, scanning and copying capabilities; and activity bags to accompanying our virtual programming.

On Monday, June 15, we will reopen our buildings to the public with limited capacity. While we're eager to open our doors to the public, we believe it is important to do our part to prevent a resurgence of COVID-19, and are moving forward with an emphasis on safety and innovation to provide a safe environment for our visitors and staff. Over the last few weeks, we've put into place measures and procedures to ensure the safety for everyone. Below is an outline of some steps we are taking:

- Posting safety guidelines at our entrances
- Enhanced cleaning schedule of all high-touch surfaces
- Providing hand sanitizing stations at public desks
 - All staff and visitors are encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Social distancing procedures:
 - Maintain at least a six-foot distance between people
 - Acrylic shields and social distancing markers will be in place at all public service desks
 - Seating will be eliminated/rearranged to support social distancing
 - Requiring all staff to wear masks and strongly encourage visitors to do the same
- Altered methods of service for initial reopening:
 - Hours of operation will temporarily be Crown Point: Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Winfield: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Tuesday & Thursday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Library access will be limited to a "Grab 'n Go" service, allowing visitors to select materials for immediate check out
 - All in-library programming and meeting room reservations remain suspended at this time
 - Curbside services will continue through the summer
 - Our book drops are open so you can return materials
 - Library materials returned will quarantine for 72 hours before checking in and re-shelving, items will remain on patrons record during quarantine, however, no fines will accumulate
 - All materials are due June 15, fees and fines will be waived through July 1; however, normal charges will begin after that date
 - We are not accepting donations at this time

The Library embraces its role in the community as a "community hub" or gathering space, and looks forward to welcoming community members back into the building in a responsible and measured way. Thank you for your patience and for doing your part to keep your community safe!

The Library's reopening plans are subject to change based on local or state health officials' recommendations. For the latest updates on Library services, please visit www.crownpointlibrary.org and follow us on Facebook.

Be safe and kind to one another,

Julie Wendorf