

Wicomico Public Libraries Reopening FAQ

Wicomico Public Libraries welcomes you back to all library branches by appointment only beginning Tuesday, October 13, 2020. For everyone's safety, we are offering limited services and hours to reduce contact and close interactions and to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

The safety and health of our patrons and staff is our priority. Thank you for following guidelines and for your patience and flexibility as we move through this time together.

What measures is the library taking to keep patrons and staff safe?

The library is taking a number of precautions to limit personal contact and follow social distancing guidelines including:

- Library patrons and staff over the age of five are required to wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth. For those who do not have a face covering, one will be provided.
- Patrons showing symptoms of COVID-19 are asked to refrain from entering library buildings.
- Patrons are asked to maintain a physical distance of 6' between one another and staff. Our buildings have been prepared to accommodate social distancing. Please follow all social distancing signage and markers.
- To maintain social distancing standards, the number of patrons in our libraries will be limited based upon the ability to physical distance.
- To ensure that as many patrons as possible may use the Library, each visitor is limited to a maximum visit of 45 minutes.
- Customers who have scheduled an appointment will have priority access to the building. Walk in appointments may be available first come first serve. Customers who do not have an appointment will be asked to wait in line outside the building until we have space for additional customers. While in line, please follow physical distancing guidelines and keep at least six feet between you and other patrons. The staff member stationed at the library's entrance will schedule you for the next available appointment.
- Accommodations will be made for parents with children and for customers with disabilities. Please call 410-749-3612 ext 4 (Downtown Branch) or 410-546-5397 (Centre Branch) for assistance.
- Customers entering with children 8 years and younger must stay together to ensure children maintain physical distance from others.
- Seating and the number of computers available throughout the library has been reduced and placed at least 6 feet apart to maintain physical distancing.
- Plexiglas shields have been installed at all public service desks.

- Hand-sanitizer is provided at service desks for patron use and frequent hand washing is encouraged.
- Our material collection is not available for browsing at this time. We encourage you to use Books To Go (<http://www.wicomicolibraries.org/books-go>) to safely borrow library materials.

While the library is taking safety and cleaning measures, we cannot guarantee the cleanliness of materials or equipment as public libraries are high touch facilities. The risk of entering a public facility is your own. We will clean high touch surfaces frequently; however the availability of cleaning supplies is limited.

What hours is the library open?

Wicomico Public Libraries' locations currently have reduced hours to allow extra time for disinfection and cleaning spaces each day. Hours for the branches are as follows:

- Centre Branch: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Downtown Branch: Tuesday – Saturday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Pittsville Branch: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

At this time, we are closed on Sundays.

Computer Use:

- Please call your library to schedule an appointment to use a computer for a 45 minute session (Centre Branch – 410-546-5397; Downtown Branch – 410-749-3612 ext 4; and Pittsville Branch - 410-835-2353). Computer use is available on a self-serve basis. Staff may be able to answer some questions at the Information Desk, but will be unable to accompany you to the computer area to provide more in-depth help, due to the need for physical distancing. You may bring someone with you to help you on the computer during your appointment. Please let us know when you make your appointment so we may include them in our schedule.
- Computer sessions will be limited to a maximum of 45 minutes a day, to allow others to use the library. Please take care of printing before your session ends.
- Computer areas will be cleaned frequently.
- Hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be available to disinfect the computer.

Library Materials:

Will Books To Go service continue?

Yes! We will continue to offer Books To Go for as long as it remains safe to do so. Please keep in mind that our collection is not available for browsing during this time.

If you are unable to come to the library to pick up library materials, we encourage you to see if you are eligible for services through the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (<https://www.marylandlibraries.org/Pages/Maryland-Library-for-the-Blind-and-Physically-Handicapped.aspx>). Alternatively you may be eligible for home delivery through our Mobile Services Department. Please contact 410-749-3612 ext 804 for more information about home delivery service.

Have any changes been made to check out procedures?

- We continue to offer Books To Go for checking out materials.

What if I want to see what materials are available in the library?

You may call your local branch for assistance with placing holds on materials, use our website to place holds or contact your local branch for specialized material request assistance. As part of our COVID response, we are minimizing contact with our physical collections to reduce the spread of the virus.

Will holds take longer to become available during this time?

As we are quarantining returned materials before checking items in, there will be delays in delivering holds materials to the next patron.

Can I request materials from other libraries on the Eastern Shore or through Interlibrary Loan?

Yes, beginning September 14, 2020, you will be able to request materials from other libraries.

What if I have materials to donate to the Library?

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept material donations at this time.

What happens to my returned materials? Why is there a delay when I return my materials to when they are removed from my account?

The library is quarantining returned materials for 7 days before check-in to ensure that any potential for contamination is removed, following best practices recommended by the State Library Resource Center. Please allow at least 7 days for items to clear your account after you have returned them. You will not be fined for this additional quarantine period.

How do I return materials to the library during this time?

Please return materials, such as books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, and hotspots to the book drops outside our locations. Please return laptops by visiting your library's Books To Go location and calling your library to let library staff know you have a laptop to return.

Programs:

When will you be holding in-person programs and events again?

- Any in-person programming or events will depend on guidelines from the State and Wicomico County Health Department. We do not anticipate any Library programs or events at our locations through the fall.
- Please visit wicomicolibraries.org or our Facebook page to find out more about our virtual program schedule.

Facilities:

Can I book a meeting room or use a study room?

Our meeting rooms and study rooms are closed until further notice.

What other changes have been made to the building?

- Some furniture, seating and tables have been removed to allow for physical distancing between customers.

Other:

What other things can I do at the library right now?

You may make photocopies, scan a document to email, send a fax, or have a document notarized during your appointment.

You can also schedule a virtual reference appointment with a librarian. Your Adult Services department is always here to answer any question you may have. To do so, call the library's main number (410) 749-3612 ext. 127. Our new virtual reference service is available for more "in-depth" inquiries - for example (but not limited to): genealogical and other multifaceted research questions, readers' advisory, one-on-one database instruction, just to name a few. To schedule an appointment for our virtual reference service, please call 410-749-3612 ext 4.

The following services are resuming on a limited basis—please use the contact information below for more information:

Homework Help – call 410-749-3612 ext 125

Job Search Center – call 410-749-3612 ext 4

Legal Clinic – call 410-749-3612 ext 4

Project READ – call 410-749-3612 ext 159

What happens next for the library?

We will continue to follow CDC recommendations as well as state and county orders.

Depending on the number of cases in Wicomico County or other circumstances related to the pandemic, we may be forced to return to previous restrictions such as closing to the public for an extended period. We apologize in advance should this become necessary.