Preparing to Reopen Your Library in the "New Normal" - CT Libraries: a Road Map to Re-Opening and Recovery

CSL has developed a draft document "CT Libraries: a Road Map to Re-Opening and Recovery" that has been shared with the Governor's Office to ensure that the Re-Open Connecticut Advisory Group is aware of the role of libraries in their communities and that CSL's recommendations are coordinated with the Governor's directives. Once we get the Governor issues re-opening guidance, we will share the Road Map along a DLD Road Map libguide.

*Libraries should continue to work with local government including public health officers to ensure that re-open procedures adhere to state and local directives.

Recommendations to consider:

- Develop a strong communications plan to help reintroduce patrons to the library and help them adapt to new protocols, policies and procedures.
- Space planning recommendations to adapt existing library space to social distancing guidelines.
  - Reconfigure location of OPAC stations
  - Removal of excess furniture
  - Follow the grocery store use of tape to establish directional flow of traffic; establish waiting points with 6ft intervals; installation of protective plexiglass screens
- Care and handling of library materials.
  - Disinfection and isolation of returned materials
- Facilities inspection, safety check and cleaning procedures.
- Provision and availability of hand sanitizer, hand washing facilities in public spaces.
- System checks - network, alarm and communications.
- Develop staff training for this new normal.
  - Dealing with difficult situations
  - Dealing with emotional trauma
- Amendment of patron conduct policies to include requiring patrons to adhere to statewide social distancing directives and library guidelines.
Limitation of the number of patrons in the library and or various departments of the library at one time
- Social distancing; use of PPE including masks; hand washing
- Address the health and safety needs of staff (stress - emotional and financial).
- Assessment of which services restore in stages to minimize exposure and risk to staff and patrons.
  - Temporary elimination of onsite programming
  - Children's programming special needs
  - Specific hours for protected groups such as older adults
- Consideration of room rental policies to include social distancing limitations.
- Special concerns around children's services, difficult to get children to adhere to safety without a plan.
  - Develop a children's program to address social distancing, hand washing etc.
- Make sure the library board and Friends's group and any other stakeholders are involved and aware of the re-opening protocol.

Recovery Recommendations:

Libraries will not just just re-opening, as community anchors they will be critical to recovery. As part of the CT Road Map, we will be offering extensive recommendations on how libraries can position themselves to help in the economic recovery:

- Engaging Small Businesses and Entrepreneur
- Financial Literacy
  - [https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/Financial_Literacy](https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/Financial_Literacy)
- Engaging Job Seekers and Displaced Workers (full example):

PEOPLE

- Ensure staff is trained in all aspects of job and career resources available.
- Ensure staff has the resources and support to deal with patrons that have experienced job loss.
- Utilize expertise of community members (e.g. retirees) for volunteer help with resume review, preparing for an interview, etc.
• Staff with expertise may assist job seekers with filling out job applications, resume preparation, printing, faxing, etc.
• Staff may start a Job Club for those in the same situation for learning, networking, support and encouragement.
• Partner with local colleges, business groups, and community organizations for support.

SPACE:

• Set up a dedicated space for job and career services
• Display table with job/career-related books and materials
• Business center with printer, fax, scanner, etc
• Local job bulletin board
• Coffee station
• Dedicated computer(s) for job/career seeking use
• Comfortable seating
• Flash drives available for job seekers to save their resume, cover letter, etc.
• Use of meeting room space to conduct workshops on job seeking services and skills.
• Good signage to point job seekers to the dedicated job and career space.
• Consider opening space an hour earlier or staying 1 hour later specifically for job seekers to not have to compete with others for computers and other resources.

PLATFORM:

• Access to job and career resources on library computers.
• Dedicated section of library web site to highlight services available to job seekers.
• Online and print job and career resources including books.
• Weed collection of books and other job-related materials that are more than 2 years old.
• Library hosts a local job fair, inviting local businesses and organizations to partner and participate.
• Library sets up in person and/or virtual workshops and training for job seekers.