

Following the success of our first set of virtual meetings in April, NHLTA held a second set of virtual roundtables via Zoom on May 28 and June 4 that were very well-attended by both library directors and trustees. Once again, the same topics were discussed at both roundtables. NHLTA wishes to thank Michael York and Lori Fisher from the State Library as well as several other members of the Reopening NH Task Force for making themselves available to answer questions and provide updates.

### **Library Reopening Resources and Plans**

Lori Fisher, Assistant State Librarian, summarized the work of the Reopening NH Libraries Task Force. Questions were asked about requiring masks and privacy issues involved in contact tracing and asking patrons to make appointments.

**Requiring masks:** it's okay to require patrons to wear masks if it is a municipal policy to require masks and if wearing masks is included in the library's patron behavior policy. Exceptions to the requirement include children under the age of two and patrons with medical disabilities. It was mentioned that the NHMA attorneys advise that trustees craft their mask policy carefully and coordinate with town policy. Libraries should have a plan in case a patron refuses to wear a mask. Masks should be made available.

Lori mentioned privacy concerns with library staff making wellness check calls to patrons; library staff calls to patrons must be library-related. Contact tracing is not a library function and is done by NH DHHS. ALA webinar: "Protecting Privacy in a Pandemic" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YudBaAUe6WY>

Links to several library reopening plans were given

- J.A. Tuttle Library, Antrim  
<https://www.antrimnh.org/james-tuttle-library/pages/curbside-service-and-reopening-stages>
- Nesmith Library, Windham  
<https://www.nesmithlibrary.org/featured-story/2020/06/22/curbside-services>
- Portsmouth Public Library  
<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/curbside>
- Bedford Library's video about how their curbside works:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-aqZBdilQ8&feature=youtu.be>

Sources for protective equipment

- <https://www.northernsafety.com/categories/safety-products>
- <https://extension.unh.edu/blog/cleaning-sanitizing-and-disinfecting-surfaces-part-one>

**Staff safety:** Manchester is screening all employees. Bristol has an email questionnaire which goes to all employees. They are to take their temperature and answer questions at home. If answer is yes to any symptoms, they don't come to work. The answered questions are kept separate from personnel files. Lori recommended checking with your insurer about screening employees for the coronavirus; Primex has resources available such as virtual workshops and online webinars (<https://nhprimex.org/>). The town public health officer is another resource; it was recommended that libraries have a local attorney. It was mentioned that most libraries don't have separate line items in their budget for a lawyer; however, trustees have the ability to shift funds from one line item to another when necessary. Liability to-do list: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/18cNAzoKhw9wEPykWOvxz2qMAFF-vAG1JC4JX4CPL0s/edit?usp=sharing>

**Social distancing when reopening:** some libraries plan to schedule appointments, most plan to limit the number of patrons allowed in at one time. Reconfiguring traffic patterns to help with congested areas is another option. It was emphasized that reopening is a local decision; you can't compare yourself to anyone else.

Budgeting is a concern – some libraries have already been asked to cut budgets, towns are waiting for the results of the June tax collection to see if cuts are necessary.

Michael York, State Librarian, discussed the CARES Act. NH has received \$122,861 which will allow some hand/surface sanitizer and possibly face masks to be distributed to every library. The State Library will apply for a grant to address broadband services; he cautioned that there is often a requirement to filter services, which libraries can be reluctant to do. There is no date set for the resumption of Inter Library Loan – the majority of libraries have to have reopened and the first priority will be to get the books currently out on loan back to their home libraries. More information is needed about the morbidity of the virus – how long it lives on physical materials.

**Trustee meetings:** electronic meetings are undoubtedly the wave of the future; virtual meetings are currently allowed under the governor's emergency orders. The guidelines can be found on the NHLTA website [nhlta.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/NH%20Gov%20emergency%20order-12%20RTK.pdf](http://nhlta.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/NH%20Gov%20emergency%20order-12%20RTK.pdf)

### **Summer Reading Programs**

The State Library is also purchasing two programs for the next two years: Niche Academy and READSquared, to help with summer reading programs. Keene is using Bean Counter software to monitor reading; many libraries are offering takeaway bags and kits for children to do at home. Kensington has set up scavenger hunts on town trails. Virtual programs by performers are planned. There are programs offered through NH Humanities -- <https://www.nhhumanities.org/digital>

Thanks to all for attending! Please note that Lori Fisher posts weekly updates to both the NHLTA and NHAIS LISTSERVs. If you haven't done so already, we urge you to sign up for the NHLTA LISTSERV, and to visit the NHLTA webpage regularly for the latest information.