



IPLF Guidelines for reopening libraries

# Iran Public Libraries responding to COVID-19

Iran Public Libraries Foundation (IPLF)–  
Planning Administration–  
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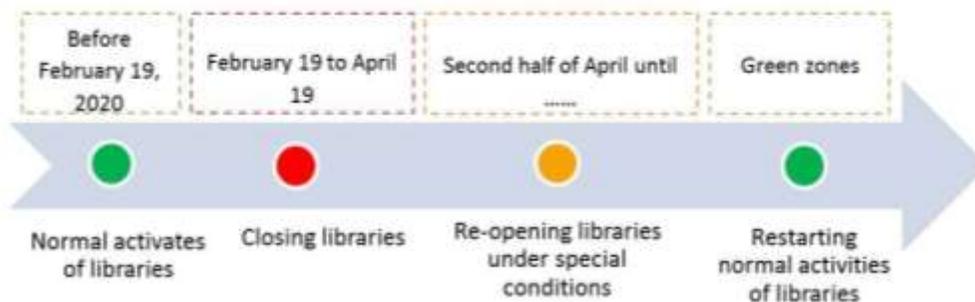
## Introduction

Public libraries, as public areas, were closed following the spread of the Corona Virus and COVID-19 epidemic in Iran. Hence, they are banned from doing actions that entail personal presence in the library area as well as high and various interactions with people before the formal declaration of "green zones" by the in-charge entities (in Iran: National Headquarters for Coronavirus Disease Management). However, implementing possible activities remotely, mainly electronic and online ones, not only is not banned, but conducting them in extensive, diverse, and creative ways is highly recommended.

## Applicability Domain

When the epidemic starts to decline, and there would be no ban over service provision in the public areas, the public libraries are free to re-start their activities gradually and through observing instructions and orders provided in this document.

The guidelines are applicable since re-opening public libraries after passing the Coronavirus outbreak's peak until the declaration of green zones.



## Introduction and Components

As figure 1, the service-based model of public libraries' activities includes a central nucleus and four peripheral parts. In this model, various parts of libraries are planned based on "services and programs". In other words, diversity, size, and even analysis of facilities, collection, staff, and technologies in the public libraries are based on services and plans proposed to clients. Accordingly, management and confronting COVID-19 in the public libraries are offered under each part of the mentioned model.

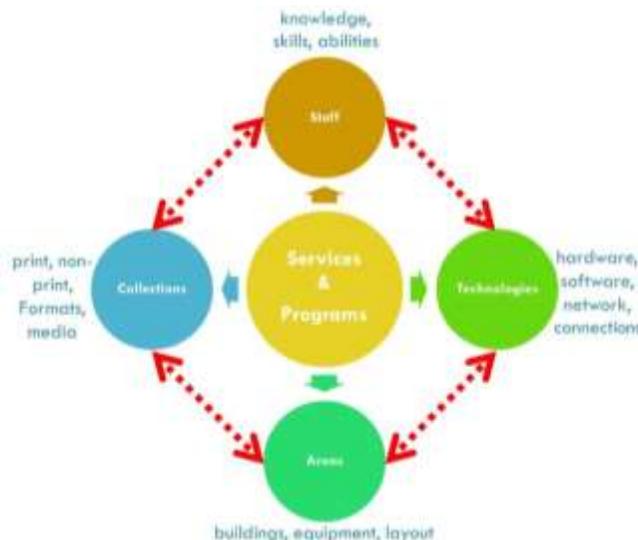


Figure 1: services-based model for public libraries

## 1. Staff

1.1 Staff is a pioneer in managing, controlling, and fighting against crises in libraries. In such conditions, observing good personal hygiene habits, social distancing, and following general and specialized recommendations are vitally important. Later in this document, you can find the guidelines recommended for staff (librarians, service and technical staff, etc.)

1.2 Before starting any working day, library staff should be checked in terms of having the symptoms of the disease;

1.3 Staff with systemic diseases can take leave by showing the related evidence;

Note: The systemic diseases refer to Asthma, liver disorders, immune deficiency diseases such as M.S., AIDS, Cancers, stem cell or organs transplantation, long-term consumption of corticosteroids and other Immunosuppressant drugs, people living in the nursing homes or long-time care centers, people with cardiovascular diseases, chronic lung diseases, chronic kidney diseases, obesity (BMI> 40), Diabetes, the elderly (65 years up).

1.4 Staff who have suffered from COVID-19 should not come to work for 21 days since the day their test showed positive results;

1.5 Staff needs to participate, at least in a relevant training course, held through the virtual training system. The subjects would be about the information on the virus itself, the disease, symptoms and preventive and therapeutic tips, how to manage libraries during these days, observing medical considerations, etc. Also, the assigned page of Corona on the website should be regularly updated informing about new information and necessary considerations;

1.6 Using detergents, masks and disposable gloves are necessary for all staff as long as they are in the library;

1.7 Disinfecting the place people put their fingers when they register their fingerprints upon using attendance devices is necessary;

1.8 Staff needs to come to their works in the shift, as all predetermined services and programs would be provided;

1.9 Presence of users (members and clients) in out-of-work times is banned; however, librarians can conduct certain activities of the library such as shelf layout or activities which can be done through internet or phone out of working hours;

1.10 Necessary coordination needs to be done for using regular telephone sets, as certain people should answer calls, and telephone sets should be disinfected at least two times per day.

## 2. Collections

The library collections are amongst the most critical tools to serve users. Library resources such as print, electronic and multi-media ones are significant outlets letting users access information. Later in this section, you can find guidelines about how to use collections:

2.1 The library collection should be run as shelves by a declaration of the green zone and people traffic inside the reservoir must be reduced as much as possible;

2.2 Upon returning, the library resources need to be kept in separate boxes or shelves and need to be separated from other collections for proper time (depending on the resource type).

**Note:** How long Corona Virus would survive<sup>1</sup>

*A) Survival time of corona virus in different temperatures*

Temperature	Survival Time
4° C	More than 14 days
5-22° C	14 days
23-37° C	2 Days
38-56° C	20 min
57-70° C	5 Min

*B) Survival time of Corona Virus on surfaces*

Surface	Survival Time
Paper (books, magazines, newspapers, pencils, etc.)	3 hours
Wood (book shelves, desks, tables, chairs, etc.)	2 days
Cloth (garments, handkerchiefs, towels, etc.)	2 days
Glass (windows, glass desks, monitors, dishes, etc.)	4 days
Steel (dishes, chair handles, metal shelves, doors, frames and elevators)	7 days
Plastic (book covers, UV covers, keyboards, chair handles, printers, attendance devices, pens, erasers, disposable dishes, gloves, etc.,)	7 days
Inside surfaces of masks	7 days
Outside surfaces of masks	More than 7 days

### 3. Areas

The library areas include buildings, equipment, furniture, facilities, etc. providing services and programs that need areas and equipment. You can find here the guidelines recommended keeping the library area clean and hygiene:

3.1 "Time" is the best disinfectant, so if library doors had been closed for 14 days, there is no need for disinfection of areas, equipment, and resources of libraries after re-opening, however, cleaning and dusting are necessary before re-opening.

3.2 During the library's working hours, its areas, depending on how many users would use them, must be disinfected. Areas where the likeability of touching various things and surfaces is higher, including handles, desks, WCs, and reading room desks, mice, keyboards, computer sets of staff, etc. need to be repeatedly disinfected.

3.3 The layout of chairs in the reading room or furniture of other areas must be in a way that the distance between any two chairs must be at least 2 meters.

3.4 The extra chairs should be extracted from the reading room not to be used.

3.5 Given the necessity of keeping resources and incapability to disinfect them extensively, it is recommended to close resources, archives, artistic and historical works compartments, and other compartments with valuable items by the declaration of green zone situation. (Proposing electronic services, if possible, for such cases is admirable.)

<sup>1</sup> Here survive refers to the capability of virus to be pathogen in vitro.

3.6 Proper ventilation of library areas, especially the reading room, is necessary. The ventilation must be in a way that the environmental air circulates easily inside the room. It is recommended to keep open both doors and windows to help better air circulation.

3.7 To reduce traffic and usage of tools, it is recommended to make unavailable all lockers, vending machines, water coolers, buffets cafeterias, dineries (dining room), prayers rooms, and also resting areas (for the staff or members).

3.8 Warming and eating foods by users inside the library area are unallowable. Areas that already have been predicted for this purpose must be unavailable.

3.9 The conference hall and arena of the library should be kept unavailable for both the library itself and others who used to rent them.

3.10 Children and Young Adults Section and personal services and programs for them are closed by the declaration of green zone situation. Borrowing books to children and young adults is possible within this period, and offering promotional services for children and young adults through virtual space is recommended.

3.11 Sections of people with disabilities have been closed by National Headquarters for Coronavirus Disease Management until the declaration of green zone situation. However, activities of such a section can be continued through virtual networks or telephone communications. Likewise, borrowing the required items is possible for them, like other classes of society.

3.12 Disinfectant sprays must be available over the reception desks or must be hung over the reception walls. Also, the disinfectant tools must be available at the library entrance, and they must be checked at least two times per day to ensure that they are not empty.

3.13 Trash cans with foot pedal must be placed in crowded places of the library to avoid opening its cap with hands.

3.14 All libraries clients (both members and others) must be asked to disinfect their hands before entering the library, especially the reception areas.

3.15 Keeping a 1.5-meter distance to clients is necessary. If the distance between the counter and clients is less than 1.5 meters, the proper length must be reminded through drawing caution strips or signals on the ground.

3.16 Given the presence of steel valves and high humidity, WCs are dangerous places for virus spread; hence, it is recommended to use WCs of libraries with more care and caution. Also, providing liquid soaps and disinfecting equipment inside the cabinets is necessary.

3.17 Doors of sections in which services are offered must be kept open to avoid touching handles as much as possible.

3.18 Only library staff (librarians and sanitary forces) or people coordinated with the department general are allowed to disinfect inside areas of libraries, and people or groups who come for disinfection under any title need to have necessary permits from the relevant organizations.

## 4. Technology

Taking advantage of information and communication technologies to provide services and programs in each public library is essential, and especially during the COVID-19 epidemic, this capacity will play a significant role in promoting the library's goals.

4.1 Searching and membership computer sets, touch screens, scanners, printers, etc. must be unavailable for users, and librarians must render their related services.

4.2 Provincial departments general should pave the way for connecting users to libraries' WI-FI through observing related standards.

4.3 Users should be encouraged to reduce their unnecessary movements and to use Library management software to do affairs about membership, search, and extension.

4.4 virtual pages of libraries in social networks must be activated, and several services and programs must be executed through them. Telecommuter librarians need to promote information dissemination, training, and cultural activities through social networks.

## 5. Programs

Programs refer to those activities designed in the framework of an event with a particular beginning and end. The staff of public libraries, either alone or with the cooperation of other social entities or commercial firms, will plan or implement them. Any program is a holding-participating process, as libraries hold programs and users participate in them. Cultural and promotional activities such as holding a book signing events, review meetings, training courses, among others, are samples of programs held in the public libraries.

5.1 Since the library programs usually are held collectively and avoiding gatherings is a way to prevent and fight against COVID-19 so that no program will be held physically with the presence of users in the library area. however, the following alternatives are offered for holding library programs which usually in libraries:

5.1.1 Story-telling: running Live Instagram or loading in the library's channel are an excellent capacity to hold such programs.

5.1.2 Book-reading meetings: Such programs can be held using certain software such as Skype by presenters led by a librarian.

5.1.3 Literary Meetings (readings poems, anecdotes, etc.): Such programs can be held using certain software such as Skype, Live Instagram by presenters led by a librarian.

5.1.4 Training Workshops: Using online training systems such as Skyroom provide a condition for implementing this program.

5.1.5 Introducing and reviewing books: Introducing and reviewing books on various occasions through text, videos, or audio formats through social networks of libraries is a useful task. Observing copyright, files of books can be distributed among users. Reading or listening through digital book platforms such as FIDIBO, Taghcheh, Navar, etc. is recommended.

5.1.6 Thematic Speech: Instagram Live software or loading in the library's channel provide proper bedrock to implement this program.

5.1.7 Piece reading: Instagram Live software or loading in the library's channel provides suitable bedrock to implement this program.

5.1.8 Book Reading competitions: The current focus of the book reading competitions are on Razavi Reading Competitions, after that libraries may start to run various sorts of reading competitions (in different forms such as painting, introduction, summarizing, tests, etc.)

5.1.9 Entertainments (games, handicrafts, and origami): Since using toys of libraries and personal education of how to make handicrafts and origami for children and young adults is impossible for now, the training files of games, making handicrafts and origami can be uploaded in the virtual pages of libraries.

5.1.10 Social and psychological consultation (individual or group): Such consultations are offered by consultants who have received necessary approvals and permits for their activities, through phone contacts in the office of the department general or through coordinating with other phone consultation centers.

5.1.11 Library Tour: You can make a movie about the library and uploading it on the YouTube or Aparat.com or library's channel or Instagram page invite the users to visit the library through a virtual tour. Also, you can prepare an electronic brochure and email it to people's email addresses or upload them on the website, weblog, and channel of the library.

5.1.12 Communication: Librarians are recommended to call those members of the library who got COVID-19 or their families and ask about their condition.

## 6. Services

"Services" refer to activities provided and offered to meet the demands of users continually either by the library itself and its staff or through working with other organizations. Any service is a demand-response process; as users set their demands and library response to them. Borrowing books, consultations, resource services, among others, are only some examples of services in the public libraries.

6.1 Given Covid-19 epidemics in Iran, the provision of library services is recommended as follows. It is reminded that the more online services are offered, the better results are gained. However, if necessary, observing social distancing (at least 1.5 m) is essential when you provide personal services.

6.1.1 Circulation: lending is the most popular service in public libraries, which because of exchanging resources, is categorized is risky measures and must be controlled carefully.

6.1.2 Training and guiding videos and footage will be uploaded in the special page in Coronavirus of our website for offering services in a better and more proper way.

6.1.3 Encouraging users to use the library's online system will help them find information about the availability and reservation of resources and reduce their presence in the library as much as possible.

6.1.4 The capability to record lent books through phone and sending resources through mails must be facilitated (users pay costs for sending resources).

6.1.5 Quantity and duration borrowing time are depending on the decision of librarians, can be increased, and users need to be informed about such findings.

6.1.6 Users are encouraged to borrow resources for other members of their family and to reduce personal movements.

6.1.7 Since the reduction of intra-city activities is vitally essential; users must be informed that having the membership card of only a public library is sufficient for using resources and services of other public libraries.

6.1.8 Users must be informed that by the declaration of green zone conditions, they can keep the borrowed resources without being forced to pay any fine.

6.1.9 Reading Hall: It is recommended that two weeks before re-opening the library, the library starts its activities, which provides an excellent opportunity for managing the reading hall and workload of librarians.

6.1.10 Consulting Readers and informative consultations: It is recommended that certain services such as consulting reads and information consultation are offered through phone and internet. Preparing a list of resources, brochures, and other similar promotional items will be very useful.

6.1.11 Reservoir services: Remote reservoir services (launching a virtual reservoir desk) these days would be the proper way to meet users' information needs. Phone consulting and sending resources by mails are among other measures that would be useful to meet users' needs in these critical days.

6.1.12: Tours to be familiar with the library: By the formal and official declaration of green zone condition by the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Disease Management, physical and personal tours in libraries are impossible. To do so, you can use virtual networks to introduce and promoting the library. Our recommended alternatives include panorama and 3-D photos, manufacturing virtual tours, and preparing electronic brochures as well as completing website/weblog information.

6.1.13 training how to search in the library collections: Since by the formal declaration of green zone condition by the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Disease Management, all search computer sets, and work stations unavailable for users, uploading brochures or pictorial training of how to search library resources in the weblog and other virtual pages of the library would be a good alternative for this purpose. Some examples of such guidelines will be uploaded in the Corona Virus section of our portal.

6.1.14 Journals Compartment: Since each journal and newspaper is used repeatedly, this compartment is closed. If newspapers or journals are put on the board, if possible, users can read without touching their pages.

6.1.15 Designing new services regarding the condition: Librarians can design and implement other services and programs regarding their client population and provision of the diseases via observing the sanitary tips. Some help to provide economic guidelines for those jobs which affected by COVID-19 can be provided via phone or the internet. Applying the capacities and capabilities of medical centers and clean house in the library coverage area is recommended in designing new services.

## **7. Information Dissemination**

Providing information dissemination services during COVID-19 prevalence is vitally important. Thus, librarians are asked to pay special attention and focus on this issue. Sending SMS, emails, forums, online social media, and even phone contacts are highly recommended.

7.1 Each library needs to inform its users about the revival of the library's activities under exceptional conditions. Such information dissemination is possible through virtual networks, regional audio and video media, sending messages, and installing banners in the library areas.

7.2 Installing banners, and posters about conditions and regulations the users are obliged to observe at the library entrance are recommended.

7.3 The library members must be informed that their membership will be extended automatically in the case of expiration during the unique condition. There is no need for personal reference and paying costs for six months.

7.4 Users must be asked to wear masks and gloves when they come to the library and to wash their hands with warm water and soaps, repeatedly.

7.5 In the case of noting symptoms of Covid-19 in your colleagues or clients in the library (dry coughs, lethargy, severe dehydration, muscular pain, fever, respiratory obstruction, disorders in olfactory and tasting senses), with respect and observing sanitary tips, guide them outside the library.

7.6 Registration and recruiting new members are active in this period. So, membership through library management system is recommended; you can consider discharges for those who become members through online methods, if possible.

7.7 If the library is equipped with POS, avoid taking cash.

7.8 Library should increase their social participation in citizens' sanitary and healthcare. Information awareness such as posters on explaining symptoms of the diseases, how to disinfect and wash hands and surfaces, how long the virus would survive in different conditions, and other statements of National Headquarters for Coronavirus Disease Management.

7.9 Circulars, posters, the information provided through the Health Ministry portal or special page of Corona of our portal must be disseminated through social media, website, weblog, boards of the library.

7.10 Publishing news, information, or pictures from other unconfirmed sources is not permitted.



**If you have any question, please don't hesitate to contact <[pazooki.f@gmail.com](mailto:pazooki.f@gmail.com)>  
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