

SLOVAK NATIONAL LIBRARY PUBLISHES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OPERATION OF LIBRARIES IN SLOVAKIA FOR THE RELEASE OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST PANDEMICS-ENLARGEMENT COVID-19, CAUSED BY THE NEW CORONAVIRUS SARS-COV-2

VALID FROM 20. MAY 2020.

Based on the Measure of the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic in the event of a threat to public health dated 29 March 2020, all facilities providing services, including libraries, were closed from 30 March 2020 until further notice.

On 4 May 2020 the Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic together with the government of the Slovak Republic decided to launch the second and third phases of the lifting of lock-down measures at the same time, from 6. May 2020. On 18. May 2020, they decided to release further measures and launch the 4th phase.

The Slovak National Library recommends:

1. The risk of infection continues to exist because some infections may not show any symptoms of the disease and may be unconsciously spread, so all hygiene measures should be followed.
2. Access the library is only permitted when airways are covered for example, a veil, shawl, scarf, etc.). This obligation does not apply to children under two years of age and those with severe autism spectrum disorder.
3. Provide disinfectants for each entry into the building or the provision of disposable gloves at entry into service (gloves must not be contaminated).
4. Enforce at least 2m between people in the library building. Establish markings on the floor.
5. Admission of max. 1 user per 15m² of the area of the library accessible to users.
6. Provide visible notification of the obligation to comply with the abovementioned hygiene measures and the maximum number of users at one time for all entries in the library. Provide a system for counting users when they enter the library and ensure that they are not collected in one place near each other.
7. Establish information boards to be placed from the entrance to the building up to the borrowing counter.
8. Perform frequent ventilation of the library premises.
9. To carry out disinfection of contact surfaces, such as handrails, entry and exit stairs, stairwells, handles, borrowing counters, transport trolley handles and storage areas, etc.
10. Every day wash the floor of the library using disinfectant liquid.
11. Define within operating hours specific times for seniors over 65 years and other vulnerable groups.
12. Inform users not to spend any longer than necessary in the library.
13. Limit the number of users in children's departments.
14. Where possible, ensure a separate entrance and exit, providing a route for loans (including hand disinfection on entry), and a route to leave (with hand disinfection on exit)
15. At the end of the exit route, place a collection basket for used gloves and other protective material.
16. Open toilets for the public, but surfaces which are touched must be disinfected every hour. The users must have soap, disinfecting and paper towels available.

Borrowing

1. Secure the lending counter with protective screens.
2. Provide personal protective equipment for employees – mouth and nose covers and gloves. Hand sanitiser must be available. Personal protective equipment must be provided by the management without adversely affecting the library's budget.

3. Ensure that the openings on the waste bins for used gloves are disinfected before removing the waste bag from the basket.
4. Put returned books in a closed box or room for 5 days (quarantine). The room must be isolated, and not be used by people.
5. Ensure that the returned books have changed status in the online catalogue to make it clear that the book is quarantined or not available.
6. Boxes and rooms used for quarantining books should be disinfected (70% alcohol solution recommended).
7. Shorten loan periods, and close the library every three hours for disinfection of the premises.
8. Prefer ordering books by electronic or telephone means. The free selection of books can only be done by a user with covered mouth and nose or latex gloves.
9. If the libraries have a system to automatically send information about the return of a reserved book, make sure that users know that they need to wait a further five days.
10. Surfaces which come into contact with potentially contaminated materials must be disinfected at least once every hour (borrowing counter).

Nb: According to the opinion of the Federal Institute for the displacement of the risk to the books, the probability of transmission of the virus contaminated with surfaces (books) is very small. In strict compliance with all hygiene and safety measures, access to the free choice may be possible in restricted mode. So far we prefer to study the requested documents.

Reprographic Services

1. Reprographic services are provided on the basis of an electronic or telephone order.
2. Send copies electronically or by post, subject to copyright law compliance.
3. If small orders (max up to 5 pages) are to be made, a copy may also be made while the user waits.

Study Room

1. If the library decides to open up the study room, this must be with an exact limit on the number of users and the length of stay.

Research services

1. Perform search services electronically.
2. Minimize users' manipulation of classical sources of bibliographies. Only allow manipulation with upper respiratory and glove overlays.

ILL and International ILL

1. The ILL and International ILL service must make use of quarantine boxes and a room.
2. ILL and International ILL shall proceed in the same way as borrowing.

Large Events

1. Collective events can be done with a maximum number of people up to 100 persons.
2. Entry and residence at the place of a large event is only possible with a covered mouth and nose (for example, mask, shawl, scarf).
3. Carry out frequent disinfection of the premises, especially surfaces, floors and objects.
4. Provide hand sanitiser for everyone entering the building or disposable gloves (gloves must not be contaminated).
5. Ensure, when entering the building, a notice of the obligation that, in the event of an acute respiratory disease (e.g. fever, cough, runny nose, difficulty breathing), the person is required to remain in domestic isolation.

6. Publish in a visible place a notice of information:

- If you experience symptoms of acute respiratory disease, you need to contact your family doctor and leave the place of the event
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, then wipe your hands in disposable paper napkins
- Prohibition of hand-shakes

7. When participating in a collective event and on arrival and departure from the space of an event, ensure a distance of 2m between persons. This does not apply to persons living in the common household or for partners

8. Ensure adequate ventilation of the premises.

Other services

1. When using computers and printers, use disposable gloves to eliminate contamination.
2. Avoid allowing users to make use of storage spaces. Otherwise, it is necessary to ensure that the spaces are disinfected after each use.
3. The use of vending machines for drinks and meals in the library's premises is not recommended.

Surface disinfection

According to the WHO recommendations (16.05.2020), a number of disinfectants can be used to disinfect surfaces which are effective against the coronavirus causing the disease COVID-19 and are also effective against other clinically relevant pathogens:

- 1 70 to 90% ethanol, propanol
2. Chlorine-based products (e.g. 0.05% sodium hypochlorite)
3. Hydrogen Peroxide > 0.5%

The recommended exposure time is one minute.

Library staff

1. Ensure the training of personnel and equip them in such a way as to ensure the safety of employees and users by the employer.
2. Private transport to the workplace is recommended as far as possible. In the case of use of public transport, use gloves when travelling.
3. Disinfect hands before entering the workplace.
4. Increase the frequency of sanitation and disinfection of common areas at regular intervals (recommended approximately every 3-4 hours), especially batteries, flushes, handles, railings, elevators.
5. If multiple employees use common tools, handling carts, printers, scanners, plotters, etc., ensure that these are disinfected after use.
6. Ensure that employees carry out disinfection of work deskw, chairs, keyboards, mice, telephone, drawer handles, etc.
7. When handling crates / boxes / books - especially drivers, collection managers, depository staff, lending staff - during unloading and loading, it is recommended to use protective gloves, face covering and protective clothing.
8. Eliminate the transport of multiple employees by a vehicle-max. 2 persons in the car – the driver and one person seated at the back of the passenger side. While driving, both must wear masks, and we recommend having a window open (increase of air exchange).
9. For vehicle of up to 3,5t with a loading area for the transport of documents, books, etc. drivers should not have passengers.

10. If a professional vehicle is used by several employees, it is necessary to disinfect the steering wheel, dashboard, gearstick, door handles, windows, handbrake, and keys themselves – all contact areas - when the vehicle is parked.
11. Ensure that most doors, with the exception of fire doors, remain open and the contact is eliminated – depending on the number of employees in the workplace on the same shift and the library's visitors.
12. In common areas for employees, ensure 2 m spacing between employees.

The recommended and effective disinfectant solution is composed of 96% ethanol, 98% glycerol and 3% hydrogen peroxide or 99.8% isopropanol, 98% glycerol and 3% hydrogen peroxide. The recommendations will be continuously modified and varied in line with changes made by the members of the Slovak Government and the Slovak crisis staff and in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of the SR.

Contacts:

Slovak National Library – <https://snk.sk/sk/informacie-pre/kniznice-a-knihovnikov/koronavirus.html>

Public Health Authority – <http://www.uvzsr.sk/>

Prague National Librarian – <https://ipk.nkp.cz/koronavirus-1/koronavirus>

Guild of Slovak librarians and libraries – <http://www.infolib.sk/sk/in>

Martine, 20. May 2020