



QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY

## **Reopening FAQs**

### **Which branches will be open?**

Starting July 13, seven branches will be open for to-go service in designated areas of their buildings and for returns at exterior return machines:

- Bayside
- Bellerose
- East Elmhurst
- Kew Gardens Hills
- Laurelton
- Long Island City
- Peninsula

An additional nine locations will be closed to the public but will accept returns at their exterior return machines or book drops:

- Astoria
- Cambria Heights
- Central
- Flushing
- Jackson Heights
- Queensboro Hill
- Rego Park
- Ridgewood
- South Ozone Park

### **What criteria did you use to decide to open these locations first? When will you open more?**

The seven sites were selected in order to provide service in different regions of the borough and for their size, layout, and condition as we assess whether and how our new service model and operating procedures, including physical distancing and other safety measures, would work in other libraries.

Depending on the experiences of the initial seven locations and as circumstances allow, we will gradually and carefully open more branches and provide additional services.

### **What services will be available at these branches?**

We are starting with our “To-Go” service, which will allow customers to pick up and return materials only. For your health and safety, there will be no on-site public programs, browsing, meeting room availability, seating, public computers, or in-person reference at this time.

### **What are the hours of operation for each of the seven branches?**

Monday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed for cleaning 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed for cleaning 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Thursday, 12 p.m. to 7 p.m., closed for cleaning 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed for cleaning 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed for cleaning 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

### **What are the requirements to visit a library location?**

- All customers must wear a face mask when entering and inside the building, as mandated by NYS Executive Order.
- Do not enter the building if you have COVID-19 related symptoms such as fever, cough, chills, and shortness of breath, have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days, and/or have had close contact with someone with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the past 14 days.
- The number of customers permitted inside a building at any one time will be limited.
- While outside waiting in line and while inside the building, customers must maintain a distance of at least six feet from other people.

### **How are returned books and other materials being handled? Should I clean materials I borrow?**

The Library is following guidance from public health authorities and the REALM (REopening Archives, Libraries and Museums) project, a research partnership between OCLC, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and Battelle focused on creating and distributing science-based information and recommended practices to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19, including how library materials should be handled.

Accordingly, returned items will be quarantined for 72 hours in designated containers before being put into circulation. This practice is recommended as the safest and most effective way to disinfect materials. Please do not use liquid disinfectants or other methods, which can harm materials.

### **What other measures are in place to keep everyone safe?**

The Library is following the most up-to-date guidance from public health officials in order to ensure the safety of staff and customers. Health and safety practices and protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19 will remain in effect as long as necessary.

- Staff will wear masks, practice physical distancing, wash and sanitize hands regularly, and use gloves as needed. Hand sanitizer is available for customers to use as well.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols are in place. Each open location will close for one hour in the middle of the service day for enhanced cleaning.
- Plexiglass barriers, distancing markers, and signage are in place to promote appropriate distancing.
- Before reporting to work on-site each day, staff are required to complete a health screening questionnaire regarding known COVID-19 exposure and symptoms over the

past 14 days. They will also be required to take their temperatures each day. Staff who have tested positive for COVID-19, exhibited symptoms associated with COVID-19, or been in close contact with someone with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the past 14 days will not report to work.

- In the event an employee or other individual who has been on-site at a Library location has a reported confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, the Library will respond immediately to prevent potential spreading according to the Library's Infection Response Protocol.

### **How do I request books or other items to be held for pickup?**

Starting July 6, you may request materials in advance on our website or mobile app, or by calling Telephone Reference at 718-990-0728 or 718-990-0714. Starting July 13, you may also call an open [branch](#) if you need additional assistance.

If items were held for you before our temporary closure at one of our locations, they will continue to be held there through September 30. You may cancel your request if you prefer. Any item requests made but not fulfilled before our temporary closure have now expired, and you will need to make a new request.

### **How many days do I have to pick up items I have put on hold?**

We have increased the pickup period to 15 days, up from seven.

### **Is there a fee for hold items that are not picked up?**

No.

### **Will I have to pay a late fee for overdue materials?**

No. No fines or fees will be assessed until October 1, at the earliest.

### **What if my account is blocked due to unpaid fines and fees?**

Until October 1, the Library is temporarily removing any fine-based blocks (blocks on accounts with balances of \$15 or more). Customers previously blocked may check out materials.

### **Will the public computers be available?**

No, not in the initial "To-Go" reopening stage.

### **Will scan stations/multi-functional devices be available to the public?**

No, not in the initial "To-Go" reopening stage.

### **Will there be programs, events, and classes?**

There will be no on-site programs, events, or classes in the initial "To-Go" reopening stage. The Library will continue providing [virtual programs and other online resources](#).

### **Will the meeting rooms or sitting areas in the branch be available?**

No, not in the initial "To-Go" reopening stage.

### **Will restrooms be available for the public?**

No, not in the initial "To-Go" reopening stage.

### **Will any locations accept book donations?**

No. Library locations will not accept any book donations for the foreseeable future.

### **Will I be able to use the Library's WiFi?**

Yes, you can connect to WiFi service immediately outside of every QPL branch using your own device. Extended Wifi service up to 150 yards outside the branch is available at Kew Gardens Hills and Peninsula. A number of additional locations, not yet open to the public, also have extended WiFi service: Arverne, Broad Channel, Elmhurst, Lefferts, Lefrak City, Poppenhusen, Queensboro Hill, Ridgewood, Rochdale Village, Rosedale, Seaside, South Hollis, South Ozone Park, Woodside and Hunters Point.

### **Is Ask-A-Librarian service available?**

[Ask-A-Librarian](#) live chat and email reference are available Monday to Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m, and starting July 6, telephone reference will be available during the same hours.

### **How can I sign up for a library card?**

First, [apply for an eCard online](#) and gain access to all of our digital materials.

To borrow physical materials, you can bring your photo ID and [proof of your current address](#) to an open location and show them to our staff at the counter through the Plexiglass. They will issue a new card to you. If you have an eCard already, it will make the process easier, since your information will already be in our system.

### **Where can I find QPL's reopening plan?**

The plan is available [here](#).