



NEWS RELEASE
North Olympic Library System
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 3, 2020
Contact: Margaret Jakubcin, Library Director
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Re: North Olympic Library System Prepares to Offer Curbside Pickup

The North Olympic Library System (NOLS) was pleased to receive the [Governor's announcement](#) issued Tuesday, June 2, with regard to allowable library activities during Phase 2 of the Washington Safe Start Plan. Public libraries throughout Washington have been working closely with the State Librarian to assist the Governor's office in developing [guidance specific to libraries](#), which also reflects the individual needs of communities throughout the state, and is responsive to the health concerns of our state at this time. NOLS has been working hard on preliminary plans to restart library service in Clallam County, and will now fine-tune those plans to fully incorporate the Safe Start directives for safe materials return and curbside pickup of held library materials. The Library will soon begin sharing details about library services and procedures to be initiated in June.

“Restarting library operations under conditions where transmission of coronavirus remains a continuing concern is an extremely complex matter,” says Margaret Jakubcin. “Retail operations have been leading the way in developing curbside delivery methods. However, unlike retail operations, where products mostly flow in one direction, libraries have to make provision for safe handling and decontamination of borrowed materials, as they are returned from households throughout the county, and before they are re-shared with others.” Due to unusually heavy borrowing during the final days before the pandemic shutdown, NOLS currently has almost 40,000 items out on loan, approximately 10% more than is usual at any

normal time. Due to the closure returns have not been accepted for nearly three months. Procedures for safe handling of returned materials therefore have to make provision for unusually heavy return rates and extended periods of quarantine for the returned materials so that they can be processed safely. Other COVID-19 public health requirements and safety protocols, such as including limiting the number of staff in library buildings and ensuring social distancing of staff as they work, must also be observed.

“We’ve been working on these logistics for weeks” said Assistant Director, Noah Glaude. “Public library service models during Phase 2 and 3 of Washington’s Safe Start will look very different than what we’re all used to, but NOLS is excited to now have the necessary guidance on operating requirements, and the green light to finalize our plans and move ahead.”

Curbside pickup of held materials, and limited Outreach to the Homebound deliveries will be re-initiated later in June. Curbside pickup arrangements will vary somewhat from branch to branch, to reflect the different site layouts and available staffing, as well as the different demographics and needs of each library community.

Despite the Phase 2 limits on allowed library services, the annual Summer Reading Program will begin on June 15. Due to COVID-19, the program will be different than past years, but still includes a reading challenge with incentives to earn a special NOLS T-shirt, chances to win awesome grand prizes, and virtual events for all ages! More information about how to participate in the Summer Reading Program will be made available the week of June 10.

The Library is always open online, and will continue to serve the community in diverse ways during this public health emergency. Make a virtual visit to the library at www.nols.org, or follow NOLS on Facebook and Instagram, to enjoy events, online resources, and other NOLS services.

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