

Reopening and Operation of the Physics Library

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures for the opening and operation of the Physics Library. The Physics Library provides access to the Physics Library Collection, including text books and other reference materials for short-term loan, assistance with loans from other libraries, and research and reference support. The University has entered into an agreement with The HathiTrust to gain online access to a large collection of books published before 2004. This agreement is based on a one-for-one arrangement, where UofT is allowed online access to as many copies of a book as are held in collections across the University. As part of the agreement, the University is required to prevent circulation of the printed books. In order to comply with this, the Physics Library may only be open when staff are present to ensure compliance with the HathiTrust agreement. Having staff on-site will also allow loans for material not restricted by the HathiTrust agreement, as well as limited access to course reserve items for short-term loans.

Regular Review

This plan will be reviewed regularly and revised if changing circumstances warrant. This will be done in compliance with University policy and recommendations from Environmental Health & Safety (EHS).

Principles

- Paramount will be the health, safety and protection of staff and all clients including faculty, students, post-doctoral fellows and staff.
- Applicable EHS, FAS and Departmental directives and guidelines will guide the restart and ongoing operations.
- Planning and implementation will follow the principles described in this document and revisions.
- The Department will provide reasonable accommodation to staff members for personal circumstances while balancing the needs of the University and its members and adhering to agreements, policies, procedures, guidance documents and legislation.
- Public parts of the building, including classrooms and lecture halls will have specific requirements for teaching and not covered in this document, as will teaching and research labs. Library staff will be required to follow any policies or procedures applicable when in those areas. This document will focus on Library work areas.

General Preparation for Reopening

- Appropriate signs and notices will be posted at the Library entrance, including a COVID hygiene poster any special covid19 procedures for Library operations.
- The Library door will be blocked open during open hours.
- Study areas will be marked as “closed – do not enter”.
- The area behind the service counter will be strictly limited to staff only, and tape markings will be placed on the floor to provide 2 m spacing from staff to Library patrons.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on the service counter.

REOPENING AND OPERATION OF THE PHYSICS LIBRARY

- It will be the responsibility of the Library staff to ensure that the signs are in good condition, barriers are in place and for maintaining supplies. These will be inspected at least daily and more frequently as required.
- Face masks will be made available, and should be used as directed by [University Policy](#). Masks should be worn in all common-use indoor University spaces (e.g. corridors, washrooms, stairwells, classrooms).
- If necessary to manage traffic in Library areas, a reservation system will be setup for the Library staff by email or using Microsoft Booking. This information will be circulated to the Department.
- All non-essential items will be removed from the service counter.

General Procedures

- Staff should stay home if they feel unwell or are experiencing symptoms and should report any absences to their Supervisor as soon as possible.
- If staff suspect they have COVID-19 symptoms or believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 they should complete the [Ontario Ministry of Health self-assessment for COVID-19](#) and follow the directions provided. An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 should immediately contact U of T's Occupational Health Nurse by email at <mailto:ehs.occhealth@utoronto.ca>.
- Staff members schedules are to be established so that only one staff member is present whenever possible.
 - Areas of common contact are to be sanitized at the beginning and end of each shift. This includes desks, counters & benchtops, phones, keyboards, tools, etc. Any materials, equipment etc. entering or leaving the staff area must be cleaned.
 - Any equipment or touch-surfaces that are used by both patrons and staff must be sanitized after each use.
- If more than one staff member is present, all are to practice physical distancing at all times, keeping a minimum of two meters apart. They should work apart as much as possible.
- Staff will eat at their desks; no common lunch room will be provided, and there will be no access to refrigerators, microwave ovens, etc.
- Hands should be washed with soap and water frequently, especially before entering the workspace, and sanitized after contacting materials and surfaces others may have handled.
- Report hazards and concerns to the appropriate supervisor.
- All relevant COVID-19 protection procedures should be reviewed and followed.
- All other safety protocol & procedures for workplace hazards are to be followed.

Standard Operating Procedures

- The Library will be open on Mondays and Fridays only for circulation and reference only. There will be no provision of study space in the Library.
- Maximum occupancy will be one staff member, and one client.
- Wherever possible, anyone wishing to visit the Library or obtain help from the staff will make advance arrangements by email, or by using a reservation system.
- Masks should be used by all patrons at all times and by staff when patrons are in the library, and when handling any items (e.g. books) that may be handled by patrons.

REOPENING AND OPERATION OF THE PHYSICS LIBRARY

- The stacks will be closed to patrons. With prior arrangement, books for loan will be available for pick-up. In special circumstances, staff will provide books to patrons waiting in a designated area.
- Returned books will be returned only through the exterior book return slot. They will remain there until processed at the end-of-day, with staff being sure to sanitize their hands after processing. Gloves will be provided to staff for this task. The returned books will be stored in isolation for a minimum of 3 days before being made available for circulation.
- Short-term loan books will be made available for loan on Fridays and must be returned on Monday.
- Clients will be asked to leave if they deliberately behave in a manner not consistent with this document. Anyone refusing to comply with these guidelines will not be allowed access to Library services and repeated behaviour will be reported to supervisors or an appropriate authority.
- Clients may have to wait in a safe area, asked to return later or make an appointment if in the opinion of the Library staff, physical distancing will be compromised.
- Clients should bring their own writing instruments (e.g. pens) for any required writing. Spare pens will be available, subject to sanitization and/or a 72 hour isolation period.
- Where possible, office machines will only be used by Library staff.
- Where possible, all office supplies, equipment, etc. must be cleaned after use by a Library staff member before storage or reuse.