



# NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY

4848 Victoria Avenue, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 4C5 | 905 356 8080

**For Immediate Release:** June 17, 2020

## **Niagara Falls Public Library prepares for a phased reopening beginning with Contactless Curbside Pick Up**

**Niagara Falls, ON:** The Ontario Government announced that as part of its Phase 2, Stage 1 reopening plan, public libraries could begin to offer curbside pick up as of May 19th. It also stated that businesses should only open when they are ready. On May 25th, the return boxes at all Niagara Falls Public Library locations reopened, and contactless curbside pickup service began at the Victoria Avenue Library location on June 8th.

Today, the Ontario Government announced that Libraries in Niagara are now permitted to begin Stage 2, which will see slightly expanded services but with restrictions.

These restrictions include:

- **Libraries can reopen with limited on-site services, such as computer access and contactless book pickup and drop-off.**
- **Customers are not permitted to handle books or materials on shelves.**
- **Libraries should operate in adherence with public health guidelines on physical distancing, capacity, and hygiene procedures (e.g., disinfecting returns and high-touch areas like computers).**

While this allowance has been made for limited library service, it may be some time before all Libraries are able to safely return to full capacity. The safety and wellbeing of our staff, customers, and community are of the utmost importance. We have been consulting with our Provincial Library Associations as well as the American Library Association, in addition to Public Health and Provincial Legislation to address health and safety concerns so that we can be adequately prepared.

There is a lot to think about as the Library prepares to get materials to library customers in a new way. Our book returns are open now, so we invite everyone to return the books and DVDs that have been in homes across the City since early March. Aside from safely managing the return of the more than 13,000 items that are checked out, the Library has created a new process, with the



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guidance of Public Health, which allows materials to be safely handled, quarantined and redistributed using Curbside Pick Up.

Contactless Curbside Pick Up is a way for customers to pick up their library materials while following the recommended physical distancing and safety measures. Customers can place items on hold through our online catalogue on our website or by telephone. When your holds are ready, you will receive an email or telephone confirmation to schedule a pickup appointment. Selected items will be placed in a bag, and you will remain in your car or wait outside designated spots in the Victoria Avenue Library parking lot to receive your items. You won't have to go inside the library, and there won't be any exchange of items like library cards.

For now, we will continue to offer Contactless Curbside Pick Up. We hope to expand Curbside Pick Up and offer more services such as computer access once we are safely able to do so. Please remember that the Library's digital and virtual resources are available 24/7 through our website at: <https://my.nflibrary.ca/>

Looking ahead, preliminary discussions have focused on rearranging furniture to accommodate for physical distancing, continuous disinfection and sanitation, quarantine of physical materials, installations of plexiglass barriers, increase in the use of PPE, and limiting the number of individuals accessing the facility and Library Stacks. Additional training and education will be implemented for staff to allow for a safe return to the workplace. The safety and wellbeing of our staff, customers, and community are of the utmost importance.

During times of economic downturn and crisis, Libraries traditionally offer support, services, social and human capital, which leverage limited community resources, as well as dynamic partnerships to aid the recovery process for all community members. The Niagara Falls Public Library is ready and willing to aid in the recovery process and support all members of our community in the coming weeks, months, and years.



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The Niagara Falls Public Library will continue to evaluate the situation and share more information as further developments become available. We all look forward to safely welcoming the residents of Niagara Falls back to the Library. We will keep everyone updated as plans evolve.

Thank you.

*All Niagara Falls Public Library locations have closed until further notice, due to the COVID-19 situation and in the interest of health and safety. Please visit our website for closure information. The Library's virtual resources are available 24/7 and can be accessed via the Library website.*

*The Niagara Falls Public Library is a free, inclusive community space open to all. Residents of the City of Niagara Falls are invited to register for a free library card to access all our resources, both physical and digital. The Niagara Falls Public Library dates back to 1878, and today has four library locations serving the City of Niagara Falls - Victoria Avenue library, Stamford Centre library, Community Centre library and Chippawa library as well as a NovelBranch library vending machine at the Gale Centre. Additional services can be accessed at the Virtual Library at [my.nflibrary.ca](http://my.nflibrary.ca), including streaming video and music, and downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines. Visit our website at [my.nflibrary.ca](http://my.nflibrary.ca) for more information.*

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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