MOVING FORWARD

Key Findings from New Libraries’ COVID-19 Response Survey: Re-opening & Financial Results
LIBRARIES RESPOND:
COVID-19 SURVEY

SURVEY OF RESPONSE & ACTIVITIES
RESULTS COLLECTED MAY 12-18, 2020
SURVEY METHOD

Conducted by the American Library Association (ALA), with additional support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Colorado State Library's Library Research Service

SURVEY
Hosted in Survey Monkey

DISTRIBUTION
Survey link distributed via email, social media, and listservs

SAMPLE
All library types, with public, academic, and K-12 libraries representing the majority of respondents

ANALYTICS
Data were cleaned, de-duplicated, and anonymized
SURVEY RESULTS

The results in this report represent aggregate responses from a convenience survey.

**RESPONDENTS***
3,850 libraries

**RESPONSE RATE**
- ~30% of US public library systems**;
- ~20% of US academic libraries;
- <20% of other library types

**GEOGRAPHY**
50 US states + Washington, DC represented

*Unless otherwise noted, n=3,850 when calculating responses.
**Public library system is equivalent to a public library jurisdiction.
Re-opening Processes & Procedures
Nearly all respondents will have a combination of protocols in place, including:

### STAFFING
- **80%** Health and safety protocols for staff
- **73%** Phased re-opening of operations
- **30%** New or revised support services that require staffing (e.g., remote work, trauma response)

### SAFETY & SANITATION
- **80%** Sanitizing/quarantining materials
- **76%** Social distancing requirements for patrons
- **61%** Deep cleaning of interior spaces

[http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources)
Re-opening Plans
1/3 of respondents reported draft form of plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Plan Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>No-contact checkout (e.g., curbside pickup, delivery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Limiting number of people (e.g., by appointment only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Phased re-opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Social distancing (e.g., one-way aisles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Personal protective equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Limiting space or equipment (e.g., restrooms, toys, computers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Quarantine materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Following external guidelines (e.g., state directives, school districts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Virtual services (e.g., virtual programming, electronic materials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Reduced hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Protective barriers (e.g., plexiglass shields)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>staffing modifications (e.g., remote work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Personal hygiene (e.g., requiring hand sanitizer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Re-opening Processes & Procedures
Common themes (500+ plans)

- Tiered or phased re-opening; the number of phases varies from 3-6.
- Enhanced cleaning and protections for health and safety of staff and public, aligned with local or state guidance
- Quarantine of materials for 72 hours*
- Audience is a factor in how plan documents are presented:
  - Staff-focused offer more detail and focus on process
  - Public-focused offer more detail about services and programs

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Re-opening Processes & Procedures
Common themes (500+ plans)

There are no standards for writing a reopening plan.

Emerging best practices:
• support library workers
• build community resilience
• help advocate for libraries and colleagues in communities and institutions
• clearly layout thoughtful steps for resuming onsite library services
• plans are non-linear and adjust as health conditions change

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Public Libraries are faced with challenges every day, but we never expected a pandemic that threw so many challenges our way all at once. Working together, our community of users, staff, government agencies, and volunteers made the transition to a new way of working very seamless. When staff get to reimagine how they can do their work from home, and as we plan together for the future, amazing outcomes are realized.

Collaboration: joint efforts of library leadership, frontline staff, city agencies, etc.

Honore Bray, Executive Director
Missoula Public Library

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Re-opening Best Practices

Staff wellbeing: combined training, team building, and focus on self-care

Our staff is our greatest resource. I have advocated on their behalf at every turn, communicating how our creative and innovative team quickly pivoted to working and teaching in virtual spaces – all while trying to take care of themselves and their families throughout this pandemic. To our team, I stressed the importance of first tending to their physical, mental, and emotional health. As we planned our phased re-opening approach, the safety of our team and our customers has been, and remains, my highest priority.

Tonya Aikens, President & CEO
Howard County Library System

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Re-opening Best Practices

**Communication:** outreach to the public, decision makers, business leaders, and community partners

*Whether onsite or remote, community is central to our mission and, to stay connected with all stakeholders, we created a detailed communications plan that includes staff, volunteers, community partners, patrons, local government, business, community leaders, and media.*

Susan Whittle, Director & Subregional Librarian
Southwest Georgia Regional Library

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
We knew early on during our weekly public library forums, that mental health concerns of patrons and staff needed to be addressed. It’s imperative that staff feel comfortable talking about their own mental health concerns and have tools available to recognize and respond to mental health concerns of their patrons. All of us have experienced some trauma related to COVID-19. If there is something positive to come out of this pandemic, it’s my hope that we focus on equipping our library staff with training that helps them address trauma within themselves and their communities.

Robin Westphal, State Librarian
Missouri State Library

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/planning-reopening-resources
Most libraries’ responses reflected no major changes to current staff-related finances

- **Benefits:** No major change (93%)
- **Salaries:** No major change (88%)
- **Staffing:** No major change (67%), but some or significant reduction (31%)
- **Professional Development Budget:** No major change (55%), but 1/3 reported some or significant reduction

- **Planned Hiring:** No major change (50%), but nearly half reported some or significant reduction (25%) or eliminated (23%)

Most libraries’ responses reflected some reductions to current operational finances

• **Print Collection Budget:** Split between no major change (49%) and some or significant reduction (46%)

• **Resuming Operations:** Split between no major change (41%) and some or significant reduction (40%), with 12% reporting some increase

• **Services:** Over half reported some or significant reduction (52%), but over 1/3 reported no major change (36%)

• **Programs:** Over half reported some or significant reduction (52%) and 14% reported eliminated, with 29% reporting no major change

The percentage of libraries responding “no major change” decreased when reporting on future staff-related finances

- **Benefits**: No major change (85%)
- **Salaries**: No major change (76%)
- **Staffing**: No major change (57%), but some or significant reduction (40%)
- **Professional Development Budget**: Over half reported some or significant reduction (52%), but over 1/3 reported no major change (36%)

- **Planned Hiring**: No major change (40%), but over half reported some or significant reduction (37%) or eliminated (20%)

Most libraries’ responses reflected further reductions to future operational finances

- **Print Collection Budget**: Over half reported some or significant reduction (61%), but over 1/3 reported no major change (35%)
- **Resuming Operations**: Nearly half reported some or significant reduction (44%), but over 1/3 reported no major change (37%) and 14% reported some increase
- **Services**: Nearly half reported some or significant reduction (49%), but over 1/3 reported no major change (36%) and 12% reported some increase
- **Programs**: Over half reported some or significant reduction (63%) and 24% reported no major change
Financial Changes to All Academic Libraries

Breakouts by Carnegie Class Available Online
Academic Libraries
Financial Changes to BENEFITS

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding
- N/A

To Date: N=575
Anticipated: N=564
Academic Libraries
Financial Changes to PLANNED HIRING

To Date: N=581
Anticipated: N=572
Academic Libraries

Financial Changes to PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To Date: N=583
Anticipated: N=572
Academic Libraries

Financial Changes to PRINT COLLECTION

To Date: N=582
Anticipated: N=580

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding
- N/A

Changes to PRINT COLLECTION:
- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%
Academic Libraries

Financial Changes to PROGRAMS

To Date: N=573
Anticipated: N=563
Academic Libraries
Financial Changes to RESUMING OPERATIONS

To Date: N=567
Anticipated: N=558

Changes to RESUMING OPERATIONS

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding
- N/A

0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%

To Date | Anticipated (thru May 2021)
Academic Libraries

Financial Changes to SERVICES

To Date: N=584
Anticipated: N=570

Changes to SERVICES

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding
- N/A

Percentage Distribution:

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%
Academic Libraries

Financial Changes to STAFFING

To Date: N=582
Anticipated: N=575

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding

Changes to STAFFING:

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

To Date
Anticipated (thru May 2021)
Financial Changes to Public Libraries
What financial changes has the library made in response to the crisis to date?

Developed by:

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES
What financial changes do you anticipate being made by the library in response to the crisis in the next 12 months?

Developed by:

Public Library Financial Changes
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to BENEFITS

To Date: N=1990
Anticipated: N=2051
Public Libraries
Financial Changes to SALARIES

To Date: N=2206
Anticipated: N=2237

Changes to SALARIES

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding

To Date: Anticipated (thru May 2021)
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to PLANNED HIRING

To Date: N=1882
Anticipated: N=1982

Changes to PLANNED HIRING

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding

To Date
Anticipated (thru May 2021)
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to PRINT COLLECTION

To Date: N=2267
Anticipated: N=2303
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To Date: N=2157
Anticipated: N=2227

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding
Public Libraries
Financial Changes to PROGRAMS

To Date: N=2327
Anticipated: N=2334

Changes to PROGRAMS

- 0%
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

Eliminated
Significant reduction
Some reduction
No major change
Some increase
Significant increase
Allocated new funding

To Date  Anticipated (thru May 2021)
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to RESUMING OPERATIONS

To Date: N=2125
Anticipated: N=2259
Public Libraries
Financial Changes to SERVICES

To Date: N=2288  
Anticipated: N=2321
Public Libraries

Financial Changes to STAFFING

To Date: N=2255
Anticipated: N=2251

Changes to STAFFING

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding

To Date  Anticipated (thru May 2021)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Significant reduction
Some reduction
No major change
Some increase
Significant increase
Allocated new funding
K-12 Libraries
Financial Changes to BENEFITS

To Date: N=85
Anticipated: N=97

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries
Financial Changes to SALARIES

To Date: N=92
Anticipated: N=102

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries

Financial Changes to PLANNED HIRING

To Date: N=85
Anticipated: N=81

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries

Financial Changes to PRINT COLLECTION

To Date: N=103
Anticipated: N=119

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries

Financial Changes to PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To Date: N=91
Anticipated: N=104

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries
Financial Changes to PROGRAMS

To Date: N=96
Anticipated: N=112

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries
Financial Changes to RESUMING OPERATIONS

To Date: N=81
Anticipated: N=98

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries
Financial Changes to SERVICES

To Date: N=95
Anticipated: N=105

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
K-12 Libraries

Financial Changes to STAFFING

To Date: N=99
Anticipated: N=104

Additional data can be found at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic
Financial Changes to State Libraries
State Libraries
Financial Changes to BENEFITS

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=11
State Libraries
Financial Changes to SALARIES

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=12
State Libraries

Financial Changes to PLANNED HIRING

To Date: N=12
Anticipated: N=11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Type</th>
<th>To Date</th>
<th>Anticipated (thru May 2021)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eliminated</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant reduction</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some reduction</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No major change</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some increase</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant increase</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocated new funding</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State Libraries

Financial Changes to PRINT COLLECTION

To Date: N=12
Anticipated: N=11
State Libraries

Financial Changes to PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=12
State Libraries
Financial Changes to PROGRAMS

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=12
State Libraries

Financial Changes to RESUMING OPERATIONS

To Date: N=12
Anticipated: N=12

Bar chart showing financial changes to resuming operations.

- Eliminated
- Significant reduction
- Some reduction
- No major change
- Some increase
- Significant increase
- Allocated new funding

Legend:

- To Date
- Anticipated (thru May 2021)
State Libraries
Financial Changes to SERVICES

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=12

[Bar chart showing financial changes to services, with categories including Eliminated, Significant reduction, Some reduction, No major change, Some increase, Significant increase, Allocated new funding. The chart compares To Date and Anticipated changes through May 2021.]
State Libraries
Financial Changes to STAFFING

To Date: N=13
Anticipated: N=12
Furloughs

~20% of respondents impacted by furloughs and/or layoffs

Part-time and temporary staff (including student workers) were most likely to be impacted

Commonly reported staffing impacts:
- hiring freezes
- reduced work hours
- early retirements
- participation in “shared work” or layoff aversion programs

N=672
## Estimated Length of Furloughs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Until the library is open to the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Dependent on governing authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10%</td>
<td>Predetermined date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=672
A U.S. Council of Mayors survey (April 14) finds that 88% of cities expect a revenue shortfall this year as a result of COVID-19. And, that for cities with populations of 50,000 to 500,000, 98% expect a shortfall.

The National Association of Counties (May 5) estimates that COVID-19 may have an over $144 billion impact on county budgets through FY2021. And, in particular "between lost revenue and increased expenditures ... small counties may see a nearly one quarter [24%] reduction in their budgets."

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities now (May 20) projects that states could be facing a collective $765 billion budget shortfall over state fiscal years 2020-22. This is up from an estimate of $500 billion in early April and an estimate of $650 billion in late April 2020.
Next Steps

• Ongoing analysis of results by library type
• Continued examination of financial data
• Webinars to be announced
• Aggregate data to states ETA last week of June

First published results (building status, patron needs, community response):
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LIBRARIES RESPOND: COVID-19 SURVEY

The American Library Association (ALA) would like to thank all of the libraries that responded to the survey so quickly. The May 2020 "Libraries Respond: COVID-19 Survey" is one of a series of data and research projects underway at ALA to learn and share information about the impacts of COVID-19 on libraries, library staff, and our work serving our communities. Analysis of data from the survey is ongoing and will be shared in coming weeks.

We would also like to thank the Library Research Service, an office of the Colorado State Library, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services for their work helping clean and validate the survey data.

To learn more about the COVID-19 surveys and view the full sets of questions, please visit: http://www.ala.org/tools/libraries-respond-covid-19-survey.

Additional Resources: