



A MESSAGE FROM BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR MARY JEAN JAKUBOWSKI

May 14, 2020

Dear Buffalo & Erie County Public Library patron:

I hope you are doing well and staying healthy. I am pleased to share with you updated information to keep you connected to the Library during these challenging times.

Our library buildings may be closed; however, there is a wide variety of library services available online and through our website at www.BuffaloLib.org. Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System telephone lines are open at 716-858-8900 Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. You can also send us an email question at: askus@buffalolib.org. Library staff are working remotely and are happy to assist you.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been receiving many questions. Below you will find answers to the most frequently asked questions.

Q. When will the Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries reopen?

A. We look forward to reopening; however, we are not able to reopen until such time as Erie County meets all criteria required by New York State's Regional COVID-19 metrics AND it is determined in what phase of the State of New York's *Phased Reopening Plan* public libraries are assigned. We are monitoring the situation and working hard developing plans. Once we know when and how we are able to reopen, we will make an announcement.

Q. Will all libraries open at the same time?

A. It is unclear at this time whether all libraries will open at the same time. Our System is comprised of 23 independent employers who will need to determine their respective opening plans. All must follow New York State's *Phased Reopening Plan* and none can open until such time that Erie County meets the Regional COVID-19 metrics as noted in the previous question.

Q. When the libraries do reopen, will you provide all of the same services as before libraries were closed?

A. It is unclear at this time whether our libraries will be offering the same level of services provided before closing. Services will be determined under the guidelines set forth by New York State, for

example, social distancing requirements, etc., as well as any guidelines developed by the County of Erie.

Q. Can I pick up materials I placed on hold before libraries closed?

A. No, not at this time. We will notify you when materials can be picked up.

Q. Can the Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries offer curbside pickup?

A. Some of our libraries are exploring “curbside” and/or “drive-through” operations for when we are able to reopen. It absolutely remains on our radar. At this time, given the Governor’s directives, we are not able to provide this service. In addition, there are many aspects that must be taken into consideration. For the safety and health of our staff and patrons, we have implemented *materials handling* procedures that follow guidelines as set forth by the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

We do have a multitude of electronic resources available from our website: www.BuffaloLib.org. I hope you will take advantage of our eBook, eAudiobook and downloadable music collections as well as a new eBook book club collection with titles that can be checked out and read by an unlimited number of book club readers. It is free & easy with your library card! Check it out at: <https://buffalo.overdrive.com/collection/1066363>. For instructions on how to download eBooks, visit: <https://bit.ly/3cdwQan>.

Q. I have a library card but I do not remember my PIN number.

A. You can change your PIN number by visiting our website at: [https://bep1.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default/search/framedpage/\\$002fcustom\\$002fweb\\$002fcontent\\$002fmyaccount.html/My\\$0020Account/800px/false](https://bep1.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default/search/framedpage/$002fcustom$002fweb$002fcontent$002fmyaccount.html/My$0020Account/800px/false).

You can also change your PIN by calling us at 716-858-8900, Monday – Friday, between 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Please have your library card number available when you call.

Q. Can the library increase the number of downloadable eBooks I can borrow from Overdrive at one time?

A. Our eBook collections are very popular. Daily, we are adding titles and volumes to the collections. For fair and equitable access to these materials, we have decided to keep the eBook borrowing limit to 20 books per library card. We encourage patrons to “return” each eBook when you are finished with it. Once ‘returned,’ you can borrow another.

Q. I still have materials - books and DVDs, I borrowed from my library. When will they be due?

A. Materials borrowed on or after February 11, 2020 are not due until June 1, 2020. We are reviewing this and will make adjustments.

Q. Can I return materials now that I currently have from the library?

A. Yes, several of the libraries have their drop boxes open. To see the list, click here or copy this link to

your browser: <https://www.buffalolib.org/sites/default/files/users/dcteam/new-releases/Branches%205.8.pdf>.

Q. Can I talk to someone about my library account?

A. Yes, call us at 716-858-8900, Monday – Friday, between 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and press #1. Due to the volume of calls, you may need to leave a message. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Q. I am researching family history from home. Do you offer any virtual assistance?

A. Yes, on Wednesday, May 20 at 1:00 p.m., via an online free Zoom training, we are offering “Genealogy 101” hosted by our Grosvenor Room librarians. Click here for details: <https://buffalolib.libcal.com/event/6698773> .

Q. Is there a way to see the schedule of all of the virtual programs being produced by the libraries?

A. Yes, visit our online calendar of events here: <https://bit.ly/35jwP2b> .

Q. Is the library accepting book donations?

A. For the health and safety of our staff, we are not accepting book/material donations at this time.

Q. Is the library accepting financial donations?

A. Yes, please click on the link below to make a secure online tax-deductible donation: <https://www.buffalolib.org/donate>.

Q. Is there anything you can offer to keep my young children busy?

A. Yes, we are posting dozens of virtual storytelling, singing, activity making, craft making, online cooking demos, gaming, wellness discussions and more for children and families. Visit our online calendar of events by clicking here: <https://bit.ly/35jwP2b>.



Additionally, the Library System mascot Reada Book owl is getting around town. Download our free coloring pages [here](#). Have your children color the pages and email them to: communications@buffalolib.org for a chance to win fun prizes. There will be ten winners chosen at random throughout the month of May. This is an all ages contest!

In closing, I want to share this link to a special storytime for children and families from Erie County Commissioner of Health Dr. Gale Burstein. She is reading the book called *Coronavirus questions answered for kids* written by Adriana Morales Marin. Click here and enjoy!: <https://youtu.be/sT5FMnyGgnI>.

Please accept my sincerest appreciation for your continued support, patience and understanding as we continue to adjust library operations. Together, we will get through this.

Stay healthy everyone!

Mary Jean
Library System Director

