

Eastern Shore Public Libraries Continue To Provide Services

Eastern Shore Public Library (ESPL) staff has responded to public safety needs regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) by taking safety measures and continuing services, even beyond hours of operation. Staff is enhancing cleaning and disinfecting of the libraries and reviewing procedures with the library board to ensure the safety of all our patrons, volunteers, and staff. Should the libraries need to close or reduce public service hours, patrons can still use many of our services, as listed below.

ESPL staff cleaning measures include wiping down reading materials, computer keyboards, and surfaces. Patrons and staff have access to sinks to wash hands. Library users are encouraged to follow the [United States Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) COVID-19](#) guidelines in all public places, including the libraries.

Hours of Operation

ESPL will not reduce hours of operation, except as directed by the state or local public health agency or if a shortage in staff arises. Changes to operating hours will be posted to the libraries' website, on Facebook and the ESPL website, on WESR, and on door entrances. There will be no overdue fines charged for days when the library is closed at the direction of the Eastern Shore Health District.

Library Programming

Library programs will be held as scheduled where possible. Please call your local library before making a special trip to attend a program to verify that it will be held.

Library Resources Available, Even If Libraries Close

- **E-resources:** Patrons will continue to have access to downloadable books and audios, online databases, and the ShoreCat online catalog with their library accounts. Staff can assist patrons by phone with setting up accounts and simple instructions. Patrons are encouraged to set up accounts and learn to use these resources *before* they become ill or in quarantine as many services require an active library card.
- **Hardcopy materials:** Patrons will still be able to return materials in outside book returns. If the library patron does not wish to enter the library, staff are able to deliver materials to patrons in the library driveways, i.e. "drive-through," if the patron calls ahead more than one hour prior to arriving. Items can be reserved via [ShoreCat](#) or by phone (if staff are available to take calls).
- **Public wifi:** Patrons can bring their own wifi-capable devices to the libraries. Even when the libraries are closed, patrons may be able to connect outside the library in close proximity to the building. [Click here](#) for the Eastern Shore Broadband Authority free public wifi locations. Access at these hotspots may be off after dark.
- **Access to computers:** The public may use public computers in the library during hours of operation. ESPL does not have a program in place to loan computers or wifi hotspots to the public.

- **Telephonic Assistance:** Staff are available by phone to answer questions, including technology assistance with e-resources, during hours of operation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the ESPL Library System Director, Cara Burton, at (757) 787-3400.