

Ohio's Public Libraries Improvise, Expand Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

Statewide Public Library Survey Results, April 16, 2020

When Ohio's public libraries closed their buildings to help stop the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), library staff quickly came up with ways to continue to serve their communities. An Ohio Library Council survey found that libraries across the state are rapidly adapting their services by launching virtual programs, expanding digital collections and keeping Ohioans connected with internet access.

The majority of library directors reported they have expanded online services like e-books and streaming media (86%), added new virtual programming (70%), and continue to keep their Wi-Fi on (99%). Some libraries turn their Wi-Fi off between midnight and 6 a.m. for security reasons.

Ohio library directors reported a range of new activities, such as:

- **Adapting in-person programs for online delivery.** For example, one single virtual storytime on Facebook from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County drew more than 3,000 participants. And, the Muskingum County Library System is reading bedtime stories on local radio stations.
- **Boosting public Wi-Fi, loaning mobile internet hotspots and lending technology.** Like many libraries, the Bossard Memorial Public Library (Gallia County) extended its Wi-Fi capabilities so that people can access the library's internet from the parking lot. The library also loaned all of its mobile Wi-Fi hotspots, giving some to students who are taking online classes. The Elyria



Public Library loaned iPads to their local nursing home so residents could continue to read online and stay connected with their families.

- **Utilizing 3-D printers to make PPEs.** There are currently 25 library systems using their 3-D printers to make components for face shields and masks. The Greene County Public Library is partnering with local school and health districts to print mask clips. The Cleveland Public Library is printing 2,000 face shields for the city's first responders.
- **Serving as food access points for families.** With schools closed, more libraries have become drive-through or pick-up locations for grab-and-go meals. The Columbus Metropolitan Library partnered with the Children's Hunger Alliance to distribute food at three library locations.

"In the middle of this pandemic, our libraries are going above and beyond to continue serving their communities. Libraries are shifting programs online, keeping their Wi-Fi on, and creating new ways to serve everyone from toddlers to isolated seniors. Our libraries are also ready to support Ohio's recovery efforts with online courses and services for unemployed workers and small businesses. They are doing all of this as the demand for library services increases and we begin to see reductions in state funding."

— Michelle Francis, OLC's Executive Director

Ohio Libraries Respond to COVID-19 Crisis

Statewide Public Library Survey Results by the Numbers [results collected April 6-14, 2020]

Expanding online check-out services (eBooks, eAudiobooks, streaming video and music)	86%
Boosting public WiFi so people can access the internet from the parking lot*	99%
Processing online library card applications	67%

Suspending due dates/extending online renewal policies	99%
Providing virtual reference help	47%
Providing virtual storytimes	70%
Providing virtual book clubs	45%
Providing virtual arts and crafts projects	45%
Providing online educational courses (Gale, LinkedIn Learning, Treehouse, Language learning, etc.)	85%
Providing virtual one-on-one tutoring (Tutor.com)	10%
Promoting participation in the 2020 Census	77%
Donating library supplies (masks, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, medical-grade gloves)	10%
Utilizing library makerspace items: 3-D printing PPEs and sewing of masks	10%

*Some libraries turn their WiFi off between midnight and 6 a.m. for security reasons.

Ohio has 251 public library systems and the highest library use per capita in the United States. Learn more at olc.org.



OHIO'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Respond to COVID-19 Crisis

**THE LIBRARY MAY BE
CLOSED, BUT THE
WIFI IS ON!**



99% of Ohio's public libraries are leaving their WiFi on so people can access the internet from the library parking lot.

150 public library systems across Ohio loan mobile WiFi hotspots for people to use at home.



3,000

ONE virtual storytime on the Cincinnati library's Facebook page drew more than 3,000 participants.

Ohio's public libraries have shifted in-person programming to online delivery.

25

25 Ohio public library systems are using 3-D printers from their makerspaces to produce face shields for health care workers and first responders.

Cleveland Public Library is printing 2,000 masks!



**LIBRARIES ARE
PREPARED
TO HELP WITH
OHIO'S ECONOMIC
RECOVERY**



85% of Ohio's public libraries offer free online educational courses from LinkedIn Learning, Gale, Treehouse, and more!

Plus, libraries have resources and programs for unemployed workers and small businesses.