



Principles for Re-Opening Utah Academic Libraries

May 11, 2020

The following principles will guide Utah's academic libraries in establishing a road map for the gradual expansion of physical access to library buildings, collections, and services. One overarching principle guides this work: **to protect the health of our community.**

Some Utah academic libraries have closed completely and some remained partially open in response to local conditions and assessment of needs. The following applies to libraries that have completely closed building access and to those that have limited access. Our goal is to provide the most appropriate, safe, and equitable access to library resources, services, and spaces, while also balancing the public health needs of our local communities.

1. Safety

Any re-opening of spaces and collections to the public must be undertaken with due care for the safety of staff, patrons, and communities. Considerations include:

- Adequate processes and procedures that are based on recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, the State of Utah, local public health authorities, and campus administration.
- Adequate sanitation and personal protective gear, with consideration of priority needs in our healthcare system and high risk essential services.
- Adequate monitoring and security to enforce social distancing.
- Adequate access to campus resources to support safety, including custodial and security support.
- Recognition that access to some services and resources may not be readily available for an extended period of time.

2. Equity

Re-opening plans must be equitable for our staff and our patrons. Considerations include:

- Inequities in access to child care, health care, transportation, and other social services that place uneven risks and undue burdens and on students, staff members, including student workers, and community members.

3. Flexibility and responsiveness

Re-opening plans must be responsive to changing conditions and knowledge.

Considerations include:

- Library administrators must have an active and clearly defined role in institutional decision making processes in order to apply our expertise to those decisions.
- Library staff must have clearly delineated communication processes and procedures to make evidence-based decisions and act in an urgent situation.
- Library administrators must have the ability to balance library staff needs with campus and patron needs.
- The gradual return to service must be appropriate for individual libraries and institutions.

4. Resiliency

Our goal is to build and contribute to more resilient institutions in the long term, rather than rely on the individual resiliency of our staff and patrons.

- Use lessons learned from COVID-19 to enhance emergency plans.
- Identify new working conditions that become permanent ways to adapt services.
- Identify new services and approaches to providing library resources that proactively address gaps in access to library resources and services.