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IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

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Yakima Valley Libraries to Re-Open All Library Locations for Limited In-Person Services Beginning the Week of March 1st

Yakima, WA – In light of the recent revisions to the State of Washington’s “Roadmap to Recovery” plan, it is again allowable for Washington libraries to open buildings to the public on a limited basis; as such, Yakima Valley Libraries will re-open all 17 library locations for limited in-person services beginning the week of March 1.

“Although we are eager to welcome patrons back into our community libraries, this is not yet a return to the pre-pandemic library operations that patrons are familiar with,” said Kim Hixson, executive director. “And in order to safely offer in-person services, Library staffing and building open hours have been modified to account for the additional workload necessary to meet all required health and safety guidelines.”

Updated open hours, which go into effect beginning Monday, March 1, are available for review on the Library’s website, here: www.yvl.org/healthandsafety.

Contact-Free Holds Pick Up service will continue to be available during library open hours, as well.

Patrons should also be aware that, under Phase 2 guidelines, building access will be limited to 25 percent, or less, of each location’s maximum occupancy, and all patrons over the age of 5 years old must wear a mask or face covering that meets CDC guidelines while inside library buildings.

Library staff will continue to follow previously-established sanitization guidelines, which include regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces and a 48-hour quarantine of all library returns.

Additional health and safety measures for limited in-person library services are as follows:

● **BUILDING ACCESS**

- In-person library visits will be limited to 30 minutes per person, per day
- Building access will be limited to 25 percent, or less, of maximum occupancy
- Because building access will be metered, staff will monitor the number of patrons in the building and may need to ask patrons to wait for others to leave before they can enter

● **FACE COVERINGS & SOCIAL DISTANCING**

- With the exception of children under 5 years old, all patrons and staff must wear a face covering or mask that meets CDC guidelines, at all times while inside library premises

- Staff and patrons should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others
- **PUBLIC COMPUTER ACCESS**
 - A limited number of public computers will be available for public use, with sessions limited to 30 minutes per day
 - Library staff will be unable to provide any computer assistance that requires contact within 6 feet or less.
- **CONTACT-FREE PICK UP & BOOK RETURNS**
 - Contact-Free Holds Pick Up service will be available at all community libraries during revised open hours, effective March 1, 2021
 - Patrons should return all library materials using outdoor book returns, wherever possible
- **HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES**
 - Library staff will sanitize public computers after each use
 - Library staff will sanitize self-checkout machines and other high-touch surfaces on an a regular basis
 - All returns will be quarantined for 48 hours before again being available for checkout.
- **PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND OTHER UPDATES**
 - Interlibrary loan requests will not resume at this time
 - In-person library programming will not resume at this time

For more information about the Library's re-opening planning, or to review related documentation, please visit: www.yvl.org/healthandsafety.

Public questions or comments can be submitted using the Library's online contact form at: www.yvl.org/contact.