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**IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE**

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**Yakima Valley Libraries to Suspend In-Person Library Services**  
**Due to New State COVID-19 Regulations**

Yakima, WA – In light of new COVID-19 requirements issued by the State of Washington on January 20, Yakima Valley Libraries must temporarily close the Sunnyside, Wapato, and West Valley community libraries for in-person service effective at 6pm on Friday, January 22.

“The need to temporarily discontinue in-person library service is a regrettable but necessary step in order to ensure that Yakima Valley Libraries is in compliance with the State’s newly-issued COVID-19 regulations for libraries,” said executive director Kim Hixson.

As per these new regulations, during Phase 1 of the current “Roadmap to Recovery,” Yakima Valley Libraries is only permitted to provide “curbside services to customers.”

Although limited in-person library services will be suspended indefinitely beginning Friday, all 17 Yakima Valley Libraries locations will continue to offer Contact-Free Holds Pick Up; and, in order to help lessen the impact of limited library services, the Library has added expanded Contact-Free Pick Up hours at several community libraries throughout the Valley.

The complete list of Contact-Free Pick Up hours and library locations at: [www.yvl.org/pickup](http://www.yvl.org/pickup).

“Based on patron feedback,” Hixson added, “we have also updated the Contact-Free Pick Up service so that patrons can pick up holds at their preferred community library without first needing to make an appointment.”

While in-person library services are unavailable, patrons are encouraged to utilize the Library’s robust Digital Library ([www.yvl.org/digital](http://www.yvl.org/digital)), which includes free e-books, e-audiobooks, streaming video, and digital magazines, all accessible 24/7 from a computer, tablet or mobile device.

Library users may also wish to try “Personalized Picks,” a service wherein patrons complete a brief questionnaire about their reading or viewing interests, which library staff then use to hand-select ‘personalized’ library materials for them.

As we navigate this unfortunate reduction in library access, public service staff at the Sunnyside, Wapato, and West Valley community libraries will still be available to assist patrons by phone during posted open hours, available here: [www.yvl.org/pickup](http://www.yvl.org/pickup).

Patrons wishing to pay library fines or fees will find instructions for online and/or mail-in payments, here: <https://www.yvl.org/how-do-i/make-a-payment/>.

For more information about Yakima Valley Libraries' ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic and related State regulations, please visit: [www.yvl.org/healthandsafety](http://www.yvl.org/healthandsafety).

For questions or comments, the public should contact their preferred community library, or use the Library's Contact Us form, here: [www.yvl.org/how-do-i/contact-us](http://www.yvl.org/how-do-i/contact-us).

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