

Using the Library

What should I expect when I visit the Ridgefield Library?

We are happy to welcome you to the Library for express services. The health and safety of our community and staff is our primary concern and our most important service priority. Library Express service is designed to reduce contact and close interactions. These safe steps are being done in accordance with the local, state and federal guidelines.

Library services available during this phase:

- In-Library visits of up to 30 minutes per person per day (please limit time to the minimum necessary)
- Borrowing of books, audiobooks, movies, CDs, and magazines
- In-person reference and reader's advisory services
- [Customized Book Bundles created for you by our Librarians](#)
- [Contactless Lobby Pickup of Requested Materials by appointment](#)
- Limited computer use by appointment, fax/scanner and copier
- The Library will continue to offer virtual programs, access to digital materials, and reference and reader's advisory services by phone or email or online

What are the Express Service hours?

To allow extra time for disinfection and cleaning of communal spaces each day, and to meet the differing needs of our patrons, Library hours have changed.

Contactless Lobby Pickup by Appointment:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday during In-Library Express Service hours listed below.

In-Library Express Service:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday: 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. (The building is closed between 1pm and 2pm to allow for enhanced cleaning.)
- Wednesday: 2pm to 7pm

Phone & LiveChat Service:

- Monday through Saturday: 10am to 5pm
 - Adult Services: 203-438-2282 ext.12004
 - Children's Services: 203-438-2282 ext.12002

- Circulation Department: 203-438-2282 ext.12003
- Teen Services: 203-438-2282 ext.11004

Virtual Services:

- Email our Staff:
 - Adult Services: ReferenceDesk@ridgefieldlibrary.org
 - Childrens Services: Children@ridgefieldlibrary.org
 - Circulation Department: CirculationDesk@ridgefieldlibrary.org
 - Teen Services: TeenServices@ridgefieldlibrary.org
- [Consult a Librarian](#)
- LiveChat
- The [Digital collection](#) is open 24/7

What measures is the Library taking to keep patrons safe?

The Library is taking numerous precautions to protect the health and safety of staff and patrons:

- Limiting patron visit length to no more than 30 minutes per person per day.
- Limiting the number of patrons in the Library at any given time.
- Requiring all patrons to wear masks that cover nose and mouth at all times while in the Library.
- Entry and exit are from the Main Level Glass Sliding Doors only. Staff are monitoring the number of people entering and leaving the building.
- Implementing 6 feet social distancing protocols.
- Reducing Library hours to ensure sufficient time for enhanced cleaning.
- Removing seating and asking patrons not to congregate.
- Applying one-way routes through the building and adding traffic markers.
- Requiring staff to wear masks that cover nose and mouth at all times while in the Library. [Masks must conform to current CDC recommendations.](#)
- Using plexiglass shields at service points.
- Quarantining returned Library materials for 6 days, per CT State Library guidelines.
- Increasing frequency of cleaning of the building and service points by custodial and library staff.
- Providing hand-sanitizing stations throughout the building.
- Per CT state guidelines, water fountains are not available.
- The Ridgefield Library has a heating and cooling system that utilizes direct outside air exchange. We have consulted with our HVAC contractors to ensure proper operation and safety of our building's air quality.

What you can do to help us keep our staff and the community safe:

- Understand that you are required to wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth at all times. [Masks must conform to current CDC recommendations.](#)
- Limit your visit to the Library to the least time needed and no more than 30 minutes per person per day.
- Stay home if you are experiencing symptoms of any illness.

- Sanitize your hands frequently. Hand sanitizer is available throughout the Library.
- Use the Self-Checkout stations (Library Card required)
- [Use Lobby Pickup for Requested materials](#)
- Maintain a distance of at least six feet from staff and other patrons.
- Follow the instructions of Library staff.

Is there a limit on the number of patrons allowed in the Library?

- In light of increased COVID-19 positivity rates in our area and to support social distancing, we are reducing the number of people in the Library to 50 including staff.
- You may be asked to wait in line until we have space for additional patrons. While in line, please wear your mask, follow social distancing guidelines and keep six feet between you and other patrons. A staff member will let you know when you may enter the Library.

Do I need to wear a mask while I am at the Library?

- Yes, all patrons are required to wear masks completely covering nose and mouth while in the Library. [Masks must conform to current CDC recommendations.](#)

What if I don't feel comfortable coming into the Library?

- The Library will continue to offer [Contactless Lobby Pickup](#), Email and Phone services, online Consult a Librarian, LiveChat, and [customized book selection](#) options.
- We will continue to offer eBooks and audiobooks, online resources and more via the Library website. Please reach out to us by phone or email if you have questions.
- We will continue to offer online programming for all ages.

What if I am unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition?

- We understand that not everyone is able to wear a mask. We want to serve you. Please contact us so that we may share options for service available during this time. For the health and safety of other patrons and staff, masks that fully cover the nose and mouth must be worn in the Library at all times.

Will the Lodewick Children's Library be available?

- Yes, the Children's Library will be available by appointment for families for 30 minutes of browsing. Based on attendance at any one time, a limit number of adults without children may also be allowed to enter. Please call the Children's Department between 10a –5pm Monday – Saturday at 203-438-2282 ext.12002 to schedule an appointment.
- Children under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult or caregiver at all times. Masks are required at all times. Since it is advised that children under 2 not wear masks, we request that parents and caregivers not bring our youngest

patrons into the Library at this time both for their safety and the safety of others. If this is not possible, children under 2 must be kept in a stroller or in the immediate vicinity of their caregiver, such as in a baby carrier.

- One-way routes through the stacks will be marked.
- At this time the play areas, toys, programming rooms, story time rooms and computers will not be available.

Will the Ellis Family Teen Center be available?

- Yes, the Teen Center will be available for a very limited number of patrons to find materials on the shelves.
- Teen and/or Adult Services Librarians will let you know if you may enter.
- We ask that patrons limit their time if others are waiting.
- One-way routes through the stacks will be marked.
- The Teen Center computers, study tables, and lounge areas will not be available.

Will Museum Passes be available during this phase?

- Yes, but please contact the museum prior to visiting for up-to-date information about hours of operation and usage.

Will I be able to read magazines and newspapers in the Library?

- Newspapers and magazines are not available for seated in-Library reading. Newspapers may be briefly read. Magazines may be checked out. Please limit time spent to the minimum needed and no more than 30 minutes per person per day.

How long will this step of Express Service last?

- The health and safety of our staff and patrons is our top priority. We will move to the next step of reopening or revert to a prior phase based on the guidance of the Governor and on local health indicators.

The Library Building

Can I book a meeting room, study room, or hang out in the Library's communal spaces?

- Our meeting and study rooms and other communal spaces are not available at this time.

Will I be able to utilize the Technology Center and STEAM Corner?

- The Technology Center and STEAM Corner will not be accessible at this time.

Will the restrooms be open?

- Only the single-user restrooms off the Bossidy Commons are available at this time.

Returning Materials

When can I return materials?

- Library materials may be returned through the outdoor book slot 24/7 or the inside book slot during open Express Browsing hours. Returned materials will be quarantined for 6 days before being handled and re-shelved by staff. This is in accordance with the latest guidance on safety of library collections.
- Certain labeled Ridgefield Library items (games, STEAM kits, etc.) must be returned at the Circulation Desk during open Express Browsing hours.
- We will not be charging overdue fines on most Ridgefield Library-owned materials during this challenging time, though we do ask that you return materials on time so that others may enjoy them.
- Materials owned by other libraries may accrue overdue fines.

Checking Out Materials

Will the Library continue to offer self-checkout of Library materials?

- We ask that you use Self-Checkout stations to help us minimize close interactions during this time. To use the Self-Checkout, you will need to scan your Library card.
- Please use hand sanitizer before and after using the Self-Checkout. Hand sanitizer will be provided. Library staff will periodically disinfect self-checkout stations.
- As always, please ask for help if you need it.

Computers, Printing & Equipment

Can I use the Library's computers?

- Three computers in the Adult Services area are available by appointment for one 25-minute session per person per day. An additional express use computer is available in the Teen Center on a drop-in basis for one 15-minute session per person per day. Call the Adult Services Department at (203) 438-2282 ext. 12004 to make an appointment and for more information. Computers in the Children's Library and Technology Center will not be available during this step.

Can I print and make copies?

- Printers and copiers are available for self-service use. Black & white copies are \$.20/page, color copies are \$.50/page. Please bring exact change to reduce cash handling by staff.

Can I use the scanner and fax station?

- The scanner and fax station is available for limited self-service use. Use should be limited to the least amount of time needed and no more than 30 minutes per person per day. Outgoing fax pages cost \$1/page. Printing from the scanner costs \$.20/page for black & white or \$.50/page for color prints. Please bring exact change to reduce cash handling by staff.

Can I use the microfiche reader/printer machine?

- The microfiche reader/printer machine will not be available during this step. We hope to add this service soon.

Will the Library continue to provide technology help during this time?

- To maintain necessary social distancing, Library staff will only provide help at our public computers remotely through an online chat service.
- As a health precaution for our staff, we will not be touching patrons' personal devices. If you need help downloading and accessing our digital collection, check out our [online video tutorials](#). Our Adult Services Staff are also offering [Consult A Librarian](#) help.

Programs & Events

Does the Library offer virtual or online events?

- All programs will continue to be offered virtually at this time. Please see our [events calendar](#) to learn more.

Book Donations

When can I donate books?

- The Friends of the Ridgefield Library have reached capacity to store donated materials and cannot accept book donations. Check [Friends of the Ridgefield Library](#) for updates and details about the May 2021 book sales. We hope to see you there!
- Please do not leave donated books in the Library lobby or anywhere outside the Library building.