



The guide was prepared by ANKOS (Anatolian University Libraries Consortium) and İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University Library

REOPENING GUIDE FOR UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC

According to the TÜBİTAK data, the COVID-19 pandemic process in Turkey started on March 10, 2020. (See: <https://covid19.tubitak.gov.tr/turkiyede-d>). However, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) data, this process began on January 11, 2020, in the world. (See: <https://covid19.who.int/>). Therefore, our country had the opportunity to follow up and take the necessary precautions against this development.

Similarly, our university libraries, too, had the opportunity to prepare for this pandemic process within the framework of the measures taken by the university. Precautionary measures taken within this framework are:

- Restricting library working hours, working alternately,
- Providing staff to use their right for annual leave,
- Granting administrative leave to library staff with chronic diseases,
- Continuing with the services that can be done without entering the library (i.e., discharge, thesis delivery, lending and receiving books in case of emergency),
- Providing library staff with masks, gloves, face shields, and goggles and ensuring their usage,
- Conducting online library meetings,
- Postponing the return dates of the borrowed materials,
- Stop sending/requesting printed materials within the scope of interlibrary loan service (ILL) service and only assist with online services,
- Increasing the online renewal rights,
- Canceling the social activities of the library (Library Week activities, talks, and concerts, etc.),
- Providing e-mail, web forms, phone and online reference services instead of face to face consultation,
- Supplying multiple book sterilization machines to use at the circulation desk, if the budget allows it,
- Ensuring that common items and areas (work tables, chairs, stair railing) are sterilized frequently,
- Ensuring that the toilets are cleaned more frequent, check the liquid soaps dispensers and refill when necessary,
- Placing hand sanitizers in easily accessible locations throughout the library building.

The pandemic process began with these measures taken. Measures taken by the library during the pandemic process are;

- Determining workflow and process control methods for the library staff to switch to working from home,

- Providing with the necessary library automation system to work from home,
- Recording the work by using the e-mail service for business communication
- Holding and recording online meetings,
- Following up open access resources due to pandemic process and informing users,
- Using the library web page and social media tools for information, communication and social interaction during the pandemic process,
- Updating the content of automatic notices sent to users via the library automation system,
- Preparing an informative academic resource guide for COVID-19,
- Preparing an informative and entertaining resources guide that support staying at home during the pandemic process,
- Following up the current literature for professional development and encouraging participation in webinars and training in the field of librarianship,
- To increase motivation and personal development during the negativities of the pandemic process,
- Working on personal development and motivation for positive thinking against negative developments and curfews during the pandemic process,
- Preparing an Emergency Action Plan by making a risk assessment for the future,
- Preparing an action plan before reopening of the library.

Actions to be planned before the pandemic is taken under control and the libraries are put into service again are listed below based on the basic library elements;

Building :

- **Diagnosis and suspicion of COVID-19:**

In case of diagnosis or suspicion of COVID-19 in the library during the pandemic process, all surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected before reopening of the library. Professional support is required in determining the timing and method of this process, providing the protective equipment and hand hygiene of the personnel that will perform the process, and following the required legal procedures.

- **Controlling and restricting the entry to the library building:**

It should be clarified the extent of physical usage of the library in terms of building. In the beginning, it should be aimed at not admitting non-university users, allowing entry to the users only for borrowing/returning resources, and benefitting from the building at a certain extent over time. With the support of the security unit of the university, the library security staff should measure the temperature with a contactless thermometer at the entrance to the library building and ensure that users are wearing masks and gloves. The fever level determined by the health unit of the university should be accepted as the standard when measuring the temperature, and users with the temperature above this standard should not be allowed to enter the library. Similarly, users not wearing masks and gloves at the measure determined by the university's health unit should also be prevented from entering the building.

- **Restricting the usage areas in the library:**

Firstly areas open and closed to users in the library should be revised and reorganized. Closed areas should be marked with warning stripes and other warning signs. The face to face interaction areas such as the circulation desks, the reference desk, etc., should be restricted, and also approaching to these desks more than a certain distance should be prevented. In order to prevent density and accumulation of people in front of the circulation desk, the waiting areas should be marked with signs in the ground in compliance with the social distance. In order to prevent the spreading of the virus, the most suitable building temperature should be determined in collaboration with the university's health unit.

According to the report of The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) the coronaviruses usually last more at high temperatures and in a short time compared to cold and dry environments. (See: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Coronavirus-Disease-2019-Basics>).

For this reason, the library can cooperate with the related department of the university to create a healthy environment. Cooperation with the university's construction unit, if any, is required for the creation of a healthy environment. Similarly, a new seating plan should be created according to the capacity of library study rooms, and social distance should be preserved. Accordingly, one seat between users should be left empty; and signs and stimulants should be placed at the desks. According to the new seating system, the number of seating areas should be reduced, and the excess chairs in the study rooms should be removed. The air conditioners should not be used due to the risk of virus dispersion risk of the virus; all usage areas should be ventilated frequently.

- **Cleaning :**

The library's cleaning policy should be revised, and the frequency of cleaning during the day should be increased. The disinfectants that can be used against COVID-19 must be determined. In order to determine the disinfectants, you can get support from the university's health unit or examine the platforms of the Health Ministry (See: <https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/tr/cevresagligi-biyosidal/dezenfektanlar-ve-genel-biyosidal-%C3%BCr%C3%BCnler-birimi/dezenfektanlar-ve-genel-biyosidal-urunler.html>) or the US Environmental Protection Agency (See: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>). Hand sanitizers should be provided, particularly at the entrance of the study rooms and other common areas. The floors, user tables, computer terminals, kitchen utensils like dispenser, tea maker, etc., used by the library staff, should be disinfected every day. Trash cans in the library building should be emptied frequently, toilets should be cleaned more regularly, and liquid soaps dispensers should be checked continuously and refilled when necessary. The staff working at the cafes within the library building should strictly comply with the hygiene rules. All food should be packaged, and nothing should be sold unpackaged form

- **Budget:**

The library budget determined before the pandemic should be revised. The budget for electronic resources should be increased, and budget items for canceled events should be identified. Due to pandemic, necessary disinfectants, masks, gloves, face shields, cleaning materials, etc. should be added to the library budget or requested from the relevant purchasing unit. Therefore, material purchase should be made in accordance with budget planning.

- **Collection:**

The usage statistics of materials that were made open access by the publishers during the pandemic process should be examined and determine, thus, those that need to be added to the collection. In addition, the issues faced when using the printed materials during the pandemic process should be identified, and the printed materials of the library should be evaluated in terms of the copyright. Determine and digitalized the printed resources to be part of the digitization project.

Get support from the university administration, cooperate with other university libraries, and increase the collaboration for the digitization project.

User:

- **Limiting the number of users in the library:**

Predetermine the number of simultaneous users considering the physical library conditions. Manage and control the number of users inside by using the chair/table reservation system, ticket application, etc. In the beginning, users should not be allowed to use the library for studying but only for research and circulation procedures. Take other measures for entering the library based on user groups, i.e., age of the users, etc., as announced by the Turkish Presidency.

- **Information and communication:**

Users should be informed accurately and clearly. Before the reopening of the library, the users should be informed about the new rules and practices of the library. The rules should be transmitted to users and staff through the university's information system, the library webpage, and social media channels. Besides, informative/educational posters or banners should be hung in the building.

Services:

- In the beginning, the working hours of the library should be limited and normalized over time.
- In order to minimize the contact, users should be directed to automatic check-in service (self-check) machines/systems/kiosks. While the technical services areas should be closed to users, and users should be directed to reader services (circulation desk, reference services).
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service for print books should be postponed; the ILL should be maintained just for electronic book chapters and articles.
- Outdoor reference service hours should be determined during summer. Also, the necessary technical facilities for this service should be provided, the outdoor information desk should be provided, and users should be informed about the changes in the library services.
- Group work areas, video surveillance, and music listening rooms, work cabinets in the library should be closed in the first stages. Then during the normalization process, user capacity should be increased incrementally. Reservation systems should be applied to enable users to benefit from these services,
- Library activities should only be planned online in the first stage. However, over time, some library activities such as seminars, student talks, games, and workshops can be organized outside of the library.
- Quarantine rooms should be designed within the library building and returned library materials should be kept in the quarantine room for one day. After holding the materials in quarantine rooms, the books should be sterilized by the sterilization machine, if any, and after the process, they should be placed on the related shelves. Similarly, the same should apply for purchased and cargo materials as well. It should be reminded that no matter how clean the library building is, these materials carry risk. Libraries that cannot afford such a service, they can rent or use a portable container as a quarantine room.
- In addition to the concern about the virus infection of the materials, one should also ensure that the materials are not physically damaged. The Northeast Document Center, Disinfecting Books, and Other Collections (See: <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/3.-emergency-management/3.5-disinfecting-books>) and the American Libraries Association, Handling Library Materials and Collections During a Pandemic (See: <http://www.ala.org/alcts/preservationweek/resources/pandemic>) can be examined for the book cleaning process.
- The technical infrastructure of the library should be revised, and necessary hardware and software should be provided for the sustainability of online services.

Staff:

- Library staff should be adequately informed before the reopening of the library. All workflows, implications, expectations, etc., should be communicated to the team.

- The staff should be encouraged to stay at home in case of illness. Resources on the importance of hand hygiene, and coughing and sneezing etiquette must be shared with the staff. In case a staff results to be infected with COVID-19, employers, and employees should be informed about the possibility of exposure.
- The staff in the risk group should be under the control of the university's health unit and human resources unit and when needed to grant the staff with permission/report and the possibility of working from home.
- In order to protect the mental health of employees, psychosocial risk factors should be evaluated and effectively deliver this information together with the required measures to the employees.
- In the beginning, business travel should not be allowed. For later periods, employees should be subjected to a health check before starting to work.
- The library staff should be checked with a contactless thermometer before starting work, and those with a fever should be directed to the university's health center.
- The staff should be informed about washing their hands with soap and water at least 20 seconds, and using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer as they enter the library building.
- The staff should periodically be provided with and encouraged to wear masks, gloves, face shields, and protection goggles.
- Warning signs should determine the social distance of library staff who work face to face with users at the circulation and reference desks. Also, glass or plastic separators can be used for the team working tables in order to keep staff safe while providing face to face service. The seating plan of the staff in closed offices should be reorganized in compliance with the social distance.
- The library staff working on the open shelf floors should be encouraged to keep the social distance while assisting to users.
- Printed forms used in user services should be prepared electronically; users should be directed to electronic forms as much as possible.
- User requests for meetings, training, seminar, etc., should be scheduled and met online
- Collaboration within the library staff and among other university library colleagues and sharing of knowledge and experience about the pandemic process plays an essential role in terms of the current situation and preparation for the future.
- Collaborative studies should be published and shared in journals, databases, etc. Therefore, call pages of these journals or databases, and national and/or international platforms should be examined. Here we give an example from the Emerald article call page. (See : <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/services/authors/calls-for-papers?id=9000>)

Emergency Plan and Risk Assessment

Due to the preliminary measures taken within the framework of the Emergency Plan and Risk Assessment, it is possible to reduce the impact of the pandemic. Considered in terms of liabilities of universities in general that of libraries in particular, it is necessary to determine the envisaged emergencies, take preventive and restrictive measures, and make evaluations for protection from negative effects of the pandemic. Therefore, library emergency response teams should be made, the necessary equipment should be provided, and staff should be trained.

As stated in the “Guide to Precautions Against Coronavirus in Workplaces” of the Turkish Republic Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Service (See: <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/40969/isyerlerinde-koronaviruse-covid-19-karsi-alinmasi-gereken-onlemler.pdf>) the COVID-19 library preparatory team should be established.

In workplaces where an occupational health and safety board is available, such procedures are carried out by the board. However, in other workplaces these procedures can be carried out by the employer or the representative, with the support of a doctor, of an occupational safety specialist, and other healthcare personnel, and, when possible, support of a team whose staff is equipped with first aid training or has experience in this aspect. Furthermore, in the workplaces that provide health services, the health and safety board, if any, should collaborate with infection control committees.

The Preparatory Team;

- Should carry out work on measures to be taken,
- Should carry out required work on hygiene and cleaning in the workplace,
- Should coordinate internal and external communication,
- Should update the emergency plan

Gathering information about the pandemic:

All developments regarding the pandemic process should be followed up regularly. In order to keep track of the developments, the resources below can be examined.

National sources:

- Republic of Turkey Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services: Measures to be taken by the occupational health and safety professionals in the workplace against the novel coronavirus outbreak. Address: <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/41225/yeni-koronavirus-salgini-kapsaminda-is-sagligi-ve-guvenligi-profesyonellerinin-isyerlerinde-aldiracagi-tedbirler.pdf>
- Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services: Measures to be taken against coronavirus in workplaces (Covid-19). Address: <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/40969/isyerlerinde-koronaviruse-covid-19-karsi-alinmasi-gereken-onlemler.pdf>
- COVID-19: The Novel Coronavirus Disease: The guide is created by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Health, and provides Turkish official and updated data and information about the coronavirus. Address: <https://covid19bilgi.saglik.gov.tr/tr/>
- The COVID-19 Turkey Web Portal: The portal is prepared by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Industry and Technology, in cooperation with TUBITAK, provides Turkish scientific resources, useful information, and updated data on the COVID-19 status. Address: <https://covid19.tubitak.gov.tr/>
- The Coronavirus COVID-19 World Map of the Republic of Turkey Digital Transformation Office: This world map includes updated data on diagnosis, healing, and death data from different countries around the world. Address: <https://corona.cbddo.gov.tr/>
- Kimlik: This platform includes current news and researches of the Turkish Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Association on COVID-19. Address: <https://www.klimik.org.tr/koronavirus/>

International sources:

- World Health Organization (WHO) Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic: The World Health Organization (WHO) provides official and updated information, data, maps, quick and useful links, resources, national and technical guides, recommendations for the healthcare professionals and the public, etc. Address: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Johns Hopkins University & Medical Coronavirus Resource Center: This Coronavirus Resource Center of Johns Hopkins University provides the latest updates, maps, trends, visualizations, useful information, and resources about COVID-19. Address: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coronavirus (COVID-19): the Disease Control and Prevention Centers (CDC) provide useful information for public health in five different languages. Address: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) COVID-19: The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC of the European Union (EU) provides useful information and information sources like current status data, various technical reports, guides about COVID-19. Address: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19-pandemic>
- United States National Institutes of Health (NIH) Coronavirus (COVID-19): The American National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) provides the

latest research information about the coronavirus. Address: <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>

- IMF and COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) focuses on economic and financial determinations about the global uncertainty created by the pandemic. It provides various information and resources to support member states. Address: <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19>
- Canadian Center for Disease Prevention and Control (IPAC) of Coronavirus (COVID-19): Disease Prevention and Control Center (IPAC), a public health institution in Canada, provides a variety of useful information, data, maps, and maps of the COVID-19 situation in Canada and the world. Address: <https://ipac-canada.org/coronavirus-resources.php>
- OECD Coronavirus (COVID-19): The Economic Development and Cooperation Organization (OECD) tackles the effects of coronavirus pandemic on our lives and societies provides solutions to boost our healthcare systems, secure our businesses, maintain our jobs and education, and stabilize financial markets and economies. Address: <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/>
- Our World in Data Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) – Statistics and Research: Our World in Data, a joint project website of the Oxford Martin Programme on Global Development, the Oxford University, and the Global Change Data Lab (GCDL), is a daily updated research and data bank to make progress against the coronavirus disease. Address: <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>
- UNESCO COVID-19: UNESCO maps the schools' closures and education as educational institutions around the world have temporarily closed and supports countries, culture, and heritage during COVID-19 by promoting global solidarity through education, science, and knowledge. Address: <https://en.unesco.org/covid197>

Other guides:

The guides used as resources in this guide are as follows:

- CLiC - Colorado Library Consortium Return to Service: Libraries and COVID-19: After the abolition of the “stay-home” policy which applied to protect public health, many libraries start to planning a guide for using after the COVID-19 outbreak. There are two guides of CLiC: “COVID-19 and Libraries Returning to Service” and “COVID-19 and Human Resources Question-Answer: Libraries ”. Address: <https://www.clicweb.org/returning-to-service-libraries-and-covid-19/?fbclid=IwAR2QhIbrfUo9hwDpc7BwxBeB6QTooNO5oRGIqPNQCqdu0pRSKAJrXQBM2ns>
- IFLA- COVID-19 and Global Libraries: The guide includes necessary information about the libraries' closure, management of restrictions, providing a safe environment in the workplace, reopening of libraries, associations between libraries, national libraries, collaboration with library collaborators and ongoing works of IFLA in the pandemic process. Address: <https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-libraries#reopening>
- ALA – Outbreak Preparedness: It includes resources that offer general information about the pandemic, recommendations for a specific policy of libraries, and universal training for COVID-19. Address: <http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/pandemic-preparedness>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)–COVID-19 Guidelines for Workplaces: Employers can apply for getting information about safety and health standards. Address: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
- UNESCO-Resources for Documentary Heritage Professionals. Address: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/communicationinformationresponse/documentaryheritage>
- ALIA/Australian libraries responding to COVID-19. Address: <https://www.alia.org.au/australian-libraries-responding-covid-19>

In addition to these resources, it is recommended to examine the following publications:

- How to Sanitize Collections in a Pandemic: Conservators weigh in on the mysteries of materials handling during COVID-19. Address: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/how-to-sanitize-collections-covid-19/>
- Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities: Interim Recommendations for US Community Facilities with Suspected / Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covidien-19) Address: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- Communities, Schools, Workplaces, and Events: Guidance for Where You Live, Work, Learn, Pray, and Play. Address: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>
- NJ State Library - COVID-19 Pandemic Resources and Plans for Library Reopening. Address: <https://www.njstatelib.org/covid-19-pandemic-resources-and-plans-for-library-reopening/>

Educational Material:

You can add your institution's logo to these posters and use them in your libraries.

Library Use After COVID-19 Poster Display format jpeg ;

English; https://drive.google.com/file/d/10UV_arz5W3utT6DoHzELUZbtT21dJzwB/view

Post-COVID-19 Library Usage Poster Print format eps;

English; <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1UiFWN2ZLYjQQbnha6okkYa8F6Hevc1u9>

Post-COVID-19 Library Usage Poster Print format psd;

English; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10FQDJpfkAkWqEXbQ63FIN947bFb7s05-/view?usp=sharing>

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