

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2021

ImagineIF Libraries Returns to Full Hours in May

Kalispell, MT - ImagineIF Libraries will return to full open hours at all locations starting May 3rd, 2021. Safety measures are still in place to provide a reasonably safe work environment for staff while providing the most access to taxpayers, including:

- social distancing signage and floor markings
- hand sanitizing
- frequently sanitizing high touch surfaces

The library's 30-minute time limit has been removed and patrons may stay longer while practicing social distancing. Curbside Pickup will continue and will be available during all open hours and all locations. The library's Personal Shopper service remains available but patrons may experience delays as library staff begin helping more in-person patrons.

Patrons are required to wear a mask and 1-hour computer sessions are now available at each location.

Starting April 19th, the library:

- Removed the 30-minute time limit for library visits
- Extended computer times to 1 hour
- Returned most furniture back to the public areas
- Added additional staff workstations ahead of schedule

By implementing enhanced safety measures and designing accommodations to meet the community's needs, like bside Pickup and Take & Make kits, the library has been able to keep its doors open to in-person traffic during the pandemic, while many other libraries statewide could not do the same. Looking toward the future, the library may need to phase out these services as more people return to services inside the building because resources do not allow for full pre-pandemic services and accommodations simultaneously.

Library Director Connie Behe is optimistic about returning to in-person programming by autumn of 2021. Behe said, "My responsibility is to look at all of the information and make recommendations that serve the most people and keeps staff safe. Throughout the pandemic, the Library has been able to continue offering services to the community and keep our doors open due to following precautions that provide a reasonably safe space for staff and patrons." The library's mask

restriction may be lifted sooner than June 1st as Behe continues to monitor local information.

Patrons are encouraged to explore the Library services like Personal Shopper, Curbside Pickup and Tech Connect, designed to provide the community free access to information and to keep people connected. To find out more about these services go to imagineiflibraries.org or call 758-5820.

The Library's in-building programs will be on pause through the summer, but ImagineIF still provides hands-on learning for youth and adults in Flathead County. Kids, teens and adults can enjoy take-home kits available for pickup at all ImagineIF locations through May, and can look forward to a new Summer Experience Program in June. In addition to Summer Experience kits, ImagineIF is planning in-person outdoor early literacy classes throughout the summer in Kalispell, Columbia Falls and Bigfork.

See below for new open hours. Find out more at imagineiflibraries.org/updates/.

Kalispell

Mon-Wed 10am-8pm

Thurs-Fri 10am-6pm

Sat 10am-5pm

Columbia Falls

Mon-Thu 10-6pm

Fri 11am-6pm

Sat 10am-3pm

Bigfork

Hours to be announced May 3rd

ImagineIF Libraries' mandate is to provide safe and unfettered access to information for everyone in Flathead County. For more information, visit www.imagineiflibraries.org.

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