



ABSTRACT

Disaster Management Act 2005- COVID 2019 – Infection prevention and control – Permission for opening of public libraries except part time libraries from 01.09.2020 onwards for certain activities and approval of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) -Orders issued.

Revenue and Disaster Management (DM IV) Department

G.O.(Ms)No. 443

Dated: 27.08.2020

சார்வாரி-ஆவணி 11,
திருவள்ளூர் ஆண்டு, 2051

Read:

1. G.O.(Ms)No.172, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM-II) Department, Dated 25.03.2020
2. G.O.(Ms)No.396, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM-II) Department, Dated 31.07.2020.
3. Director of Public Libraries letter RC No.9262/Woo3/2019 dated 25.08.2020.

ORDER:-

In the Government order first read above, the Government has ordered to close all State Government establishments including libraries in view of COVID 2019 pandemic under Disaster Management Act 2005.

2. In the Government order second read above, it has been ordered to extend the State-wide lockdown till 31.08.2020 under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 with various relaxations and amendments issued with the existing restrictions, guide lines and relaxations in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

3. In the letter third read above, the Director of Public Libraries has stated that the following libraries are functioning in the state under the Directorate of Public Libraries:-

Connemara Public Library	1
Anna Centenary Library	1
District Central Library	32
Branch Libraries (Full time Libraries-314 and Branch Libraries-1612)	1,926

Mobile Libraries	14
Village Libraries	1,915
Part Time Libraries	749
Total	4,638

Due to Covid-19 Pandemic situation, the above mentioned libraries have been closed since March 2020. Now, various organisations have requested to re-open the libraries for the welfare of the public.

4. Hence, the Director of Public Libraries has requested the Government to permit all the libraries except part time libraries to function from 01.09.2020 onwards subject to the following conditions:-

- (a) The three sections namely, Lending Section, Reference section and Own Book Reading Section shall alone be permitted to function in 1) Connemara Public Library 2), Anna Centenary Library, 3) District Central Libraries 4) Full time Branch Libraries.
- (b) Lending section shall alone be permitted to function in Branch and Village libraries.
- (c) All libraries except Branch libraries and Village libraries shall function from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. on all working days.
- (d) The Branch Libraries and Village Libraries shall function in their usual working hours. (before 2 pm on all working days).

5. The Director of Public Libraries has also requested to approve the draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for libraries with regard to COVID 19 pandemic prevention.

6. The Government have examined the proposal of the Director of Public Libraries in detail and issue orders permitting all the libraries except part time libraries to function from 01.09.2020 onwards following the Standard Operating Procedure annexed to this order subject to the following conditions:-

- (a) The three sections namely, Lending Section, Reference section and Own Book Reading Section shall alone be permitted to function in 1) Connemara Public Library 2), Anna Centenary Library, 3) District Central Libraries 4) Full time Branch Libraries.
- (b) Lending section shall alone be permitted to function in Branch and Village libraries.
- (c) All libraries except Branch libraries and Village libraries shall function from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. on all working days

- (d) The Branch Libraries and Village Libraries shall function in their usual working hours. (before 2 pm on all working days).

(By order of the Governor)

**K.SHANMUGAM
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.**

To

The Principal Secretary to Government, School Education Department,
Chennai - 9.

The Principal Secretary / Commissioner of Revenue Administration,
Chepauk, Chennai - 5.

The Commissioner, Greater Chennai Corporation, Chennai.

All Collectors.

The Director of Public Libraries, Chennai-2,

Copy to

The Chief Minister Office, Chennai - 9.

The Private Secretary to Chief Secretary to Government, Chennai - 9.
SF/SC

/Forwarded By Order/


SECTION OFFICER.

Annexure

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for functioning of libraries with regard to COVID-19

The Government has decided to open the libraries in the State excluding part time libraries from 01.9.2020 onwards for certain activities. The following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is provided for the functioning of all types of libraries in the State following social distancing norms, taking care of pandemic containment requirements.

I General norms

1. The following three sections may be opened initially for the benefit of public, school/ college students and those who are preparing for competitive exams.
 - **Lending Section**
 - **Reference Section**
 - **Own Book Reading Section**
2. In Branch Libraries and Village Libraries, lending section shall only be opened.
3. The part-time libraries shall remain closed since these libraries do not have the above three sections.
4. The libraries shall function from 8.00am to 2.00pm on all working days except Branch and Village Libraries which shall function in their usual working hours (before 2.00pm on working days)
5. Libraries which come in the containment zones across the state shall not be re-opened during the lockdown period and readers from containment zones should not be allowed to use the library.
6. Usage of Air Conditioning facility in the library or sections shall be avoided.
7. Own book reading section users shall not be allowed to share their books, laptops and other things with other readers. Those things shall not be permitted to be taken to other sections of the library other than own book reading section.
8. Group discussion shall not be allowed in this section.
9. Persons above 65 years of age, persons with co morbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 15 years shall not be allowed to use the library.
10. In libraries with computerized catalogue facilities, readers shall write down the details of the book they require, on a small piece of paper, and librarians shall pick up the books and issue it to the readers in Lending Section.
11. Libraries which do not have a computerized catalogue, shall keep a copy of book register and issue the books which the reader

selects. Permitting the library users inside the book stack room shall be avoided.

12. First-come first-serve basis shall be followed when a large number of readers arrive at the same time to the reference section and own book reading section. In that case, librarian and library staff shall register the names of the remaining readers and may be requested to come later on a specified time.

II Social distancing norms

1. Proper boxes must be marked on the floor/ground with minimum 6ft distance to ensure social distancing in the queue while the readers/members enter into the libraries and they shall be allowed one by one inside the library.
2. Social distancing norms shall be followed to avoid crowding at the entrance.
3. The seating arrangements in the Own Book Reading Section and Reference Section shall be made keeping suitable social distance with only 50% seating capacity.

III Precautionary measures and sanitization:

1. Prior to usage of libraries, the premises of the libraries along with furniture, book racks, hand rails, doors, windows etc. shall be disinfected properly following the Government guidelines already issued for the same. Full disinfection of the libraries shall be done daily before opening of the libraries.
2. Provision of adequate hand wash facilities / hand sanitizers shall be provided.
3. Readers/Staff shall only be allowed to enter the premises after washing their hands/disinfecting/sanitizing.
4. Readers shall not be permitted to take the books directly from the Book Stacks.
5. Librarian and library staff shall take the reference books requested by the readers from the bookshelf and provide them to the readers.
6. Librarian and library staff must wear hand gloves while doing so.
7. Director of Public Libraries shall communicate the **Government guidelines** for sanitization of public places/libraries to all libraries for strict compliance by all concerned.
8. Wash areas, toilets, etc., where people are likely to come shall be disinfected properly. Social distancing norms shall apply to such areas strictly.

9. The books, reference materials used / returned by the readers shall be kept separately and they shall be thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant before replacing them into the shelves.
10. The District Library Officers shall co-ordinate with concerned local bodies / health department officials for thorough cleaning and sanitizing all libraries and their premises once in a week.
11. The Chief Librarian/Librarian of the library shall be responsible for the upkeep of their library according to these standards.

IV Thermal screening in libraries

1. Thermal screening of all readers/staff including contractual staff shall be done when they arrive to the libraries.
2. The Chief Librarian/Librarian shall check whether it is functional every day.
3. A no-touch thermometer, 4 numbers of AAA cells for replacement and a clean cloth are to be kept ready for thermal screening. The Chief Librarian/Librarian shall check whether it is functional every day.
4. Thermal screening could be done before the person enters the library. Subject to the infrastructure available, it is desirable that persons wait in a queue following physical distancing norms, in some shaded area like a covered structure or corridor, etc.,. Proper marking should be done in the floor for social distancing.
5. The person handling the thermometer should wash hands and dry them before touching the no-touch thermometer. That person should familiarize himself with the instructions.
6. Before using the no-touch thermometer, the person handling it should look at the infrared sensor lens at the end of the unit. If dirty, it should be cleaned so that the thermometer works properly. To clean the lens, wipe gently with a damp swab. Do not use solvents, and do not touch the lens with the fingers.
7. To prevent transmission of disease, avoid direct contact of the thermometer with a person's skin.
8. After use every day, the device handle should be wiped clean and dry, before storing it safely for the next use.
9. The thermometer should be checked for functioning an hour before the first use each day. In case, the cells are having no power left, they should be replaced. Always spare cells should be available with the person operating the thermometer.
10. The average normal body temperature is generally accepted as 98.6°F (37°C). Some studies have shown that the "normal" body temperature can have a wide range, from 97°F (36.1°C) to 99°F (37.2°C). The persons who show temperature above 37.2°C may be restricted from entering the library.

V Social behaviour for pandemic prevention/containment in public places/libraries

1. The Chief Librarian/Librarian shall ensure that a clean face mask is used by all readers/staff of the library.
2. Wearing of face masks shall be made compulsory. Touching the mask should be kept to minimum.
3. Touching the face or any part of the face should be avoided.
4. Touching any surfaces of furniture/fixtures/railings/lifts/handles and other surfaces should be kept to the minimum.
5. Spitting should be strictly prohibited inside the premises.
6. Social distancing shall be maintained at all places in the libraries.

VI Other instructions

1. Further detailed instructions regarding usage of different sections of the libraries shall be issued by the Director of Public Libraries.
2. All staff must compulsorily wear their Identity card at all times, from the time of leaving their residence (during the transit, working hours etc) until they return to their respective residences, at the end of the day.
3. Hospitals/clinics in the nearby areas, shall be identified and list be available at all libraries at all times.
4. All staff should be thoroughly oriented on COVID-19 with focus on hand washing, respiratory hygiene, social distancing, surface cleaning practices, self-care for any co-morbid conditions, seeking proper care at the earliest etc.
5. Readers/Staff should be strictly instructed not to attend any unnecessary social gathering.
6. Library users should be informed with a clear circular on the instructions about how to use the library and sections, through library notice board and readers should be guided to follow the instructions strictly.
7. Chief Librarian/Librarian shall be held responsible for strict adherence of guidelines at the libraries and should carry out compliance checks frequently.

K.SHANMUGAM
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

// Forwarded By Order //


Section Officer 27/08/22