



## Advice for toy libraries on reopening after Covid-19 restrictions

Updated 22 June 2020

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### Context

This document was developed based on toy library specific advice received from the Infection Prevention and Control cell of the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. Despite the advice coming from a Victorian department we believe it is prudent for all toy libraries to follow this advice.

If there is state specific government guidance that contradicts this advice, please follow the advice of your state government. This document replaces all previous advice.

We are also aware that many toy libraries are hesitant regarding reopening. It is important that toy libraries feel confident in opening soon to reinforce the public perception that toys from a toy library are safe and clean. If your toy library is having trouble reopening please contact Toy Libraries Australia at [info@toylibraries.org.au](mailto:info@toylibraries.org.au) for support.

## Opening of the toy libraries

From 22 June 2020, toy libraries can open in all states. Volunteers can work in the toy library and members can browse the toys.

## Covid safe plans

All toy libraries should develop a Covid safe plan prior to opening. See appendix A for a template developed by Toy Libraries Australia. In some states you might also need to fill in a government template for a basic Covid safe plan.

## Caps on the number of people in the toy library

All toy libraries (in all states apart from WA) should have at least 4m<sup>2</sup> of space for each person in the toy library (and in each room). In WA the requirement is 2m<sup>2</sup> space for each person

In addition, many states have further restrictions on the maximum number of people in a community facility/library. From 22 June these restrictions are:

State	Maximum number of people
WA	100 people
Victoria	20 people
QLD	20 people (increasing to 100 people from 10 July)
SA	75 people
NSW	20 people (no limit from 1 July)
NT	None
Tasmania	80 people
ACT	None

## Hand sanitiser

All members and visitors should be asked to use hand sanitiser prior to entering the toy library.

## Cleaning toys

Advice on cleaning and quarantining of toys has changed. It is now not recommended to quarantine toys in place of an appropriate cleaning program.

All toy libraries should have a process in place to ensure **all toys and bags returned to the toy library are cleaned by hand with a neutral detergent or 2-in-1 detergent/disinfectant product** or in a dishwasher on a hot wash and dried before they are placed back into circulation.

- A neutral detergent is one that is PH neutral (e.g. dishwashing liquids).
- A 2-in-1 detergent/disinfectant product is a multi-purpose cleaner that states on the label 'removes grease and grime' (or similar) and 'kills 99.9% of germs'.

**The responsibility for cleaning toys can be a member's responsibility**, but this requirement must be clearly communicated to members and the toy library must record confirmation from the member that toys have been cleaned. One way of doing this could be for members to sign that they have appropriately cleaned their toys upon return. If you use the MiBase or SeTLs toy lending software there is a simple alert that can be added to confirm the member has cleaned their toys.

Paper-based materials, such as books, puzzles and games, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. The bags they are contained in however do require to be cleaned with a neutral detergent.

If toys are returned from a household where someone is unwell (i.e. vomiting, diarrhoea, respiratory infection), they should be cleaned and disinfected in the library before they are placed back into circulation. Guidance on this process is included in Appendix C

Toy libraries can choose to quarantine toys in addition to the above cleaning protocol, but quarantining can not replace cleaning.

Toy Libraries Australia's instructions for cleaning toys can be found at [www.toylibraries.org.au/cleaning-toys](http://www.toylibraries.org.au/cleaning-toys)

## Cleaning of the toy library

Toy libraries should take all reasonable steps to ensure:

- Frequently touched surfaces accessible to the public (including toilets and handrails) are cleaned at least twice on any day.
- Surfaces are cleaned when visibly soiled and immediately after a spill on a surface.

To clean in this context means to wipe the surface with a disinfectant. If your toy library is open for only a couple of hours, we would recommend cleaning frequently touched surfaces prior to opening.

Your cleaning schedule should be documented in your Covid safe plan and ideally keep a record of when cleaning occurs.

See the Safe Work Australia COVID-19 Good Hygiene Checklist for more information [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19-Good-Hygiene-Checklist.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19-Good-Hygiene-Checklist.pdf).

## Signage requirements

Toy libraries should display a sign at the entry to each space (room) accessible by members with the maximum number of people allowed in the space. In addition, signage should be used to encourage compliance with social distancing measures.

## Record requirements

Toy libraries must record the first name and contact phone number of all people visiting the toy library for more than 15 minutes and the date and time they attended.

If members are borrowing and returning toys, this information should already be captured by your toy library management software. Remember to keep record of staff and volunteers working in the toy library and any visitors who aren't borrowing. These records can be destroyed after 28 days.

## General precautions to reduce transmission

Toy library members, volunteers and staff should also be taking the following precautions:

- Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if attending the toy library for an extended period of time.
- Practising social distancing by maintaining at least a 1.5 metre distance between yourself and others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
- Make sure you follow good hygiene and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze and disposing of used tissues immediately.
- Don't visit the toy library if you feel unwell and seek medical advice promptly.

## Appendix 1: Toy library COVID safe plan template

<b>Toy Library</b>	Australian Toy Library
<b>Document version</b>	Version 2
<b>Person preparing the plan</b>	Jane Doe, President
<b>Date approved by committee</b>	13 June 2020

Note: your COVID safe plan should be reviewed when state or federal guidance changes. Some states also require you to complete a basic standard template for your Covid safe plan.

### Physical distancing plan

See appendix 2

### Capacity of the whole toy library

Total area of the toy library	e.g. 100m <sup>2</sup>
Density requirements for your state	e.g. 4m <sup>2</sup> (or 2m <sup>2</sup> in WA)
Calculated maximum number of people in the toy library	e.g. 100/4=25
Current state restriction on maximum number of people allowed in an indoor space	e.g. 20
Maximum number of people allowed in the toy library ( <i>in most states this excludes staff and volunteers</i> )	e.g. 20

### Capacity of individual rooms

*In addition to the total capacity of the toy library, each room must also comply with a maximum of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person rule. Calculate the maximum number of people in each room of your toy library.*

Room 1	e.g. 13
Room 2	e.g. 10
Room 3	e.g. 5

**Measures to be put in place to manage the number of people in the toy library**

**Measures to be put in place to maintain 1.5m between people**

**How we will communicate physical distancing measures (e.g. signage, marks on floor)**

**Health, hygiene and facilities**

See the COVID-19 Good Hygiene Checklist for more information  
[www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19-Good-Hygiene-Checklist.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19-Good-Hygiene-Checklist.pdf)

**Health and hygiene measures to be put in place**

**Location and contents of hand washing and sanitising stations**

**Measures to be put in place to encourage good hygiene in the toy library**

**Process to regularly monitor and review the implementation of hygiene measures to ensure they are being followed and remain effective.**

Toy cleaning

**Our policy on cleaning general toys**

**Our policy on cleaning toys exposed to COVID-19 or unknown respiratory illnesses**

**Our policy on toy quarantining during the current step**

Note: Updated advice does not recommended quarantining of toys in place of an appropriate cleaning program

**Toy library cleaning**

See the COVID-19 How to Clean and Disinfect your Workplace Guide  
[www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/how-to-clean-disinfect-your-workplace-covid19.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/how-to-clean-disinfect-your-workplace-covid19.pdf)

**Routine cleaning details for frequently touched items**

Item	When to be cleaned	Cleaning method
Door handle	Before and after each session	Spray disinfectant



### Routine cleaning details for infrequently touched items

Item	When to be cleaned	Cleaning method
Carpet	Weekly on Friday afternoons	Vacuum

### Our process to regularly monitor and review the implementation of hygiene toy library cleaning to ensure they are being followed

### Membership policies

#### What will our membership policies be during this step in the reopening

Late fees	
Borrowing lengths	
Number of toys borrowed	
Membership renewals	
Volunteering requirements	
Other	

## Appendix 2: Physical distancing checklist

Adapted by Toy Libraries Australia from Save Work Australia ([swa.gov.au/coronavirus](http://swa.gov.au/coronavirus))

**This checklist will assist you to implement physical distancing measures at your toy library. Don't forget to also check the Safe Work Australia COVID-19 [website](#) for additional resources.**

### Density requirement (One person per 4m<sup>2</sup> or 2m<sup>2</sup> in WA)

*Calculate the number of people you can have in the toy library at any one time.*

- Do a walk through of your toy library with a tape measure and write down the dimensions of all enclosed spaces.
- Calculate the area of each enclosed space by multiplying the length of the space by its width in metres.
- Divide the calculated area by 4 (or 2 in WA). The result is the total number of people (including children) you can have in a space to allow for at least 4m<sup>2</sup> of space per person.

*For example: Length = 5 metres, Width = 10 metres Area in square metres: 5 x 10 = 50.*

*Maximum number of people: 50 ÷ 4 = 12.5. Round it down to 12.*

*Is it reasonably practicable for you to provide 4 m<sup>2</sup> of space per person?*

- Consider how many people are usually present in the enclosed area at any one time. Is this more or less than the number you calculated above?
- If the calculated number is less than the number of people usually in the space, can you reduce the number of people in the enclosed space by:
  - reducing the number of work tasks in the enclosed space (e.g. count toys outside of opening hours)
  - restricting access to the enclosed space to essential workers
  - staggering entry of members into the library.
  - reducing the length of visits by asking members not to bring children to the toy library
  - only letting one person per family into the toy library (whenever possible)

## How to implement measures to achieve 1.5m distance between each person

*Identify all the situations, tasks and processes where staff, volunteers and members interact closely with each other.*

- What tasks require staff/volunteers to be close to each other?
- What are the situations where staff and volunteers interact closely with members?  
*For example: Members at the check out or toy return.*
- Does the layout of the toy library, including entry and exits, require people to be close to each other?  
*For example: Toy shelving close to each other, office desks next to each other*

*Identify the situations, tasks and processes where it is reasonably practicable for people and others to keep 1.5m away from each other.*

- Can you change the layout of your toy library?  
*For example: Can you move workstations and shelves further apart? Can you restrict member movement to a particular part of the toy library? Remember, 1.5m distancing includes both side to side and back to back.*
- Can you modify the way people interact with each other?  
*For example: Can you put in physical barriers that minimise contact between staff/volunteers and others (e.g. Perspex shield)? Is there a way to manage doorways more effectively to avoid congestion? (e.g. one door marked for entry only, the other for exits, or keeping some entrance doors open, if safe to do so).*
- Can you modify the use of toy library facilities?  
*For example: Can you reduce the number of people at the toy library at a given time by staggering visits.*
- Can you stop timing consuming processes from happening in the toy library?  
*For example: Can you only accept new members via online registration and payment?*
- Identify and address, so far as reasonably practicable, any other risks that may arise if people are required to practice physical distancing.

*Put in place measures to communicate and remind workers of the need to physical distance*

- Put signs around the toy library and create wall or floor markings to identify 1.5m distance. Your staff and volunteers could wear a badge as a visual reminder to themselves and each other.
- Provide physical distancing markers on the floor in areas where members line up.

### *Close contact work tasks*

Toy libraries should not have any tasks that require close contact (within 1.5m of others). Redesign all tasks so close contact does not occur.

**Have you consulted with staff, volunteers and relevant health and safety representatives (as applicable) on implementing physical distancing measures? You have a duty to consult with staff and volunteers when they are likely to be or are directly affected by a situation involving their health and safety.**

## Appendix 3: Cleaning and disinfecting toys from a household with a person who is unwell

If a member reports that a someone from their household has been unwell, including exhibiting symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhoea, or respiratory infection, their returned toys should be both cleaned and disinfected in the toy library prior to returning the shelf.

### **Process for in-library cleaning and disinfecting of toys from households with a person who is unwell**

#### **Prior to cleaning**

- Staff and volunteers cleaning these toys should be informed to avoid touching their face, especially their mouth, nose, and eyes when cleaning.
- Those cleaning should wear disposable gloves while cleaning.
- Those cleaning should use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before putting on and after removing gloves.

#### **Cleaning procedure**

1. *Clean the toys following TLA's normal toy cleaning instructions*  
 For toys, cleaning is an essential step prior to disinfection. Organic matter can inactivate many disinfectants. Cleaning reduces the soil load, allowing the disinfectant to work.
2. *Make a fresh batch of bleach solution (if not using a commercial product) and follow manufacturer's instructions*  
 The disinfectant used should be one for which the manufacturer claims antiviral activity, meaning it can kill the virus. This includes chlorine-based bleach disinfectants. If making your own chlorine-based bleach disinfectant, follow the dilution instructions on the next page.
3. *Wipe the area with bleach solution using disposable paper towels or a disposable cloth.*
4. *Dispose of gloves and paper towels/clothes in a leak proof plastic bag.*
5. *Wash hands well using soap and water and dry with disposable paper or single-use cloth.*  
 If water is unavailable, clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

## Making a disinfection solution from household bleach

Household bleach comes in a variety of strengths. The concentration of active ingredient, hypochlorous acid\*, can be found on the product label.

### Recipe to achieve a 1000ppm (0.1%) bleach disinfectant solution

Original strength of bleach		Disinfectant recipe		Volume in standard 10L bucket
%	Parts per million	Parts of bleach	Parts of water	
1	10,000	1	9	1000 mL
2	20,000	1	19	500 mL
3	30,000	1	29	333 mL
4	40,000	1	39	250 mL
5	50,000	1	49	200 mL

\*Hypochlorous acid (HOCl) is a weak acid formed when chlorine (Cl) dissolves in water and dissociated to hypochlorite (ClO<sup>-</sup>) which is the oxidising disinfectant in bleach.

A useful chlorine (bleach) dilution calculator can be found at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/infection-control-guidelines/chlorine-dilutions-calculator>.

If you have, for example, a White King Bleach at home which is 4% available chlorine and you want to make up a 10 litre bucket of 1000ppm disinfectant solution you would enter the information as follows:

1. Concentration of bleach product (% sodium hypochlorite)

4 % sodium hypochlorite (NaClO)

2. Desired concentration of chlorine solution (ppm)

1000 ppm

3. Desired volume of chlorine solution (Litres)

10 Litres

Calculate

To make your chlorine solution add 262.5 millilitres of bleach to 9.7 litres of water.

In this case, add just over one cup (262.5ml) of bleach and fill the rest of your bucket with water

## Wording for a communication to members

(Adjust based on decisions made for your local toy library)

### INITIAL COMMUNICATION

We're thrilled to share that the **XXX** Toy Library will reopen on **XXX**. Our community's health and safety remain a priority to us and we have spent a lot of time planning a safe and sustainable re-opening.

All toy loans have been extended to be up to date and all memberships have had a (Insert time if appropriate) added to cover the **X** weeks that we were totally closed.

DHHS's Infection Prevention and Control Unit has provided specific advice to toy libraries so for now there will be some changes to the way we operate. Here's what you need to know:

- As always, members must clean toys before returning them. This is now a DHHS requirement of us opening so when you return toys we will ask if they've been cleaned. If they haven't you'll need to use our cleaning station to do it. This includes toy bags and boxes. You can view our cleaning guidelines [here](#).
- Please use the hand sanitiser as you enter and maintain physical distancing of 1.5m from other people.
- We encourage you to choose your toys and leave promptly to go home to play, as we're not able to offer a space to hang out at this stage.
- Please don't touch toys you're not going to take home and don't remove them from their bags in the library. This will be tough for children excited about new toys, so please chat to them about this rule and keep them close during your visit or try to come alone.
- Reopening means we need volunteers to sign up to the roster, but for now volunteers cannot be accompanied by children and will be required to follow hygiene precautions.
- We can allow (insert calculated amount) people in the toy library at any one time to comply with the 4m<sup>2</sup> (or 2m<sup>2</sup>) rule, if we exceed that number you may need to wait in the foyer or outside.
- If anyone in your family is unwell (e.g. vomiting, diarrhoea, respiratory infection) you must not visit the toy library. Instead, contact us about extending or returning the toys.

We'll continue to navigate these changes together and may need to make further adjustments along the way.

Thank you for your continued understanding, patience and support as we reopen for browsing and borrowing. We're excited to see you all again!

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For advice from others, join our Facebook discussion group: [www.facebook.com/groups/TLAdiscussion/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/TLAdiscussion/)  
 For advice from TLA, email Sarah McCarty at [info@toylibraries.org.au](mailto:info@toylibraries.org.au)