

## Quarantine of returned items

**From:** [rmeyer@decaturlibrary.org](mailto:rmeyer@decaturlibrary.org)  
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Good morning,

Somehow I failed to communicate beyond circ staff but a couple of weeks ago, based updates from the CDC, Robert discussed with me the possibility of shortening the quarantine of items to overnight. I fully agreed based on the newest reports. What's more—we are shooting for as early as May 1 turning the sorter back on and returning to normal operations regarding returns and shelving.

I sent the new report earlier but here it is again: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/science-and-research/surface-transmission.html>

I had said in that earlier email that the CDC assessed the risk of surface transmission of the COVID-19 virus as 1 in 10,000. That isn't quite accurate. The more accurate way to put it is that any time we touch a *contaminated surface*, there is a 1 in 10,000 chance that we will then contract the virus. And once fully vaccinated, those odds change to about 1 in 200,000. Proper hand hygiene and mask wearing should further reduce the risk.

What the odds are of a contaminated book being returned seem to be significantly lower than that. About ½ of 1% of Macon County is currently infected (at most). The numbers begin to shrink to near zero when one considers that: how many of that small percentage have books checked out of the library? How many of those books are getting contaminated? How many contaminated items are being returned?

The laboratory studies that we were basing quarantine on are considered flawed due to the fact that: a) a much larger than real-world sample of virus was used, and b) the studies went out of their way to create environmental conditions that would increase the life of the virus (so that they would see worst-case scenario).

To my knowledge there have not been any confirmed cases of transmission of the virus from a surface.

The CDC further acknowledges that normal cleaning procedures are sufficient and full disinfection is only required in cases where a confirmed COVID case has touched a surface and that is probably only useful in the first 24 hours after the surface has been touched ("surface disinfection once- or twice-per-day had little impact on reducing estimated risks"). As a result of this, I ordered an immediate end to the practice of fogging with a disinfectant that we had in place for many months.

I hope that this is clear and that it does not lead to increased anxiety or concern. If it does, or you have *any* other questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Again, I'm sorry for not communicating this earlier.

Thank you,

Rick Meyer  
City Librarian  
Decatur Public Library  
130 N. Franklin St.

Decatur, IL 62523  
P:217.421.9713



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