

Original question:

*I am hoping to be able to add more open hours later this year; we are not open on Fridays, and I'd like to offer at least a few hours of service. Normally, we are open 10am - 9pm Monday through Thursday, then 10am - 5pm Saturdays. I don't think we'll be able to offer a full 7 hours like we do on Saturday, I want to start smaller with about 4 hours. I'm not sure when to put those hours, though, morning or afternoon? I'm sure someone will be displeased no matter what we do!*

*I'd love to hear from libraries that are open for a short time any day of the week, and how you decided upon what hours to offer. I'm also interested in hearing from anyone that may have added hours like this recently, and how it has worked out, any changes you needed to make, etc. I'm not sure how to handle staffing, for instance; can I get by with our current staff, or does that spread us too thin the rest of the week? Lots to consider, I appreciate all input!*

Hi Don,

From a foot traffic perspective, Friday afternoons are always far busier than mornings, so I'd vote for a 1-5 pm simply because it seems to be when there is the largest concentration of patrons on most Fridays.

Can't speak to the decision-making etc. as I had nothing to do with that, but we are open 1-5 on Sundays! Staff from each department is asked to pick up roughly 3 Sundays a quarter. We then receive the corresponding amount of hours off that we worked that Sunday on another day of the week. Librarians are allowed to choose to work 9-5 on Sundays rather than just 12-5, so we can have a whole day off if we want. We do offer some comp time rather than this rescheduling method, but I never do that so I can't speak to it lol. Staff is very bare bones, usually 3 librarians or reference assistants to cover our 3 ref desks, a manager, and two circ clerks. Librarians are on desk from 1-5 with a 20 minute break (the manager fills in the desks for these breaks).

Picking 4 hours on a Friday is much more difficult though as many people have work or school! A patron survey might be a great idea to see what hours would work for the greatest number of people.

We cut back our hours after we reopened after Covid. We are a class IV but a smaller library. Our current hours are M, W & Fri 10-6, Tues & Thurs 1-8 & Sat 10-4. Our foot traffic, computer use & circ have not gone back to preCovid figures so we'll hang onto these hours for a while. If your staff would be too thin, could you hire subs for Fridays?

Opening at the same time every day is helpful for patrons to remember. So I would suggest the morning hours.

Hi Don: Not sure if this is much help, but--

Our main location is open 7 days-- M-Th 10-9, F & S 10-5, Sun 1-5. (I understand that grew out of a millage over 20 years ago, to extend our days/hours and keep them consistent year-around.)

Here's more to your question-- For 15 of those years, we operated a microscopically small (1 10'x10' room) branch library in a rural township (until the owner lost the building to taxes and it was torn down) in the far north of our service area. Hours there were M & W, 3-7; Tues, Thur & Sat, 10-2; closed Friday. 10-2 was definitely busiest 10-2-- while the 3-7 hours seemed busier during the week, as folks stopped in on their way home from work. Things got pretty quiet after 6 pm.

For you, Friday might also follow the late afternoon pattern-- folks heading home from work, kids stopping after school, stopping at the library to pick up a book or movie for the weekend. Maybe from 2-5 or 3-6pm?

I did a patron survey and worked from there. Saturday we're open 10-2. Our hours were strange and inconsistent before so it's been a good change. You're right though, no matter what you do...

Class II library.

RTDL closes at 8.30 M-Th and everyone is usually cleared out by 8:15 patron-wise. Would it be possible to skim those two hours off of your M-Th schedule and add them to Friday?

Good morning Don,  
JFK, jr is open M-Th 12-8 and F-Sa 12-5  
CK is open M-Th 10-9 and F-Sa 10-5

We get a lot of patrons wishing JFK was open earlier than noon; we may be doing this due to the numerous requests. Like you we will have to figure out staffing and then decide if we want to stay open until 8 or close earlier. We used to have a lot of people in the library between 6 and 8 but since COVID it is dead after 5pm. I would hate to close

earlier though due to the few that do utilize the library after 5 because of their 9-5 work schedules.

My recommendation would be to open earlier rather than later but I guess you would really need to look at when your traffic is coming in. In regards to staffing we usually have four or five workers on our 12-5 shift and it works out well. We have had days where we have been short staffed and ran it well with only three .

I would be interested in your findings and how you plan on spreading your staff out. How many staff do you have? We have 2 librarians, 9 paraprofessionals, and 3 shelvers.

Don,

Garden City Public Library is open 12p - 5p on both Friday and Saturday. I like those hours because it keeps our hours as simple (M-Th 10a - 8p, F-Sa 12p - 5p) as opposed to having different hours on Friday and Saturday. Years ago, we had summer/winter hours when we were open on Friday in the summer, and open on Saturdays during the "winter" (roughly the school year).

We do get people coming to the Library at 10a on Friday and Saturday expecting us to be open (or forgetting which day it is). Mostly they are looking for computer/internet services.

Hi Donald,

We haven't adjusted our hours since fully reopening after COVID, but our patrons hated when we did not have a consistent opening time -- we've never received so many complaints. Even patrons who always come in the middle of the day (so opening time doesn't really matter) complained.

Maybe your community is different, but our patrons seem to take great comfort in knowing we open at 10:00am every day.

As far as staffing, you may want to check your health insurance plan to see when benefits kick in. For us, I think it's 30 hours, so we have to be sure part time staff stays below that threshold. Outside of that, we did have to bring on extra staff as we expanded our schedule. We're a relatively small staff -- 7 part-time desk workers. That's a good number for us. Our open hours are covered, and there's enough who are willing and able to sub when needed.

Our schedule:

Mon-Thu: 10:00am-8:00pm

Fri: 10:00am-6:00pm

Sat: 10:00am-3:00pm

I hope this helps

Hey Don,

We ended up reducing our hours from COVID down to 10-7 Tuesday-Friday (not open Monday), and Saturday stayed the same until 4.

I looked back about a month on the camera and counted my traffic after 6, and it just wasn't worth it past 7. The place we could use hours the most are on Saturdays probably later, maybe 5 -7. I could see a few people being interested in Sundays.

We've been closed on Monday's since the recession (2008). While we know we would get some traffic, it didn't seem worth it to dilute traffic the rest of the week when in the last 7 years we've had 0 complaints. So Sunday hours would probably open more opportunities for the public than Mondays for example, which seems to be quintessentially the same boat as you.