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STATE LIBRARY OF LOUISIANA REOPENING UNDER PHASE 1 PROCESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE AND NATIONAL GUIDELINES

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BATON ROUGE, La. – The State Library of Louisiana is reopening under a phased process that began on Monday, May 18. During this process, library staff are transitioning back into the building, putting specific safety measures in place to ensure all public service areas will soon be accessible using social distancing measures and to allow for quarantine procedures of incoming materials.

"The very nature of libraries makes it both difficult and critically important for us to adhere to strict mitigation standards to prevent any spread," said State Librarian Rebecca Hamilton. "As librarians, we have to take a step back at exactly at the time we want to step up."

"The State Library and all of the 340 public libraries statewide never stopped serving our citizens over the last two months. They continued to provide much needed internet access, reference help, and a wide variety of online library services. This was especially evident in the amount of virtual programming provided to our young people," said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. "I am so proud of their efforts to ensure all of our citizens continue to have access to the information they need in their personal lives and for their businesses, once again showing we are Louisiana Strong."

The State Library has also established their "Call Ahead/Pickup Service." While the State Library remains closed to the public during Phase 1, patrons may now call the State Library to reserve books and other materials and to schedule a time to pick up. All due dates for materials borrowed prior to the stay at home order have been extended to June 30, and no late fees will be charged for returned items.

The following services, which the State Library has continued to provide for the duration of the stay at home orders, remain available to the public:

- Telephone and email reference and technical assistance in all departments available Monday through Friday
- Talking Book and Braille Library assistance including readers' advisory help and material delivery available Monday through Friday
- Electronic resources, such as EBSCO, Homework Louisiana tutoring assistance, Pronunciator language databases,

and more, as well as support for those resources, remain available 24/7
- Free Wi-Fi remains available outside of the State Library 24/7
- The **Louisiana Digital Library** remains available 24/7

The State Library plans to reopen to the public on June 5 when the state is expected to enter Phase 2.To find the most accurate reopening statuses of all public libraries statewide, visit the State Library of Louisiana website. For up to date resources and other information about COVID-19, visit the State Library of Louisiana LibGuide webpage.

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