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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR BILLY NUNGESSER ANNOUNCES RE-OPENING OF LOUISIANA WELCOME CENTERS AND STATE LIBRARY UNDER RECOMMENDED PHASE 2 GUIDELINES

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BATON ROUGE, La. – As Louisiana prepares to move in to Phase 2 of reopening, Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser announces the re-opening of eight of the state's welcome centers and the state library to visitors. Starting Friday, June 5, the lobbies of each welcome center along interstates and highways will open to visitors following guidelines released under Phase 2. Louisiana's welcome centers have been closed since March 16, only keeping open restroom facilities for travelers.

"The road to recovery is not one we will travel quickly, but we need to get started safely and smartly," said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. "As people start to venture away from their homes, they are going to do so mostly by driving. While restrooms have been open and cleaned 24 hours a day, we need to make sure we have taken the necessary precautions, following the guidelines, to be able to provide the best information about all the great things Louisiana has to see and do for our interstate and highway visitors. We need to show them that we all are Louisiana Strong."

During this week, each of the welcome centers will receive another deep disinfecting of all surfaces and areas accessible by the public and staff. Welcome Centers will be continually cleaned and disinfected throughout the day and overnights. Once re-opened, each welcome center will be distributing "Feed Your Soul" branded face masks for free to all visitors, and limiting the number of visitors inside the lobby area to no more than 10 at time. Welcome center staff will continue to wear masks and will complete the guest register book for visitors. Social distancing will be maintained, and travel brochures will be secured behind the desk and distributed to visitors as requested.

The welcome centers re-opening include:

- **From Texas**
  - Greenwood Welcome Center; I-20 East from Dallas
  - Vinton Welcome Center; I-10 East from Beaumont
- **From Mississippi**
  - Mound Welcome Center; I-20 West from Vicksburg
  - Francisville Welcome Center; U.S. 61 from Moundville

    - Kentwood Welcome Center; I-55 South from McComb
    - Pearl River Welcome Center; I-59 South from Picayune
    - Slidell Welcome Center; I-10 West from Gulfport
- **Within Louisiana**
    - Atchafalaya Welcome Center; I-10 St. Martin Parish

The State Capitol Welcome Center will reopen following approval by the Speaker of the House. The New Orleans Welcome Center on St. Ann Street in the French Quarter will remain closed.

State Parks Discount Code Available to All Visitors

Louisiana State Parks is now accepting overnight reservations at 18 parks from out-of-state visitors, as well as Louisiana residents, using the discount code WELCOMEBACK. The discount code offers a 4-night booking for the price of 3 on stays through September 7, 2020. Reservations can be made online at louisianastateparks.reserveamerica.com.

Overnight facilities at three state parks - Chicot State Park in Ville Platte, Lake Bistineau State Park in Doyline, and Bayou Segnette State Park in Westwego – remain closed. However, the day-use area and boat launch at Bayou Segnette State Park in Westwego, and the East Landing at Chicot State Park near Ville Platte have reopened for daily use from 6 a.m.–6 p.m.

Visitors can enter Bayou Segnette State Park through the entrance station and access to the boat launch and parking lot and the day-use area, including the picnic areas.

Access to Chicot Lake will be available via the East Landing of Chicot State Park. The landing is located off La. Hwy. 106 on Spillway Road.

State Library of Louisiana

The State Library of Louisiana will re-open to the public on Monday, June 8, at 50% capacity for library visitors. Staff will be on hand to assist patrons in accessing materials from other floors.

Library staff are taking extra time to ensure safety measures are in place for public areas to allow for social distancing and quarantine procedures of incoming materials. The State Library will also continue its “Call Ahead/Pickup Service” for patrons to reserve books and other materials and schedule a pick up time. 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.

To find the most accurate reopening statuses of all public libraries statewide, visit the State Library of Louisiana website.

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