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**The Huntsville Madison County Public Library to reopen on June 15**

*Limited capacity will apply amidst the COVID-19 pandemic*

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (June 8, 2020)** On Monday, June 15, the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library (HMCPL) will reopen its doors to the public, but with limited occupancy to encourage social distancing. This is phase three of the library's reopening plan.

"After surveying nearly 2500 of our patrons, we found the thing they missed the most about the library was browsing the shelves. Over the last several weeks, we have been working to secure personal protective equipment to be able to reopen safely," said Laurel Best, Executive Director of the HMCPL. "Our libraries are designed to be community spaces, so we had to strike a balance between who we are and this new normal of social distancing."

The Library is asking patrons to keep their visit to an hour to be able to provide access to everyone who wants to visit. Gathering spaces, like the children's play areas, the Makerspace Studio at Madison and public lounges, are still closed. Many of the library's pre-Covid services will reopen during phase three, but library staff ask that you call the branch before visiting to confirm.

Curbside service, which began on May 6, will continue for those who are not ready to visit the library or just enjoy its convenience. "We have had such an overwhelming response to curbside service so we will continue offering this to our patrons as long as there is a demand," said Best. In addition to picking up holds through curbside, patrons can also pick up grab bags, summer reading craft bags and mobile printing orders.

Cavalry Hill Public Library is the only branch that remains closed as of June 15 because of building access restrictions, but will reopen as soon as those restrictions are lifted. The BookMobile is visiting Cavalry Hill every Tuesday from 2:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. until the library reopens so children can pick up their summer reading materials.

Another part of the library's reopening plan is reinstating fine accruals. "We stopped charging fines the day we closed to the public on March 16 and have kept the Library fine-free through the first two

phases of our reopening to allow for maximum flexibility to our patrons," said Best. The Library will start charging fines on overdue items beginning July 6.

Library programs and meetings have not yet resumed and will be announced at a later date as part of the final phase of the Library's reopening. "Our goal is to reevaluate after the summer months on whether or not we can safely resume programs and meetings," said Best.

In the meantime, the Library is offering virtual story times and an upcoming virtual Excel for Beginners computer course.

**Open and curbside hours will operate:**

Monday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. at Downtown, Madison, and Bailey Cove

Monday - Friday from 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. at Monrovia, Murphy, Hazel Green, Triana and Showers

Monday - Friday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Gurley and New Hope

For all of the details, please visit [hmcpl.org/hmcplconnects](http://hmcpl.org/hmcplconnects)

For summer reading information, please visit [hmcpl.org/summer](http://hmcpl.org/summer)

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