



Hancock County Library System

Operational Policies

Adopted by the Board of Trustees 2005,

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1 SERVICE PHILOSOPHY AND GUIDING VALUES

1.1 MISSION

To inspire lifelong learning and enrich the quality of life of our communities by providing cultural, technological, and informational resources and indispensable services that are accessible to all.

1.2 VISION

A thriving, diverse community connected by an innovative library system as the accessible hub with responsive resources and caring service.

1.3 SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

Hancock County Library System strives to embody Excellence, Discovery, Collaboration, Diversity, and Integrity in serving the residents of Hancock County.

We strive for **EXCELLENCE**, taking pride in what we do, by providing valuable and helpful service to patrons, working toward positive outcomes through efficient use of available resources.

We learn through **DISCOVERY**, being innovative and growing all the time by developing as professionals, seeking and being open to feedback from the community we serve.

We engage in **COLLABORATION**, achieving success together through relationships with community partners and effective communication with our patrons.

We embrace our **DIVERSITY**, fostering belonging in an inclusive community through thoughtfulness and openness to perspectives and experiences of our community.

We act with **INTEGRITY**, building safety and trust by honoring professional ethics and being open, transparent, and honest with the community we serve.

1.4 LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

1.4.1 HISTORY

What is known today as Hancock County Library System was converted to a public institution in 1965 from an earlier, privately supported library. A new library building in Bay Saint Louis and a branch library in Waveland were opened in 1975/1976. The following year a branch was established in Kiln. Each of the first three branches—Bay St. Louis, Waveland, and Kiln—was renovated or relocated, in 1995, 1983/ 2003, and 2000 respectively. A cooperative library was established with the Pearlington elementary school in 1999. The East Hancock branch in Diamondhead opened in March 2013 with a Community Development Block Grant.

The Hancock County Library system has demonstrated resilience in the wake of major hurricanes Katrina and Isaac. It is the commitment of HCLS to provide the community with services and resources as quickly as possible following disruptive severe weather.

1.4.2 TECHNOLOGY

The Hancock County Library System utilizes integrated library system software to facilitate the lending of circulating materials within and between all branch locations in the system. HCLS is committed to providing patrons with accessible technologies to access the Library's collections and their borrower account information.

1.4.3 AWARDS AND GRANTS

The Hancock County Library System has been the recipient of the following honors:

- Library Services and Construction Act Grant to expand Bay St. Louis library and install integrated library system in 1989.
- Library Services and Construction Act Grant for a new Kiln library in 1997.
- HCLS received the National Award for Library Service in 2001.
- Named a National Literary Landmark by Friends of Libraries USA for its connection to Stephen Ambrose, writer and historian, in 2003.
- Awarded the SirsiDynix Building Better Communities Award, for providing vital services after Hurricane Katrina, in 2006.
- Community Development Block Grant to rebuild the Waveland Public Library in 2009.
- Community Development Block Grant to build East Hancock Library in 2011.

1.4.4 OUTLETS AND SERVICES

The Bay Saint Louis Library is the administrative headquarters for the library system and the main outlet for Hancock County Libraries. All cataloging, financial transactions, and other support functions occur at this location.

The branches provide the following public space:

- Bay St. Louis Library – 20,840 square feet
- Waveland Library -- 7,047 square feet
- Kiln Library – 9,554 square feet
- Pearlinton Library -- 7,621 square feet
- East Hancock Library in Diamondhead – 6,294 square feet

All five branches provide public computers, open wireless internet access, technology services, programming services, and public meeting rooms.

1.4.5 COMMUNITY STATEMENT

HCLS is situated within the Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula combined statistical area and driving distance to New Orleans, with access to major airport hubs, ports, and planned Gulf Coast Passenger Rail. Residents have access to diverse retail shopping, dining, and recreational activities. Short- and long-term visitors also live in the area at RV parks, nearby military bases, and various tourist attractions. The Library's physical and electronic collections, online resources, diverse programming efforts, and interlibrary loan services will be evaluated considering the changing, diverse needs of the community we serve.

The Library is committed to aligning collection development and services with the needs of our community. An understanding of our community requires that we review and monitor changing population characteristics, the diversity of our patronage at various branch locations, and the projected changes for the county and communities. The Library will conduct regular and ongoing analysis of the community to ensure our awareness of the issues impacting our service community, assess the Library's resources, and identify potential service partners.

Community assessments will provide the Library with credible information on the following topics:

- Demographics and characteristics of the population
- Issues and obstacles to information access
- Community public and private resources for social services
- Businesses, employers, and professional activities
- Social organizations and groups active in the community
- Educational institutions and resources
- Public entities and services provided
- Local industries, interests, and attractions

1.5 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVITY

Hancock County Library System recognizes the importance of and is dedicated to establishing policies and practices that uphold equity, diversity, and inclusivity in our resources, collections, programming, and services to the communities we serve. Embracing diversity and fostering inclusivity is enacted by:

- Engaging genuinely and respectfully with everyone, making HCLS a welcoming community for all.
- Using thoughtful language when interacting with others, being mindful of our impact.
- Being open to everyone's perspectives and experiences, even when different from our own.
- Recognizing our own biases, apologizing when we engage in biased behavior, and striving to do better moving forward. Thoughtfully stepping forward where we see bias taking place, offering support and intervention that centers the desires of those most affected.
- Holding ourselves accountable for ensuring accessibility, while disrupting barriers, in programming, policies, and practices.

- Promoting opportunities to improve the health, safety, and well-being of ALL our patrons.

1.6 PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

The Hancock County Library System collects patron information to administer library card accounts for access to resources and borrowing privileges. Personal data are used to prevent the fraudulent use of patron identity and to protect local tax investment in library resources. Personal data are maintained only if there is an operational need. Patron accounts are purged after two years of inactivity following the expiration date, except when accounts have unreturned materials and associated fines.

To safeguard the personal information of library patrons, procedures are established to ensure personal data remain private and confidential. Staff practices and procedures are established to restrict access to the electronic systems maintaining patron accounts and to ensure confidentiality and appropriate use of patron data. Library staff is not authorized to release or disclose personal information to anyone but the account holder, except to the legal guardian of a minor or when written permission has been provided by the patron. The Executive Director has the authority to release the content of a library account upon receipt of a proper legal process required by or in compliance with State and Federal law.

Personal data are not collected or maintained from public computer sessions, wireless internet access sessions, wireless hotspots available for checkout, or document services. Patron information provided to third-party vendors is subject to outside privacy policies. The library uses library system data to track aggregate circulation and library usage, in line with required statistical reporting and professional practice.

The library maintains security surveillance to monitor public safety. In the event of an emergency, criminal activity, or violation of library policy, the Executive Director is authorized to release video recordings to the appropriate authorities or to library staff to identify a person suspended from library property.

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2 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

2.1 OBJECTIVES & GOALS

The Library acquires and facilitates access to materials and resources that inform, educate, entertain, and enrich individuals and the community. The Library strives to balance the needs and desires of patrons within the limitations of the budget and available space. Such limitations are objectively considered alongside criteria for selection.

The Library's goals for the collection are that it should be:

- Timely, responsive, and relevant to the interests and needs of the community;
- A source of information for reference, educational and recreational purposes;
- Balanced in its inclusion of viewpoints on all subjects;
- Proportionate, in its provision of materials, to demand and use; and
- Managed and evaluated on an ongoing, systematic basis.

The Library collection should meet the needs of the community in areas that include developing reading skills in children and adults, promoting information literacy, developing computer and technology skills, supplementing K-12 education programs, supporting the development of local businesses and entrepreneurship, providing unique resources for local history researchers and genealogy, highlighting local artists and writers, and providing information related to local industries, activities, and interests.

2.1.1 PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Collection Development Policy exists to support the Library's mission and serves to inform staff about the collection and the methods and principles governing its development. By providing written guidelines for collection development activities, the Library ensures consistency in the selection, acquisition, maintenance, evaluation, and deselection of resources despite any changes in funding or personnel.

Transparency and trust are important for the relationship between public libraries and the communities they serve. This policy additionally serves to provide the Board of Trustees and library patrons with information about how and why collection development decisions are made.

Resources in the library collection are intended for a diverse community with varying needs and interests. This policy provides information and guidance for staff and the public regarding how to handle concerns, complaints, or challenges to Library materials and information resources.

This policy aims to:

- Guide staff in selecting materials to ensure the collection meets the Library's goals;
- Inform the public of the methods and principles governing the development of the Library's collections;

- Establish roles and responsibilities for all aspects of collection development; and
- Establish regular evaluation and assessment of the Library's collections to ensure they meet the Library's goals and the needs of the public we serve.

2.1.2 RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Executive Director holds the final responsibility for collection development. Designated staff provides continuity in collections through an organized structure for budgeting, selecting, acquiring, and managing library materials. Designated staff select materials under the direction of the Executive Director and within the framework of policies approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Executive Director and designated staff provide ongoing guidance for balancing collections with policy and systemwide collection goals. Designated staff are responsible for making selections for branch and electronic access collections, reviewing standing orders and periodical subscriptions, and utilizing information resources related to the needs and usage of materials at each branch. Designated staff will be responsible for providing regular collection assessment, evaluation, and deselection review to identify gaps and meet goals for the systemwide collection.

2.2 COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The Library provides residents and guests of Hancock County with a selection of popular interest resources to meet the wide variety of entertainment and informational needs in the community. Books, DVDs, and audiobooks on CD make up the bulk of the collection. These are supplemented by popular periodicals and newspapers. Objects and equipment make up our growing Library of Things. The Library participates in the regional interlibrary loan program, further expanding the physical resources accessible to patrons. Digital access collections include ebooks, downloadable audiobooks, and electronic magazines from OverDrive, available on the Libby app. HCLS also offers streaming video, electronic newspaper access to a variety of news resources, and digital access databases on a variety of subjects and interest areas.

Collections at the library are organized by the target audience, with sections for children, young adults, and adults, and differentiated in our online discovery platforms by audience. Adult materials prioritize popular and current fiction and a balanced nonfiction section. Young Adult materials are targeted to audiences from grade 6 through post-high-school years. The subject matter is relevant to teenagers, with protagonists typically aged 13 through 21. Juvenile materials are classified based on the target audience grade level, with board books for pre-literacy development and picture books for children through grade 3. Juvenile fiction and non-fiction titles are intended for grades 3 through 6. Classification of the target audience is considered based on author and publisher intent, treatment by other library professionals, and the professional judgment of staff.

2.2.1 SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND FORMATS

Library of Things. The Library of Things collection includes items that are outside the traditional definition of library materials. Collection items include games, electronic equipment, home repair tools, learning tools and equipment, arts and crafts equipment, kitchen tools, and more. The selection of Library of Things items is based on an identified need in the community—enabling access by sharing resources that are often used intermittently or to provide an entry point to build new skills and experiences.

Reference. The reference collection provides a source of general and specialized information to guide research for personal interest and enrichment. The print reference collection at the Bay St. Louis and Kiln branches have historically supported reference staff and included more research-focused resources, including several existing multi-volume sets on a variety of topics. With the wealth of information available online and through local and state databases, HCLS complements our print reference resources with online resources, intending to transition to a smaller, more general use print reference collection. This collection will maintain a current general encyclopedia set, unabridged and specialty dictionaries, quality print atlases, and handbooks on topics of general interest, including law, medicine, and other areas identified through usage studies and surveys.

Mississippi-Louisiana Special Collection. The Mississippi-Louisiana collection is housed at all five branches, focusing on local history, genealogy, literature, culture, and ecology. This collection aims to highlight the unique perspectives and experiences of the region and to preserve items of local interest for research in local and family history. Selections are to be made for fiction and nonfiction books, including biographies and autobiographies about Mississippians; subjects that include Hancock County, the Gulf Coast Region, Greater New Orleans, the State of Mississippi and, to a lesser extent, coastal Louisiana; and various literary and fiction genres by Mississippi authors that would not be better placed in popular fiction. Historically valuable periodicals, maps, and other media may be considered. Fragile, out-of-print, and difficult to replace items will be restricted to in-house use. HCLS digitized a collection of historical Sea Coast Echo microfilm reels dating from 1892, which are available online in a searchable platform. The Mississippi-Louisiana collection will be weeded according to policies and practice, with special attention to the ongoing value local history and culture provide to users.

Periodicals. Periodical subscriptions are maintained for major and local newspapers, news magazines, and magazines on special topics of general interest to the community. Physical copies of magazines and newspapers are not circulated and are in-house use only. Back issues are maintained for one year. Electronic access to newspapers and emagazines are made based on availability, demand, and available resources.

Multimedia Kits/Educational Toys and Games. Multimedia kits with audio CDs, learning toys, games, and puppets accompanying books have been popular additions since FY2016. Kits are

available for checkout through a partnership with Excel by 5, a local organization focusing on early childhood development and community resources.

Web Archive. Traditional library functions of acquiring, cataloging, preserving, and serving collection materials of cultural and historical importance extends to digital materials, including web sites. The Library uses web archiving to acquire and make permanently accessible born digital works that are playing an increasingly important role in the intellectual, governmental, commercial, and creative life of the residents of Hancock County. These items include but are not limited to websites, social media, online audio video streaming, blogs, online media publications, and static documents available online such as PDFs and JPGs. Web archiving preserves as much of the web-based user experience as technologically possible to provide future users accurate snapshots of what organizations and individuals presented on the archived sites as particular moments in time.

Databases. HCLS provides access to MAGNOLIA, paid for by the Mississippi Legislature and the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the Mississippi Library Commission. The Library subscribes to several local databases to support the interests and needs of Hancock County residents. These resources are regularly evaluated for usage.

Video Games. Video games have become an integral part of modern culture and, much like film and books, can instruct and inspire just as much as entertain. To engage young minds in the library, create a sense of community, and provide current resources to meet recreational and learning needs, HCLS provides video game systems for usage at our branches. The collection of electronic video game titles and video gaming systems are available for in-house play only.

2.3 SELECTION

The following materials selection statement is intended to guide librarians and inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. The Library supports an individual's freedom to access ideas and information representing all points of view. The library neither encourages nor discourages any viewpoint, and the selection of materials does not imply endorsement. The library holds that the ultimate choice of reading, listening, and viewing materials is an individual and private matter, and the library's goal is to provide free and open access to all types of materials.

Materials are generally purchased through vendors with which the Library has established relationships for purchasing and processing of materials. These vendor relationships help library staff work efficiently and effectively to manage funds and provide timely service. Alternative vendors will be considered to provide materials otherwise unavailable from our primary sources. Vendor contracts and agreements are reviewed periodically for fiscal responsibility and quality of services provided.

2.3.1 SELECTION CRITERIA

Selectors should work systematically to ensure balanced coverage of different subjects, viewpoints, genres, and media. Sections should be made based on demand, while also ensuring the availability of literary classics and educational resources. Budget and space limitations require a focus on materials that appeal to a broad range of users, rather than academic and highly technical works that do not meet the general public's needs.

The following criteria are used to determine whether an item should be added to the collection. An item does not have to meet all criteria to be selected:

- Authority and reputation of the creator(s)
- The attention of critical reviewers, media, etc.
- Award-winning, bestselling, or classic
- Inclusion in subject indexes and bibliographies
- Quality of the writing, acting, production, sound, etc.
- Lasting literary, artistic, historic, or social value
- Accuracy and currency of the content
- Current and anticipated needs of the community
- Suitability of the format for library use
- Popular demand or demonstrated community need
- Price and availability of funds
- Local or regional significance
- Wider cultural significance or relevance to current events
- The necessity for breadth, depth, and variety in the collection
- Availability of space to store collections
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection

When making selections, consideration should be given to the durability, suitability, ease of use, and accessibility of the materials. The following material and format guidelines are provided in selecting items:

- Books
 - Hardcover (preferred) or trade paperback
 - Standard sizes; only select odd sizes when merited by content
 - No mass-market paperbacks
 - No exposed spiral bindings
 - Avoid fold-outs and removable items
- Ebooks
 - File formats and lending models are subject to the availability from publishers and the vendor platform
 - Where available, One Copy/One User is preferred for classics, bestsellers, and award winners to expand the available collection
 - The length of Metered Access copies and the number of duplicate copies should be informed by usage, popular demand, and hold times

- Audio
 - Compact Discs (CDs) are the current standard physical media technology for players
 - Unabridged edition (preferred)
- Video
 - Digital Video Discs (DVDs) preferred; only purchase Blu-Ray discs if both formats are included
 - Theatrical edition (preferred)
- Library of Things
 - Patrons can use item without extensive, specialized training
 - Things can be stored or moved without damage
 - Carrying cases are available for the item or can easily be contained in original packaging or kit bags
 - Library staff can maintain, repair, and create instructions for use (consistent brands/models)

2.3.2 STANDING ORDERS

HCLS subscribes to several standing order lists which provide automatic acquisition of new titles by the most popular authors. Standing orders will be regularly reviewed based on circulation and the continued popularity of authors and subjects.

2.3.3 REQUEST FOR PURCHASE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Suggestions from patrons of materials to purchase are welcomed. Decisions on whether to acquire items are governed by the guidelines of the Collection Development Policy. Patrons may fill out the Request an Item form on the website or at the library to request physical items. Ebooks and audiobooks may be requested through the OverDrive platform when logged into a patron account by clicking Recommend for a search result item not in our collection. If the item is approved for purchase, the patron will be placed on hold for the material and notified when it is ready for checkout.

Inter-Library Loans. HCLS participates in the Mississippi Library Commission's Beehive Resource Sharing for interlibrary loans. Funding for postage is provided through the Mississippi Library Commission's Resource Sharing Transport Cooperative Program. Through these programs, patrons can request books from libraries across the state and the nation at no charge. Interlibrary loan requests can be entered online as part of the catalog request feature or requested from branch staff. Requests are fulfilled by designated staff based on the policies and procedures of the program.

2.4 WEB ARCHIVES COLLECTION PLAN

The purpose of the HCLS Web Archive is to capture, manage, preserve, and provide access to web materials that illuminate the experiences and history of local entities, the development of spontaneous local events, prominent residents, culture and society, and institutions of Hancock County and the Gulf Coast region. This policy will function as a written guideline for the continuing acquisition and capture of web materials that will inform researchers, community members and library patrons about the activities of Hancock County and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. For items to be added, they must provide a historically relevant picture of the cultural, economic, political, and social life of Hancock County and the surrounding area. This guide will aid in defining the scope and nature of this collection for patrons and other repositories, as well as our public service staff at the Hancock County Library System.

2.4.1 ACCESS

The HCLS Web Archives is available through the web archiving service, Archive-it.org, which incorporates a version of open source crawling software. Archive-it.org is an affiliate of the nonprofit organization Internet Archive. Depending on collection guidelines and the nature of individual websites, websites may be recaptured at regularly scheduled intervals, such as semi-annually or quarterly. The HCLS Collection can be located at <https://archive-it.org/home/hancockcountylibrariesms>.

2.4.2 SCOPE

The HCLS Web Archive will contain content relating to the history, culture, community development, community groups, and current events of Hancock County and the surrounding area. Collections will expand existing HCLS collections, including the Mississippi-Louisiana special collection, digitized *Sea Coast Echo* historic microfilm, and partnerships identified through Strategic Planning and community coordination. Designated project staff will actively seek out web content from the community and archive websites identified through the web archiving advisory group, formal and informal community feedback, and ongoing assessment. Content will include residential life, economic activities, government activities, cultural and social events, spontaneous/current events, educational institutions, local art, local community groups and organizations, and minorities and marginalized persons or groups. Delivery platforms will include general websites, digital newspapers/journals, video, social media, blogs, and embedded files, such as PDFs.

2.4.3 TARGETED USERS

The unique web materials of the HCLS Web Archive are made available to all people who have access to the internet regardless of location. Users of the collection include those interested in the people, places, business and organizations, and events of Hancock County and the Gulf Coast region. Other

users include library staff, students and educators, historians, journalists, and other interested persons.

2.4.4 SELECTION CRITERIA

When appraising if an item is appropriate to add to the collection, an assessment of whether the value of an item is proportionate to the time it will take to process and preserve the documents and its relevance to the collection will be considered. Web content selected have either evidentiary value (documentation of the functioning of an organization or individual) or research value and should maintain a complete and accurate representation of the original content to the extent possible. Web content that is unique or extremely rare will be considered for inclusion even if it is out of the scope of the collection. The following guidelines apply to all web content to be included in the HCLS Web Archive:

- Web content describing the people, places, events, organizations and/or objects related to Hancock County and the Gulf Coast region.
- Websites that complement and/or fill in gaps of existing collections and resources or relationship to a wider project, program, or initiative at HCLS.
- Web content that will not duplicate information that can be found in other web archiving collections.
- The Web Archive should reflect and be inclusive of the entire population of Hancock County and the Gulf Coast region, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, gender or sexual orientation, political affiliation, and age of the creator(s). The extent to which web content documents an underrepresented population will be considered.

2.4.5 NOMINATING CONTENT

Web archiving URLs (seeds) may be submitted via the Web Archiving Nomination Form available on the HCLS website. This form is for nomination purposes only and does not guarantee the web content will be included in the Web Archive. Seed nominations should be appraised by designated staff using the Selection Criteria outlined above.

2.4.6 WEB ARCHIVING PROCESS

Websites selected for inclusion are harvested using the Archive-It service from the Internet Archive. Depending on collection guidelines and the nature of individual websites, websites may be recaptured at scheduled intervals, such as annually, semi-annually, or quarterly.

All seeds must first be test crawled before approving and scheduling further production crawls. Test crawls will allow archivists to compare the functionality and look of the archived site to the live site. Once test crawls are saved, the archivist will determine the capture frequency. For seeds being crawled more than once, it will be re-appraised regularly for any status changes—such as domain

change, removal from the live web, or changes to update frequency. Such changes should be evaluated for continued capture and active status.

Not all material which is captured must be retained indefinitely. Materials captured by HCLS are subject to the Library's review, retention, weeding, and deaccession policies. Captured content may be removed from the collection as material becomes unavailable due to technical difficulties, content is deemed inaccurate, content is determined to be in violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights, or for other reasons determined to be appropriate by HCLS Library administrators. Those materials which are retained for longer term access will be preserved by Internet Archive and HCLS through a program of technical, organizational, and financial commitment and planning.

2.4.7 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Archived websites will remain freely available to the public, where website-level descriptive metadata is added to allow browsing and full-text search. It is generally accepted that the creation of Web Archives falls within the boundaries of fair use. HCLS recognizes the right to collect publicly accessible web content and make them available for research purposes under the fair use exception of Title 17 of the United States Code, section 107. The Library will, to the best of its ability, contact site owners to inform of impending crawls. Creators may request the removal of crawled web content from publicly accessible areas and HCLS will work with creators who do not wish to have their web content archived to permanently delete any crawls that have already been completed.

2.5 DONATIONS & GIFTS

The Library accepts donations on behalf of the Library Foundation of Hancock County. Acceptance and disposition of all donations will be determined by the Executive Director or designated staff. Donations become the property of the Library and may be added to the library collection, placed in a library book sale, or donated to another community organization. The Library has the right to discard any items received that are in poor physical condition. Materials that no longer meet the stated objectives of the library will be systematically withdrawn according to accepted professional practices. Donated materials will not automatically be replaced if worn-out, damaged, or lost.

The Library accepts gifts of books, visual art, or other library materials in honor or memory of individuals. Donors should contact the Executive Director for guidelines. Gifts will be withdrawn from the collection in line with collection development guidelines established by policy.

2.6 COLLECTION EVALUATION

Evaluation and assessment are vital to maintaining an updated and relevant collection. HCLS follows the Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding method to manage and maintain its

collections. Evaluation should be ongoing to measure progress, and as an assessment of the library's continuing realization of its mission. Assessment can identify strengths and weaknesses of the collection, including scope and depth, and provide the library with data needed for other aspects of collection management, including acquisition, deselection, and budgetary allocations. A thorough evaluation of the collection should be done annually or semi-annually based on identified needs. Collection categories should be evaluated on the same schedule as they are weeded. Circulation statistics, holds ratios and wait times, interlibrary loan data, patron requests, and related sources of information, will enable the library to prioritize popular subjects and materials among the branches and online, and to identify needs for additional development.

2.6.1 DESELECTION

The Library strives to meet the needs of its patrons as efficiently as possible with a collection that is current, easy to use, and fits the available space. Deselection, or weeding, is the process of removing items from the collection to ensure it remains up to date, accurate, and useful, and that it meets the needs and interests of the community served. Items with low demand, excessive wear, inaccurate or outdated information, or materials that no longer meet the needs of the public will be withdrawn from the collection. Items withdrawn from the collection will be sold in the Library's standing book sale, used in library programs or outreach, donated within the community, or discarded at the discretion of library staff.

Responsibility For Weeding. Designated Library staff have the responsibility for ensuring that weeding is performed regularly with a systemwide focus. Branch staff will assist in completing weeding projects under the coordination of the librarian responsible for collection development based on review and evaluation and in line with collection development policy. Identification of individual items during circulation procedures that are in non-working condition (DVDs and CDs) or have extreme wear (torn or damaged pages, stains, damaged spine, etc.) will be removed from the collection by circulation staff, with notification to the branch manager, in line with standard operating procedures. Materials may be repaired based on feasibility using appropriate and available methods. The decision to replace withdrawn items is at the discretion of the designated staff responsible for selecting new materials.

2.7 INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

HCLS upholds the principles of intellectual freedom outlined in the American Library Association's Code of Ethics, Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read Statement. Every member of our community has the right to access information, and while not every item in the library's collection will appeal to everyone, the library provides a varied, balanced collection to meet the needs of our diverse community. We believe that no one should be denied access to information because they cannot afford the cost of the materials or be denied access to the internet or any other type of information available for personal reading, viewing, or listening.

The Library provides a wide variety of perspectives and opinions on all subjects, without preference to any perspective.

2.7.1 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Library will be governed by the Collection Development Policy and its selection criteria in any decision regarding the removal of items from the collection. Patrons who object to the inclusion or placement of any item in the collection may request such items be reconsidered for appropriateness within the library collection. Library staff will provide information about the library's selection criteria and the appropriate form to identify the challenged material and provide reasons for requesting an item be removed or replaced. Challenged materials will remain in the collection during the review process.

The completed form will be reviewed by the Executive Director or designated staff to determine whether it meets the guidelines as outlined in the Library's Collection Development Policy. Several options are available when deciding the disposition of materials, including retention of the material, re-assignment to a different collection category, or removal if the materials do not conform to the standards laid out in this policy. Within ten working days of the submission of the form, the Executive Director will advise the patron of their decision regarding the materials or that the matter will be brought to the attention of the Board.

If the patron is unsatisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, they may request a formal hearing from the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled per the policies and procedures of HCLS. Based on this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or overturn the decision. All challenges, reviews, and recommendations should be kept in writing and copies should be provided to the Board of Trustees.

2.8 REVISION OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This policy should be reviewed by the Board of Trustees and updated, if needed, every three years, according to Library Accreditation standards for the state of Mississippi.

2.9 REPORTING

Library Support Services will provide regular reports to the Board of Trustees regarding the number of items added and removed from the collection, the total collection size, collection development projects, and grants received.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees February 20, 2014;
Last Revised July 18, 2023*

3 PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Hancock County Library System utilizes a variety of communication channels to promote the mission and goals of the Library and to increase public awareness of resources and services through programs, displays, bibliographies of resources, social media, and publicity.

3.1 PUBLIC RELATIONS, MARKETING, AND OUTREACH

The public relations goals of Hancock County Library System are:

- To promote awareness and understanding of the Library's goals and services among funding authorities, civic leaders, and the general public;
- To promote active participation in the varied services offered by the Library to the diverse residents of Hancock County; and
- To further the Library's Mission and Strategic Plan.

The Executive Director will establish a marketing and outreach plan to promote and raise awareness of Library programs and services. The Executive Director, Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator, and designated outreach staff are expected to participate in community activities as part of its mission to promote the Library and its services. Outreach programs are defined as events, presentations, meetings, and community activities designed and/or sponsored by Library staff members and representatives of approved cooperating agencies at locations outside of Library facilities. Approved cooperating agencies include governmental, civic, non-profit, and cultural organizations with needs specifically met by the Library's outreach programs.

Promotional and marketing materials and messaging to be published online, in print, on the radio or television, or in any public-facing communications channel will be approved by the PR/Marketing Coordinator, under direction from the Executive Director and in line with Library policies and the Strategic Plan.

3.2 EMAIL & TEXT MESSAGING

The Library uses registered email addresses, and phone numbers where text services are available, to provide patrons with transaction notifications, service announcements, and promotional messages for library services and events.

Email messaging allows the Library to provide information to the community about library services and tailor them to our patrons' needs and interests. Patrons may sign-up for email messaging on the library website. Patrons may ensure delivery of emails by adding staff@hancockcls.org and hcls@hancock.lib.ms.us to their email contact list to ensure emails are delivered to their inbox and not a spam folder.

Email service announcements and promotional messaging are sent via a customer contact platform managed by Library staff. Patrons signing up for Library services, including library cards, event registration, and other library activities, will be included in promotional email

messaging. Patrons may update their email preferences or unsubscribe from emails at any time by selecting the link at the bottom of any email. Patrons who unsubscribe from email messaging will still receive automated transaction notifications via email or text message, such as library card expiration, overdue items, and checkout receipts. Patrons can update their automated circulation notification preferences by logging into their library card account.

3.3 DIGITAL BILLBOARD SIGNAGE

Hancock County Library System maintains a digital billboard at the Kiln Public Library located at 17065 Highway 603, Kiln, MS 39556. The primary purpose of the Library's digital signage is to promote library programming, events, resources, services, and announcements. In addition, digital messaging may be used for community announcements, to promote community events, or to advertise certain meetings and events occurring in the library, space permitting. In such cases, the Library's direct participation and/or sponsorship is required to be eligible for inclusion in digital sign messaging. The Library may elect to sponsor regular meetings or ongoing events that meet Strategic Plan goals and in accordance with the library's policies, and messages promoting such events may be displayed at the discretion of the Executive Director for a limited time, space permitting.

Digital messaging shall not promote political campaigns, private businesses or advertise commercial products or services.

The Executive Director, PR/Marketing Coordinator, and designated Library staff are responsible for the content and design of information and may include or remove messages as they see fit to meet the needs of the Library. The IT Manager and designated staff shall collaborate to manage the technical and procedural elements of digital signage scheduling and best practices.

3.4 PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Hancock County Library System may take photos, videos, and audio recordings during Library events and activities to use in its promotional and marketing materials, on its website, and on social media platforms. The Library reserves the right to document its services and the public's use of the Library buildings and grounds. These photographs, videos, and audio recordings may be copied, displayed, and published. Any individual that does not wish the Library to use a photograph or video of them or their child should inform Library staff prior to such photographs or videos being taken. To protect the privacy of individuals, no image will be used or identified with full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the individual, parent or guardian.

3.4.1 THIRD PARTY PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Permission is not required for non-commercial filming and photography in public areas of Library buildings and grounds. No commercial or media photography or filming may occur at Library buildings, grounds, or events without prior written permission and approval of the Executive Director. Use of specialized equipment for non-commercial or commercial photography or

filming, such as tripods or lights, requires advance permission from the Executive Director or designated staff.

Photography and filming must not interfere with Library operations, interfere with the utilization of Library services and resources, or violate Library policies. Non-public areas where Library users have an expectation of privacy include restrooms, private study or meeting spaces, offices, break rooms, and staff work areas, and photography and filming are prohibited in these spaces. Information that constitutes a Library record with personally identifiable information is confidential and may not be photographed or filmed. Minors may not be photographed or filmed while in Library buildings or grounds without the explicit, written permission of their parent or guardian. Persons taking photographs and videos are solely responsible for obtaining all necessary consent, releases, and permissions required by law from persons who can be identified in any photograph or video.

3.5 SOCIAL PLATFORMS

Hancock County Library System maintains an online presence on various social media and engagement platforms to facilitate the sharing of information about library-related subjects and issues. Social platforms include such formats as social network pages, blogs, video-sharing sites, websites, and community reviews and ratings platforms. Such tools are provided for educational, cultural, civic, and recreational purposes. Social media accounts are used:

- To promote Library programs, services, and collections;
- To improve Library programs, services, and resources based on patron feedback;
- To provide information to the community;
- To enhance community engagement and outreach; and
- To reach new and inactive patron groups.

Social platform tools provide a limited public forum to facilitate the sharing of ideas, opinions, and information, and are intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where Library users will find useful and entertaining information and can interact with Library staff and other library users. Public posts and comments made by third parties do not necessarily reflect the position of HCLS or staff. Comments are regularly monitored and moderated by Library staff and HCLS reserves the right to remove comments that are unlawful, off-topic, or violate Library policies. When commenting or posting on HCLS social platforms:

- Do not post personally identifying information
- Posts containing the following are against Library policies and will be deleted:
 - Hateful and harassing speech, obscenity, personal disparagement and defamation
 - Threatening language
 - Private or personally identifying information published without consent
 - Copyright violations
 - Commercial advertisements and spam posts
- Posting on HCLS social platforms constitutes an agreement to these rules and any terms of service set by the platform

Posts and comments removed shall be archived. Repeated violations may result in an individual or group being blocked from commenting, posting, or otherwise interacting on the Library's social platform(s).

The Library will periodically evaluate its online presence and social media accounts, which may be discontinued at any time.

3.6 LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

The Executive Director is responsible for establishing programming goals to further the Mission and Strategic Plan. A "program" is a planned interaction between the Library staff and the program participants for the purpose of promoting Library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, entertaining, enrichment, or cultural experience. The sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content or views expressed by presenters or participants.

Library-sponsored programs are free and open to the public. HCLS provides a variety of age-appropriate programming. Program attendance may be limited based on age for programs intended for children or young adults. A parent or caregiver may attend any Library program with their child and the Library may require an adult or responsible caregiver to attend programs for young children. When safety, cost or the success of the program requires attendance limits to be established, attendance will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration for programs may be requested or required. Program attendees are expected to adhere to all Library policies while in attendance.

The Hancock County Library System develops Library programming reflecting the range of community interests to further the Mission and goals of the Strategic Plan. The following criteria are used to make decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Current demand and frequency of attendance
- Accuracy and timeliness of program content
- Cost, budget, and resource considerations, including staff time and availability
- Qualifications, reputation, and background of the speaker or presenter
- Quality of the presentation and treatment of content for its intended audience

Guest presenters wishing to volunteer their time to provide a Library-sponsored program should provide a summary of their proposed program, relevant supporting material, and information about themselves for the purposes of scheduling, promotion, and marketing. Proposed programs should fit HCLS's Mission, programming objectives, themes, and schedule. To encourage reading and learning, HCLS may grant permission for the sale of books, recordings, and related materials at cultural and informational programs. Permission to sell items must be arranged in advance and approved by the Executive Director. Guest presenters must agree to abide by Library policies.

The Library reserves the exclusive right to record any in-person or virtual programs sponsored by the Library. Library staff will inform participants when recording takes place. Video recordings are maintained for future use on Library video-sharing and social platform websites for public access.

The Library will regularly gather feedback from attendees at Library programs and the community to guide programming resources, planning, and goals.

3.7 LIBRARY DISPLAYS

Hancock County Library System staff curate Library displays to further the mission and goals of Library programming and services. Library displays are intended to:

- Call attention to a theme related to HCLS services, collections, or programs
- Highlight current issues, events, or other subjects of public interest
- Prominently display materials or highlight Library resources and services

Library displays may consist of infographics, book/resource lists, images, decorations, Library materials and resources, Library technologies and services, interactive elements, and third-party information resources. The Library curates and maintains displays of information and resources at its branch outlets and online in Library discovery and engagement platforms.

3.8 PUBLIC EXHIBITS

The Hancock County Library System may provide available space to display collections, artwork, quilts, and other personal possessions to share the artistry of our community. The Library has the discretion to approve or deny permission to display artwork and artifacts based on alignment with the collection development policy, programming activities and goals, and other Library policies. The owner will sign a release form acknowledging acceptance of this policy and the length of approved display. At the end of the display period, or at any time the Library notifies the owner, the owner shall coordinate a date and time for the removal of exhibited items.

The Library cannot guarantee the security of items on public exhibits. All items placed in any of our Library buildings are loaned with the understanding that the risk and responsibility for insuring them must remain with their owners. The Hancock County Library System will use ordinary care in displaying them, but we accept no responsibility for them in case of theft or damage while they are on display. Library employees may assist the exhibitor in locating, opening, and securing the exhibit space, but cannot help transport items to and from vehicles or place items in the exhibit cases.

The Library cannot support or host commercial endeavors. No price tags or stickers may be placed on any item left for display. Anyone exhibiting items may display their personal contact information in an appropriate place near the pieces displayed.

3.8.1 PATRON-INITIATED DISPLAYS AND BULLETIN BOARDS

HCLS makes space available to community groups or individuals for displays of information, notices, pamphlets, or flyers. These spaces are available as a service for the public and are not necessarily reflective of the Library's viewpoints. The Executive Director will establish rules and guidelines regarding the time, place, and manner of use of bulletin boards and other public display spaces.

The uses of public display spaces must conform to Library policies, particularly those supporting equity, diversity, and inclusivity. Materials shall not be excluded or removed based on the background or views of the messaging, nor of the affiliation of individuals or groups requesting use.

Bulletin board materials may be submitted for posting by nonprofit organizations for civic, educational, charitable, or cultural activities. Limited space generally allows for short-term notices publicizing local events or services to the community. The Branch Manager must approve all postings and may refuse postings that do not meet the Library's policies, Mission, or goals. Access and availability of display space is dependent upon demand and available space varies by branch.

Library staff will place and remove postings promptly. Each item posted must be dated and all items posted on public bulletin boards become the property of the Library to be removed and disposed at the conclusion of the event, after a 30-day period, or as space demands.

3.9 COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW AND CHALLENGE PROCESS

Hancock County Library System encourages communication and feedback from Library patrons. If a patron wishes to submit a request to review Library communications and messaging, including promotional materials, social platform content, Library programs, Library displays, or public exhibits, they may complete and submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form to the Executive Director. Requests for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Library Director in consultation with Library policies and planning documents. The Executive Director will advise the patron of their decision regarding the Library resource in question or that the matter will be brought to the attention of the Board. If the patron is unsatisfied with the decision, they may request a formal hearing from the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled per the policies and procedures of HCLS. Based on this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or overturn the decision. All challenges, reviews, and recommendations should be kept in writing and copies should be provided to the Board of Trustees.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees May 20, 2014,
Last Revised November 21, 2023*

4 PATRON SERVICES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 RULES OF CONDUCT

The Hancock County Library System Board of Trustees encourages all community members to take full advantage of the wide range of services offered at each library branch. However, certain behaviors can result in the loss of library privileges, especially when library staff becomes aware of illegal or disruptive behaviors on library premises. Library staff will deliver 1) a verbal warning, 2) a written warning, or 3) notification of consequences if the behavior continues, which may include temporary expulsion from library property, suspension of library privileges, and/or permanent loss of library privileges.

Library patrons must refrain from the following on Library property:

- Disruptive behavior, sound, language, or smells that inhibit others' use of the library and its services
- Riding bikes, rollerblades, skates, or skateboards
- Smoking inside a library building or within 25 feet of the library entrance doors; use of e-cigarettes/vape pens or smokeless tobacco in the library building
- Consuming alcoholic beverages (except at sanctioned library events)
- Accessing pornographic or sexually explicit materials
- Soliciting for money or selling items
- Sleeping on the premises
- Loitering—defined as remaining or wandering on library property without the use of library materials and services
- Animals are not allowed inside library facilities unless they are trained support/service animals or are part of library programming. Animals may not be left unattended outside on library premises.

Snacks and securely covered drinks are permitted in the library but may not be opened or consumed in computer areas or within three feet of library equipment. Patrons are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and disposing any leftover food and containers in trash bins. Spills must be reported to staff promptly. Unattended food or drinks may be removed and discarded at staff discretion.

All library staff members are authorized to contact local law enforcement officials if they believe that an individual's actions are a threat to public safety. Any violation of local, state, or federal laws on library property will be promptly reported to the appropriate local law enforcement officials.

4.1.1 APPEALS

The Hancock County Library System recognizes the right of any patron to appeal a decision made under the Rules of Conduct. All appeals requested by the patron should be made in the following manner, verbally or in writing:

1. An appeal should be made to the supervisor in charge, such as the Branch Manager.

2. If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, an appeal may be made to the Executive Director.
3. Patrons may appeal the suspension or ban of their library privileges to the Board of Trustees. The patron shall submit a written request to the Executive Director within ten days of the date of the letter that notified the patron of the suspension or ban. Failure to submit a written request within ten days of the date of the notification letter shall constitute a waiver of appeal and the decision shall be final. The Board will consider all timely appeals at its next regular meeting and determine whether the suspension or ban should be upheld or rescinded. The decision of the Board shall be final.

4.2 SAFE CHILD

Library staff cannot assume responsibility for children's safety and comfort when they are unattended. Responsibility for the welfare and the behavior of children using the library rests with the parent or guardian or an assigned chaperon. If library staff members have cause to notice unattended children aged ten (10) or under on library property, the children will be identified, and their parents will be contacted and asked to come and pick up their children or to immediately arrange for a responsible caregiver aged fourteen or over to accompany their children while visiting the library. If no parent or responsible caregiver can be contacted and/or arrives in a reasonable time, law enforcement will be called. If children aged ten (10) or under are left at the library repeatedly with no parent, guardian, or chaperone, a letter explaining the Library Board's position on this matter will be sent to their parents.

4.2.1 LEVELS OF SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Library personnel cannot and will not be responsible for children left unattended or leaving the library on their own. Parents and caregivers should arrange for the proper level of supervision and to ensure children have transportation arranged. Children vary in their level of maturity and ability to self-supervise their behavior. Parents and guardians are encouraged to provide the appropriate level supervision necessary. Any child that is unable to care for themselves, or whose behavior has been disruptive, may require the supervision of a responsible caregiver regardless of age. The following levels of supervision are required for all minor children:

Age of Minor Child		Level of Supervision
0-5 years old	Pre-school	Must always be within sight of parent or designated adult caregiver
6-10 years old	Elementary	Must be supervised by an adult or designated caregiver 14 years or older

11-13 years old	Middle school	May be left unattended, providing they are mature enough to follow library rules of conduct; Parent/guardian is responsible for their child’s behavior, and disruptions may result in required supervision by a designated caregiver
14-17 years old	High school	May be left unattended at the library for an unlimited period, provided they are mature enough to follow library rules of conduct

4.2.2 UNATTENDED CHILDREN AT CLOSING

When library staff observes unattended juveniles aged 15 and under on library premises fifteen (15) minutes before closing, the staff member will ask the juvenile if prior arrangements have been made with a parent or caregiver. If the responsible caregiver has not arrived at closing, local law enforcement will be called, and they will be responsible for contacting parents and resolving the issue of where the child is to be taken. Under no circumstances will staff transport children in their cars or wait with the child past fifteen (15) minutes after closing. No child should ever be left outside alone after the library closes.

4.3 BORROWING & LENDING

4.3.1 LIBRARY CARD ACCOUNTS

The Hancock County Library System creates and maintains patron accounts to facilitate the provision of services and resource access. The Executive Director is responsible for establishing procedures in line with adopted policies. Library cards are freely available for any person who lives or works in Hancock County. Communities immediately adjacent to Hancock County’s borders are included as a courtesy. Individuals living or working outside Hancock County and visitors may register for an annual guest card for a fee.

To establish a library card account, patrons must:

- Apply for an account with necessary identification and documentation of residence
- Register only one account per person
- Minors under age 18 must have the signed approval of parents or guardians and the responsible party must have an active library account

Library card accounts may be accessed and updated by patrons through the catalog or by contacting library staff. To keep library accounts in good standing, patrons should:

- Provide the necessary contact information and keep it updated
- Not allow others to access or use your library card
- Report lost or stolen cards for a replacement and to prevent unauthorized use
- Renew accounts every three years; expired accounts may be renewed by contacting staff and confirming contact information
- Pay fines and service fees; outstanding fines/fees over a certain threshold will prevent signing into some online resources and suspend borrowing privileges

- Return all borrowed materials; lost item fines will be charged for unreturned items

4.3.1.1 *INSTITUTIONAL BORROWERS*

Non-profit organizations and service agencies may be granted institutional access accounts. The purpose of institutional accounts is to increase access to library materials for individuals under the care of a Hancock County institution or provide organizations special access to technologies that meet community needs. Such organizations may include day care facilities, pre-school and after school organizations, nursing and care homes, child advocacy organizations, government service agencies, and similar service-providing non-profits. The Executive Director will review the needs of organizations and approve expanded lending limits on a case-by-case basis, to best serve the community of Hancock County.

To qualify for an institutional account, applying organizations must:

- Be located in Hancock County, Mississippi.
- Demonstrate that the account will be used for the benefit and enrichment of individuals who are receiving services through the organization. Items for personal use must be checked out by an existing account holder on a personal account.
- Be authorized by the organization's director or financial administrator and by the Executive Director of HCLS.
- Institutional account may have up to 3 authorized users who will each be issued an associated library card. Loss of associated library card must be reported immediately to prevent unauthorized use. Authorized users must present identification when using associated library card.
- Keep the account updated annually and communicate changes to authorized persons to Library staff.
- Be responsible for all materials checked out under the account. This includes persons served by the organization with linked accounts. If materials are lost, stolen, or damaged, the organization agrees to accept financial responsibility for replacement.

4.3.1.2 *RESTRICTED-ACCESS ITEMS*

Institutional accounts are given access to restricted-access Library of Things items. HCLS provides off-site access to restricted-access items based on Strategic Plan goals, the Collection Development Policy, and demonstrated community need and interest. Such restricted-access items include new or costly technologies that meet community needs. Access is limited to institutional borrowers because of the cost, specialized utility, and high maintenance needs of these Things. Because of the additional liability assumed by institutional account holders, the Director or CEO of the borrowing institutions must authorize the check-out of restricted-access items.

Authorized institutional borrower staff or volunteers may be required to attend regular training sessions to become certified to operate certain items. HCLS staff will hold training sessions multiple times throughout the year. Institutional borrowers will only be able to check-out restricted-access items if the operating user has attended training within the previous year. Organizations with institutional accounts that have not fulfilled training may request HCLS outreach staff participation at their event but will not qualify to check-out and operate the device independently.

Non-profit organizations and companies that have been approved for institutional accounts and certified authorized users who will be operating borrowed devices may not charge attendees of their event or use the device in a for-profit activity.

4.3.2 LENDING MODEL

Patrons with a library card account in good standing may check out circulating materials upon presentation of a library card. Staff may, as a courtesy, use a form of photo identification to access the account for borrowing. Patrons unable to present a library card may use alternate identification twice before they are required to replace the assumed-lost card, free of charge.

4.3.2.1 LENDING LIMITS

Patrons may borrow a total of 25 books plus five (5) DVDs and five (5) audiobooks (CDs or Tonies).

Special restrictions apply to the following materials:

- Three (3) interlibrary loan items by teens (12-17) and adults (18+)
- Two (2) multimedia kits
- One (1) gaming controller/headset
- One (1) Thing (see Lending Summary section for age restrictions)

Periodicals, magazines, and reference books may be used in the library only.

4.3.2.2 LENDING PERIODS

Gaming systems, charging cables, and select Library of Things items that are limited to in-house use must be checked out and returned the same day.

Newly released video materials (DVDs) have a limited checkout period of seven (7) days.

Library of Things items are available for seven (7) days unless otherwise specified.

All other library materials available for circulation may be borrowed for fourteen (14) day periods.

Patrons may receive a paper or electronic receipt for check-out transactions that includes a due date for all loaned materials. Patrons with an email address or text-message-enabled phone number on their library card account will receive notices before the due date.

4.3.2.3 RENEWALS

All library materials, except for Things, interlibrary loans, and multi-media kits, will be automatically renewed up to two (2) times unless another patron has placed a reserve on the item. Automatic renewals provide an additional seven (7) day period for new DVDs and an

additional fourteen (14) day period for other items. Patrons may set up notifications via email or text message, or log into their account online or via the mobile app to see how many remaining renewals are left, or if the item has been reserved and must be returned.

Multi-media & learning kits may be automatically renewed for one additional fourteen (14) day lending period if another patron has not reserved the item.

Library of Things items may be automatically renewed for one additional seven (7) day lending period if another patron has not reserved the item and unless otherwise specified in the policy.

Interlibrary loans are placed with lending libraries throughout Mississippi and other states, and lending periods are set by these lending libraries. Interlibrary loans may not be renewed and must be returned to prevent late charges and replacement costs from being levied by the lending library.

4.3.3 LIBRARY OF THINGS

The Library maintains a variety of Things that vary in cost and intended age. Because of the variety of Things available to check out, some of which are fragile, expensive, and/or designed for use by individuals of a certain maturity level, circulation policies are based on the type of Thing to be checked out. The Library will establish circulation procedures and utilize security measures necessary to protect and maintain items in good condition and ensure they are available for use by the community.

Patrons checking out Things must have an active library card in good standing and meet any restrictions or special considerations that apply. All library patrons are required to check out and return Things to a staff member at the service desk. Things returned in the Book Drop or left unattended in the library will incur a \$20 fine.

Library staff will inspect things before borrowing and again upon return. Things must be returned in their carrying cases with all parts intact, in the same condition in which it was checked out. The borrower (or their legal guardian) is solely responsible for the care and handling of a Thing. Things returned in a condition requiring staff to clean them will be assessed a \$5 fine. Failure to return the Thing and/or all of its parts in the condition in which they were checked out will result in a fine assessed based on the cost to repair or replace the Thing or its parts. The Library has sole discretion in making decisions regarding repair or replacement, and replacement costs may be assessed up to 14 days after check-in if difficult-to-detect damage is discovered through testing and inspection of the item.

A list of replacement costs of Things is maintained by the Library and is available upon request. Each thing will also be accompanied by an information card with usage instructions and replacement costs. A Library of Things Lending Agreement is available online and upon request. Patrons may be asked to sign a copy of the Agreement when checking out some items.

Due to the nature of the items contained in the Library of Things, these items will not be eligible for interlibrary loans to other libraries.

The Library reserves the right to temporarily remove Things from circulation for use for library purposes (workshops, demonstrations, or other programs), or to repair a damaged item.

The Library is not responsible for any injury, loss, or damage that may occur from the use of a Thing. It is the borrower’s responsibility to protect against loss and damage. By circulating a Thing, the borrower releases, indemnifies, and holds harmless the Hancock County Library System from any and all injury, loss and/or damage caused by its use and operation.

4.3.4 ELECTRONIC CIRCULATION & DIGITAL SERVICES

The Library provides access to a variety of digital services for library card account holders. Users may access electronic resources and platforms by using their library card account credentials to log into third-party platforms. Information and links to digital services are provided on the Library’s website. Limits and lending periods for electronic items are as follows for active accounts in good standing:

- The default lending period for ebooks, audiobooks, and magazines is 14 days; items may be renewed if no holds exist. Items are automatically returned at the end of the lending period.
- Patrons may borrow five (5) ebooks or audiobooks at a time and place five (5) holds. Magazine titles are unlimited and available simultaneously with no holds.
- Patrons are provided five (5) video play credits per month with Kanopy. Play credits count toward a film, a playlist series, or a single collection title, as set by Kanopy, within a 48- or 72-hour viewing period. Kanopy Kids provides unlimited plays. The Great Courses are limited to two (2) series per month.

4.3.5 MATERIALS LENDING SUMMARY

Item	Lending Period	Restrictions	Replacement Cost	Special Considerations
Audiobook / CDs and Tonies	14 days, 2 renewals		Varies (\$35)	
Binoculars (Adult)	7 days, 1 renewal	Teens (12-17) & Adults 18+	\$60	Teens (12-17) must have a parent/guardian signature
Binoculars (Youth)	7 days, 1 renewal		\$20	
Electronic Books (ebooks), magazines, and audiobooks	14 days		n/a	Access with Libby app, some content can be sent to Kindle app
Print Books	14 days, 2 renewals		Varies (\$15 paperback; \$30 hardcover)	
Charging Cables	3 hours, no renewal	In-house only	\$15	Present photo ID and sign out (library card not required); Must be returned before closing time
Hot Spots	7 days, 1 renewal	Adults 18+ One checkout per household	\$200	Must have active library account for at least 6 months prior; Present ID and sign form;

				Do not expose to extreme temperatures
Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Materials	14 days, no renewal	Teens (12-17) & Adults 18+	Minimum \$50	Items provided by other lending libraries may take one to two weeks or more to arrive
Metal Detectors	7 days, 1 renewal	Adults 18+	\$450	Must have active library account for at least 6 months prior; Present ID and sign form
Microscope (Adult)	7 days, 1 renewal	Teens (12-17) & Adults 18+	\$150	Must have active library account for at least 6 months prior; Present ID and sign form
Microscope (Youth)	7 days, 1 renewal		\$40	
Microscope Slide Kit	14 days, 1 renewal		Varies (\$20)	
Multi-media / Learning kit	14 days, 1 renewal		Varies (\$100)	
Nextron Boombox	7 days, 1 renewal		\$55	
Photo Booth, 360	48 hours, no renewal	Institutional Accounts only	\$7,000	Checks out with app-loaded phone, tablet, and wi-fi hotspot; Authorized users must attend yearly training to certify; Indoor-use only, requires special permission for outdoor use; Only certified, adult staff or volunteers may operate for the duration of event; Library staff will coordinate drop-off and pick-up of device. Complete the online form to set up event logo, music, and theme.
Sewing Machine	3 hours 1 renewal	In-House Only; Teens (12-17) & Adults 18+	\$80	Teens (12-17) must have a parent/guardian signature; Must be returned before closing time
Telescope	7 days, 1 renewal	Teens (12-17) & Adults 18+	\$275	Must have active library account for at least 6 months prior; Present ID and sign form
Tonie Box	7 days, 1 renewal		\$125	Present ID and sign form; Youth (under 18) must have a parent/guardian signature
Ukuleles	7 days, 1 renewal		\$35	
Videos / DVDs	14 days, 2 renewals		Varies (\$20)	
Videos / DVDs - NEW	7 days, 2 renewals		Varies (\$20)	New means acquired within 90 days

Video Game Controllers	Return same day before closing	In-house only	Varies	
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4.3.6 LATE FINES & LOST / DAMAGED MATERIALS

Hancock County Library System does not charge late fines for most materials to promote equitable access. To ensure all patrons have access to our collections, patrons are expected to return items when they are due, after the allowed renewals, and promptly when another patron has reserved an item.

Excepted from fine-free access are specialty items, including:

- Multimedia and learning kits
- Interlibrary loan materials
- Library of Things

For multi-media/learning kits and interlibrary loan materials, a late fine of one dollar (\$1) per day will be assessed up to a maximum of five dollars (\$5) per item.

For Library of Things items, a late fine of five dollars (\$5) per day will be charged up to a maximum of twenty dollars (\$20) per item.

Patrons who return items within three (3) days of them being overdue may have these fines waived. The library reserves the right to suspend borrowing privileges for specialty items for patrons who repeatedly make overdue returns.

Borrowed items not returned within the automatic renewal period (up to 14 days for Things, 21 days for new DVDs, and 42 days for all other materials, or the due date for multimedia and learning kits and interlibrary loan materials) will be considered lost, and the cost of replacement will be assessed as a fee to the library account holder. The lost item replacement fee is based on the cost in the catalog or the fee schedule of the average replacement cost.

In addition, interlibrary loan items not returned will be assessed a fifty-dollar (\$50) fine. Parents and guardians of minors are responsible for all fines and fees associated with child and teen accounts.

Lost and unreturned items may be returned at any time to any library branch to have the lost item replacement fee removed. No refunds will be given on paid lost item replacement fees if the item is later found; the patron may keep the item. The theft of library materials or failure to return them is a violation of state law and violators may be subject to criminal penalties.

4.3.6.1 WAIVING FINES

Branch managers may consider fines on a case-by-case basis and allow fines to be reduced, waived, or paid in portions to temporarily restore borrowing privileges for blocked accounts.

4.3.6.2 DAMAGED ITEMS

Defacing or intentionally damaging library materials is a violation of state law. Charges for items returned damaged will depend on the extent of the damage. The cost of replacement will be assessed for items damaged beyond further library use. Patrons will be assessed a fine for items that can be repaired or have only minor damage based on a fee schedule of supplies costs. Repeated mistreatment of library materials may result in a loss of borrowing privileges.

4.3.7 REFERRAL OF DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Library card accounts with \$100 or more in unresolved fines/fees will be referred to a collections agency to assist the Library in recovering long overdue materials to maintain the integrity of the Library's collection and ensure the availability of materials to library users. A \$10 administrative fee will be applied to patron accounts referred for debt collection. If "lost"/overdue items are returned after being referred to collections, the replacement cost will not be owed, however, the account holder will be responsible for all administrative expenses incurred for initiating the collection process.

The Library encourages the return of all overdue Library materials and the resolution of fines/fees. The Executive Director and Branch Managers have the discretion to establish a payment plan with the patron and to suspend debt collection activities with an outside agency if the patron is making an effort to settle their account and is communicating with Library staff.

4.3.8 READ DOWN FINES PROGRAM

The Hancock County Library System will offer children and teens age 18 and younger the ability to read instead of paying library fines that have accumulated on their library account. Children and teens can earn \$2.00 off their fines for every 15 minutes of reading while in the library. Staff at the service desk will verify reading time and waive the appropriate amount from the library account. The purpose of this program is to empower children to do something about fines owed to the library even if they do not personally have the financial means to pay them.

4.4 INTERNET & TECHNOLOGY USE

The Hancock County Library System provides a range of computer technology, internet connectivity, and digital information resources. The Library will continue to provide the community with access to new technologies and encourage experimentation, creation, and education. The Library reserves the right to deny access to equipment if users do not abide by HCLS policies.

The Library will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law or necessary for the proper operation of the library.

Patrons utilizing the Library's technology, information, and connectivity resources, whether in the Library or at a remote location, agree to:

- Abide by all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

- Not use resources in a manner that is unsafe, harmful, or poses an immediate threat to the well-being of others.
- Not use equipment and materials in a manner that causes property damage.
- Not violate the copyright or intellectual property rights of another.
- Not attempt any maintenance on computers or equipment.

4.4.1 PUBLIC COMPUTERS & WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

The Library is not responsible for damage to storage media, loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from the use of public computers or wireless internet access. Access to public computers requires an active library card in good standing or a guest pass. The signature of a parent or guardian on a minor's library card application indicates permission to use Library computers unless otherwise informed by the parent or guardian. Internet resources are provided equally to all users, regardless of age.

The use of public computers and wireless internet access is not private. Any information transmitted could be intercepted when using unsecured public networks. Wireless internet users are encouraged to install virus protection on their devices. The Library is not responsible for compromised information or for damage that results from a security breach.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires all internet access in a public library to be filtered. Filters may sometimes inadvertently block legitimate information or information of educational value, or they may allow access to illegal, obscene, or explicit content. Any adult may request a filter be disabled. Staff may also override the filter for a minor in the event the filter wrongly blocked access to a credible site. Patrons may file a complaint about the filtering software on library computers within thirty (30) days to the Executive Director.

Library staff may terminate a session and/or suspend library privileges without notice if computer use or patron conduct policies are violated. Users must report any computer or equipment problems to staff. The Library may limit access or session duration to accommodate users waiting for access. Public computers may be designated and assigned to the exclusive use of children seventeen (17) and under. Computers equipped with a scanner or special software are reserved for patrons utilizing those functions.

Library computers revert to a fresh state upon the end of a session to ensure the privacy of patrons accessing public computers. All personal data and changes are deleted. Staff is unable to recover data once a computer session ends.

Staff time for individual training and assistance is limited. Staff may provide general information for accessing computers and connecting to wireless internet. Patrons are encouraged to make an appointment for one-on-one assistance in advance if more than general assistance, if necessary. The Library cannot guarantee that a user's device will work with the Library's network or computer systems. The Library cannot provide troubleshooting assistance related to the user's devices or assist in making changes to the system settings.

Patrons are prohibited from:

- Viewing or displaying content that can be construed as obscene or "harmful to minors" in violation of state laws.

- Causing a threat or harm to the Library network or other networks.
- Behaving in a way that is intrusive, disruptive, harassing, or bullying or that creates an intimidating or hostile environment to staff or other patrons.
- Playing audio/video without headphones.

4.4.2 PRINT, COPY, SCAN, & FAX SERVICES

The Hancock County Library System provides a variety of self-service document services. Services requiring a fee for use will be posted, and fees are payable at payment kiosks or the Service Desk.

4.4.3 3D PRINTER & LASER ENGRAVER

The Library provides access to various maker equipment technologies, including 3D printing and laser engraving. The Library reserves the right to refuse any creation requests that violate policy, law, or rules of conduct. Only designated Library staff, volunteers, and certified library patrons will have hands-on access to maker equipment. Access may be revoked at any time by the Executive Director.

Priority on the use of maker technologies will be given to Hancock County residents. All HCLS cardholders in good standing who are age 14 or older may request access to equipment. New users will be required to complete training from Library staff and sign a release waiver. Patrons under the age of 14 may access the printer with a parent or guardian.

4.4.4 VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS

The Library will provide space for the usage of video game consoles and/or dedicated gaming PCs at all its branches, available to all ages. Patrons must follow all HCLS policies and instructions from staff; failure to do so will result in a loss of privileges. Gaming activities are covered under the Library's Rules of Conduct and will not be disruptive to library operations.

The Library will make game systems available to patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. Access to the Library's video game collection will only be available on the premises of HCLS branches. Reservations or checkout of video game equipment and titles for use outside the Library are not available. The Library reserves the right to limit gameplay. Failure to end gameplay, when requested, will result in a loss of video gaming privileges for a minimum of three (3) business days. All wireless or non-tethered equipment must be returned to the service desk and gaming systems shut down fifteen (15) minutes before Library closing time.

Patrons must use the equipment and games provided by the Library and may not bring outside equipment or games. Online games must be vetted by the library. Installing, removing, or altering games or software or attaching outside equipment to the video game system is not permitted. Direct access to consoles or library accounts is not permitted.

Patrons must use all equipment in the manner intended. Any malfunction of the video game system and gaming equipment should be immediately reported to Library staff. The library accepts that equipment wears out and breaks over time and will not hold customers responsible

for normal wear or malfunctions. The repair and/or replacement cost for equipment damaged by a patron's use (not including from normal use) will be the responsibility of the cardholder or the adult cardholder for damage caused by a young patron.

4.5 MEETING & STUDY ROOMS

Meeting rooms are intended to further the Library's mission, including but not limited to 1) facilitating the exchange of diverse information and ideas; 2) providing wholesome and entertaining educational activities for adults, teens, and children; and, 3) bringing high-quality cultural programming to residents of the community. The Executive Director is responsible for establishing and administering procedures to carry out this policy.

Library meeting rooms may be reserved by local non-profit groups and organizations for meetings, programs, seminars, and exhibits. Library programs and co-sponsored programs and events from groups or organizations affiliated with the Library are given priority. Library meeting rooms may not be used by individuals, businesses, or corporations for commercial or for-profit ventures. Individuals or small study groups may be permitted to use the meeting room for quiet study or private meetings, but community groups presenting programs and meetings open to the public will be given priority.

Library facilities are available on a non-discriminatory, equal access basis in compliance with state law. Use of Library facilities and meeting rooms by any group or organization signifies acceptance of the terms of this policy and the guidelines for room use. Permission to use Hancock County Library System facilities will be denied for purposes that would interfere with the proper functioning of the Library, disrupt the use of the Library by others, or violate state law. Permission to use the library's meeting rooms does not constitute library endorsement of any program presented or any viewpoints expressed by the Hancock County Library System. Advertisements or announcements implying such endorsement are not permitted.

The following non-library-sponsored activities are prohibited in HCLS meeting room spaces:

- Social gatherings such as showers, birthday parties, dances, etc.
- Political rallies or campaigns for specific partisan political issues or candidates.
- Direct healthcare services, including examinations, hands-on demonstrations, or treatments.
- Religious/church/worship services or ceremonies (though religious study groups are permitted).
- Other events considered by the Executive Director or Board of Trustees to be contrary to the purpose of this policy or mission of the Hancock County Library System.

HCLS does not assume liability for injuries to individuals or damages to personal property that occur because of actions of the sponsors or participants in activities in its meeting rooms.

Person(s) reserving meeting rooms will be held responsible for any expense the Library incurs due to the actions of a group or individual's use of meeting room space.

Parties reserving meeting room space must adhere to the following:

- Persons who attend events in the meeting rooms must abide by the HCLS Rules of Conduct and all Library policies.
- No admission may be charged.
- No products, services, merchandise, or memberships may be promoted, advertised, solicited, or sold in a meeting room, except those that benefit the Library and are sponsored by the Library Foundation of Hancock County.
- Attendance must not exceed the posted capacity of the meeting room.
- Use of meeting rooms shall conform to all local, state, and federal laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Programs and meetings published on the Library's event calendar must be open to the public

4.5.1 APPROVAL OF RESERVATIONS

Library managers or their designees will approve the use of the meeting rooms, based solely on the Library's meeting room policy. Any application that is denied may be referred by the applicant to the Executive Director, and, if necessary, it can be referred by the Executive Director to the Board of Trustees for a final decision. The Library reserves the right to deny further use of the meeting rooms to individuals, groups, or organizations who do not comply with this policy.

4.5.2 SCHEDULING RESERVATIONS

Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis and may be made at least 72 hours and no more than six months in advance. The Executive Director and designated staff may grant discretionary approval for reservations outside of these time frames. Requests for the use of library meeting rooms may be made in person or online. If available, meeting rooms may also be reserved for walk-in requests. The Library reserves the right to re-schedule a meeting room reservation to accommodate Library programming or ensure equitable access for public use. Notice of cancellation should be made as soon as possible and at least 24 hours in advance of the reservation. If parties reserving and using Library facilities fail to follow the guidelines the Library may deny future requests to reserve meeting and study rooms.

4.5.3 CARE AND USE OF FACILITIES

- Permission to use the rooms includes ordinary use of the furniture and fixtures.
- Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored or left in Library meeting rooms before or after use.
- Groups or organizations are responsible for the set-up and cleanup of the meeting room.

- Groups must leave rooms as they are found.
- All trash resulting from the serving of refreshments must be removed from the premises by the organization.
- Light refreshments may be served. Meal preparation is not allowed.
- The Library recommends technical instruction at least 2-3 days before the event if presenters do not have experience with our technology and equipment.

4.6 PROCTORING SERVICES

The Library will attempt to meet the needs of patrons who require test proctoring as the normal functions of the Library allow. Staff will conform to the testing institution's conditions for proctoring to the extent possible. The Library cannot provide direct in-room supervision of the student for the duration of the test, a secured location for test-taking, nor provide proctoring to groups of students. Patrons who must use a Library computer for an online test may do so. The library reserves the right to deny this service if the proctoring request is unreasonable in its demands or too burdensome to administer.

Tests may be received or returned through the mail, delivery services, by e-mail, or by fax. Pickup for tests returned to the institution using a delivery service must be scheduled by the student or institution. Any postage incurred by mailing tests to the student's institution will be paid by the student or the institution. It is the student's responsibility to follow up with the institution to ascertain that the test was received. The Library will not keep copies of test materials unless it is specifically requested by the institution.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees May 24, 2005,
Last Revised February 20, 2024*

5 VOLUNTEERS

The Hancock County Library System aims to provide quality service to the residents of Hancock County and recognizes the important role volunteers play in achieving that goal. Volunteers allow the library to expand and enhance the services it provides by supplementing, not replacing, the efforts of regular staff. Volunteers play an equally important role within the community, serving as advocates for the library.

A volunteer is any person over the age of 13 performing services on behalf of the library of his or her own free will without compensation or the expectation of compensation. Volunteers may serve as individuals or as part of a group. Volunteer service may be provided on a one-time basis, periodically during special projects or seasonally, or on a long-term scheduled basis. A mandatory condition imposed by a legal authority, court-ordered community service is not considered volunteerism and cannot be accommodated by the Hancock County Library System.

Conditions for volunteer service:

- A volunteer application form will be completed and reviewed by the library administration.
- Adult volunteers are over the age of 18 and are required to complete a background check.
- Youth Volunteers may serve individually or as part of a group. Some student volunteers are required to perform a prescribed amount of service as part of an academic or scholarship program. Supervisors will work with student volunteers to make sure their assignments meet established standards and can be completed within a set timeframe.
- Tasks performed by adult and youth volunteers will be mutually determined by volunteers, supervisors, and library administration based on the needs of the library.
- Volunteers may be restricted from performing certain activities that are deemed confidential or present a risk to the volunteer or the library.
- Volunteers must be able to interact and communicate respectfully with library staff and the public.
- Volunteers must abide by all HCLS policies, rules, and procedures.
- Volunteers should communicate effectively with their supervisors regarding schedules, assigned tasks, and service interests.
- Volunteers may request a letter of recommendation from their supervisor for academic or job purposes, to be provided at the supervisor's discretion.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees September 16, 2014;
Revised September 20, 2022*