



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LA County Library Offers Laptop & Hotspot Loans at Select Libraries

Printing Pickup Will Also Be Offered at All 46 Sidewalk Service Locations

LOS ANGELES COUNTY (September 1, 2020)— LA County Library is pleased to announce two new services developed to assist those without computers, internet, or printers at home—a Laptop & Hotspot Loan at select libraries, and Printing Pickup at all Sidewalk Service locations.

The Laptop & Hotspot Loan kit includes a Chromebook laptop and a wireless hotspot for internet connectivity. The program is currently being offered at 10 locations, as a pilot program. The Library hopes to add more locations as soon as additional devices are procured. Kits can be picked up as part of the Library's contactless Sidewalk Service.

Reserved for cardholders 18 and up, the kit can be borrowed for 3 weeks—just like a book—with the opportunity to renew up to 3 times if there are no holds. Like all materials borrowed via Sidewalk service, Laptop & Hotspot Loans will be quarantined for 96 hours after being returned, to ensure customer and staff safety.

While many libraries nationwide have offered hotspot loans and various tech checkouts, LA County Library is among the first in the Los Angeles area to offer a take-home kit that includes a laptop (Chromebook) along with the mobile hotspot. The hope is that, when paired, these devices will more fully enable those negatively impacted by the digital divide.

The libraries that will be piloting the Laptop & Hotspot program reside in communities that have an internet subscription rate of between 57% and 63%, meaning that roughly 40% of the population in these areas is without internet at home. Many of these areas have also seen some of the most substantial job loss during the time of COVID-19.

The Library is also adding a Printing Pickup service at all 46 locations currently offering Sidewalk Service. Up to 10 pages daily can be printed using the Library's wireless printing app (LACountyLibrary.org/print), and picked up like any other item.

“The digital divide has far-reaching consequences, especially during this unprecedented time,” said Library Director, Skye Patrick. “No connection to the internet means no way for the unemployed to find employment or participate in virtual interviews, no way for isolated older adults to receive telehealth or keep in touch with loved ones, no way for caregivers to access information for homeschooling or support their kids’ digital schooling needs. We see Laptop & Hotspot Loans and Printing Pickup as two ways the Library can help to bridge the digital divide for these communities.”

While Laptop & Hotspot Loans are currently limited to the 10 pilot locations as a first phase, the Library is pursuing expansions of this and other programs, including purchasing devices to make kits available at all libraries; working to identify funding to expand Wi-Fi access in all Library parking lots, to allow

connectivity beyond building walls; and developing ongoing Virtual Programming for workforce development, including workshops on resume and cover letter writing, and interviewing skills.

For more information about Printing Pickup and the Laptop & Hotspot Loan program (including participating libraries), visit [LACountyLibrary.org/express-service](https://www.lacountylibrary.org/express-service).

About LA County Library

Founded in 1912, LA County Library is one of the largest and most innovative library systems in the US. It offers free public resources including books, music, multimedia materials, computer and internet access, and educational and recreational services to 3.4 million residents across 3,000 square miles through its 86 community libraries and mobile fleet of 14 vehicles, including 3 bookmobiles, 6 MāKMō (maker mobiles), and 5 Reading Machines. LA County Library is dedicated to reducing barriers and increasing access to and equity of public services for all. To learn more, visit [LACountyLibrary.org](https://www.lacountylibrary.org) and follow @LACountyLibrary on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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