



PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT AND MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: June 17, 2009

RE: Schedule change

Contact: Karen Keller, Library Director, 343-2982

LIBRARY HOURS REDUCED DUE TO BUDGET CUTS

The Anchorage Public Library's hours of operation will be changed to accommodate the mandated 56-hour unpaid furlough that employees must take. The AMEA contract adjustment, approved by the Assembly Tuesday, June 16th requires all employees to take 56 hours of furlough leave without pay during the remainder of the 2009 calendar. Part-time employees are required to take a prorated furlough leave. The AMEA furlough is similar to the non-represented employee furlough the Assembly approved earlier. The furloughs are part of the effort to balance the city budget. Beginning in July, all public library locations will be closed weekends and Mondays until the last week of September.

"Developing a furlough schedule for the library was extremely complicated," said Karen Keller, Library Director. "The library is losing the equivalent of 4,903 labor hours with the furloughs. APL is one of the few city services open seven days a week and in the evening so there are multiple work-week schedules that had to be factored into a plan. We also have multiple locations to consider.

"We tried all kinds of scenarios," she said. "We needed to manage service interruptions to our public with as little confusion as possible and very importantly we had to try and mitigate the hardship for library staff who must take a pay reduction. We also had to take into account normal schedule adjustments made for employees on vacation, jury duty or medical leave. And, we wanted to get this addressed as quickly as possible, before the school year was in full swing."

Trying to work out a schedule was daunting. The Loussac Library, where 73 percent of APL's 104 employees work, is open seven days a week; its staff has three different work-week schedules (Sunday-Thursday, Monday-Friday, and Tuesday-Saturday). And, since Loussac and all the branches are open evenings, there are also two daily shift schedules to work around.

Given this complexity, library administration concluded the only way to manage the challenges was to reduce library hours during a system-wide furlough schedule. The branch libraries (Chugiak-Eagle River, Girdwood, Muldoon and Samson-Diamond), which are open five days a week (Tuesdays-Saturdays), will be closed on Saturdays during the furlough period. The Loussac Library, which is open seven days a week, will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday during the furlough period. The closures begin after the July 4th holiday weekend. Loussac was already scheduled to be closed Saturday, July 4 and Sunday, July 5 for the holiday. Loussac's furlough schedule will begin Monday, July 6. The branches' furlough schedule begins Saturday, July 11. The normal, non-furlough schedule resumes Monday, September 28.

This schedule does not impact summer reading special events with one exception; one event was rescheduled. The Little Dipper Book Club program is on hold during the furlough. The revised calendar is on the library's website at www.anchoragelibrary.org. Loan periods for library materials will be adjusted so items are not due on days when the library is closed. Access to library resources through the web (databases, downloadable books & music, e-books, etc.) will not be affected by the furlough schedule.

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