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Hamilton County Partners with Library System to Provide Clients with Better Access

Cincinnati (June 10, 2008) A new service will save clients of Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services time, money and gas consumption by allowing them to drop off required paperwork at any of the 41 libraries operated by The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

Branch libraries are distributed throughout the county, providing clients with easier access and more convenient hours of service, including evenings and weekends. Library staff members have been trained to handle verification documents such as applications, Social Security cards, birth certificates, passports, marriage licenses and divorce decrees that are necessary for a client to receive services from the Job and Family Services department. Library employees will fax the documents to the main offices of JFS, relieving the client of mailing them or delivering them in person to a downtown office.

"Many clients are uncomfortable placing their personal documents in the mail and want to deliver them in person, but that means a trip downtown," said Moira Weir, director of the Job and Family Services department. "That could mean they have to take time out of work and spend money on gas. We'd rather they saved that time and money. This is another step in our mission to be more accessible to the people we serve."

The department, which helps county residents with child protection, child support collection, health care insurance, subsidized child care and other services, also has opened satellite offices at neighborhood social service agencies and health care centers in an effort to be more accessible.

The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, which has 40 branches throughout Hamilton County in addition to its Main Library downtown, is constantly searching for ways to be area residents' first choice for information.

"We're excited to be able to offer another service," said Kimber L. Fender, executive director of the library system. "We're constantly evaluating and anticipating the needs of our customers and providing them with information that improves their lives. In addition to picking up tax forms, and applying for a passport, now, they'll be able to connect with the Job and Family Services department. It's our hope that by drawing more people into the Library they will become more familiar with our many programs and services and value the library as a crucial source of information."

About Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services

The Department of Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, elderly protection, child care, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food stamp disbursement and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands each year and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.

About The Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

With 41 locations countywide, the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County is one of the largest and busiest library systems in the country. It offers a selection of nearly 10 million books, audiobooks, digital audiobooks & e-books, CDs, digital videos & DVDs, magazines and more, plus free Internet access, Wi-Fi, live homework help online, almost 150 research databases, and KnowItNow, an online chat with a librarian reference service available 24/7 through the website, www.CincinnatiLibrary.org, as well as over 14,000 annual entertaining & enriching free programs on an extensive range of topics and interests for all ages. Library cards are free for all Ohio residents.