



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

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Pritzker Administration & Readerlink Announce Company's New Marion Facility During Illinois Economic Development Week

Readerlink's new book distribution facility in Marion will create 75 new full-time jobs; Illinois celebrates Economic Development Week from May 9-13

MARION - Governor JB Pritzker, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and Readerlink announced its new distribution center in Marion as part of Illinois Economic Development Week. Readerlink is the largest full-service distributor of hardcover, trade and paperback books in North America. Supported by a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the company is establishing a new distribution facility which will create 75 new jobs in the community.

"I'm proud to welcome Readerlink's expansion in Southern Illinois, bringing 75 new permanent jobs and dozens more construction positions to the Marion community," said **Governor JB Pritzker**. "One of the most important parts of my job is shaping our state into one of the most forward-thinking, economically prosperous, and innovative in the nation, and that includes bringing new investments and opportunities to areas that have been left without support for too long. I'm also proud to make this announcement for Marion as we celebrate National Economic Development Week and further solidify Illinois as a first-class destination to do business."

State officials and Readerlink announced this investment as part of National Economic Development Week, which is designated by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) to increase the awareness of programs offered that create jobs, advance career development, and increase the quality of life by providing communities with programs and services. DCEO also issued a [handbook](#) highlighting recent regional economic development projects from across the state.

"During Economic Development Week and throughout the year, DCEO is excited to celebrate and make continued investments in all the elements – top talent, world class infrastructure, strong local communities – that make Illinois a great place to do business," said **DCEO Director, Sylvia I Garcia**. "As a lover of books, I'm thrilled to see Readerlink expand their footprint in Illinois. Readerlink's investment in Marion will create jobs and contribute to growing Southern Illinois' diverse economy."

As part of locating its facility in Marion, which is an economically disadvantaged area, Readerlink will be making a \$3,331,000 investment. Additionally, the new facility is supported by a \$1,000,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). CDBG funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The state administered funds are earmarked exclusively for non-metropolitan areas that do not receive funding directly from HUD.

“We are grateful for the hard work of local officials and organizations that have partnered with ReaderLink to facilitate the opening of our Marion, Illinois distribution center. The joint effort opened the book for a successful and timely introduction to the community. We look forward to being a southern Illinois business partner for many years to come.” - **Dennis E. Abboud, President and Chief Executive Officer of Readerlink**

“The Community Development Block Grant program is a powerful tool for revitalizing neighborhoods and \$1 million in federal funding from that program will support Readerlink’s distribution facility in Marion,” **said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL)**. “This new facility is a great example of federal, state, and local leaders working together to invest in our communities and create good paying jobs in Southern Illinois.”

“I’m pleased to see Readerlink making an investment in Southern Illinois that will create good-paying jobs and spur economic development throughout the region,” **said U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)**. “I’m also proud that federal support helped make this project possible, ensuring economically disadvantaged communities receive the assistance they need. I’ll keep working with our state and local leaders to help ensure our working families and communities all across Illinois are supported.”

ReaderLink is North America’s largest full-service book distributor. Every year, the company ships more than 325 million books and drives over \$3 billion in sales for its partners. ReaderLink serves more than 680 retailers with a combined 70,000 individual storefronts. ReaderLink's partners include mass merchants, warehouse clubs, grocery stores, convenience stores, and the armed forces.

“The City of Marion is so grateful and is blessed to have ReaderLink invest in our City. We believe in their mission to empower a future generation of readers. We welcome them, and all their current and future team, as they make Marion their home.” – **Marion Mayor Mike Absher**

In addition to releasing its handbook, during Illinois Economic Development Week DCEO highlighted regional economic development leaders, partnerships, hosted a webinar, and raised awareness of available resources.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's mission is to support and maintain a strong economic environment for those we serve—taxpayers, employers, workers, and communities—by actively recruiting and growing businesses, maintaining a 21st-century workforce, enhancing innovation, and bringing jobs and investment to underserved communities throughout Illinois. To learn more about ongoing resources and programs, follow us on social media @IllinoisDCEO and visit [DCEO's website](https://www.illinois.gov/dceo).