



Eliminating Late Fines: Improving access to your library

Background

- Anywhere Public Library is interested in eliminating late fines as a way to make the library more accessible to everyone in Our Town.
- When we stopped collecting late fines on children's materials one year ago, there was no delay in returns or in our overall revenue, and the number of borrowers increased 10%. We talked with staff at libraries that had eliminated fines recently on all materials and they had similar results.
- Bottom line: Eliminating all overdue fines will have only a positive effect for the citizens of Our Town.

Fines are not a sustainable or dependable form of revenue.



Money collected from fines and replacement fees has gone down steadily for the last 10 years. Our budget proposal seeks to fully fund the Library's budget from sources other than late fines.

Many people remain unable to check out library materials.



19% of cardholders (1,132) cannot check out materials because they have too many fines/fees.



34% of cards are blocked in North Neighborhood. Percentages are higher in economically challenged neighborhoods.

Our community members tell us about the impact of fines and fees:

"<Quote from community member affected by overdue fines.>"

--<Patron name> and photo, if desired

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--<Patron name> and photo, if desired

Late fines are not effective.

Studies have shown that small fines do not have any impact on return rates.

"The scant research on the value and impact of library fines and fees does not indicate a clear benefit of administering these policies, and they may be costly to enforce."

- Removing Barriers to Library Use, Colorado State Library, 2015

In fine-free libraries, people still return items, and on time.

- **Library users still need to return items, and will still receive reminders** when a due date approaches and has passed.
- It often costs more money to collect fines and fees than the revenue it brings in.
- Many libraries even report that patrons return **more** items after going fine-free.