

FINE FREE FAQ

YOUR library is now fine free! We no longer charge fines on late items. This ensures that everyone in our community will have access to library materials and services, which is our primary purpose as a public library. Here you'll find information about this new policy and how it affects you.

WHY GO FINE FREE?

It's good for our community. Our community is stronger and healthier when people have access to the programs, services, and materials they need to pursue their educational, career, family, and life goals, and library staff can focus on what we like to do best: helping our patrons! We believe this will encourage prior users to come back to the library and attract new users to experience our offerings.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- You will no longer receive a daily late fine on overdue items.
- You are still responsible for returning your items. We do want all items back!
- The library will send you reminders to return your items.
- Materials that are 28 days overdue are assumed lost and you will be billed for the replacement and processing costs.
- If lost items are returned, the replacement and processing costs will be cleared from your account.
- Replacement fees and processing charges for lost or damaged items still apply.
- If you have overdue fines that you accrued before we went fine free, you are no longer required to pay these fees.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- ***Which libraries are fine free?***

The 12 libraries of the Lehigh Carbon Library Cooperative (LCLC) are now fine free. They are: Catasauqua Public Library, Coplay Public Library, Dimmick Memorial Library, Emmaus Public Library, Lehigh Area Memorial Library, Lower Macungie Library, Palmerton Area Library, Parkland Community Library, Penn Kidder Library, Slatington Public Library, Southern Lehigh Public Library, and Whitehall Township Public Library

- ***What is the difference between a fine and a fee?***

Fines are time based, punitive charges on items borrowed longer than their limits. Fees are for library services and products such as copying, printing, material replacement costs, etc.

- ***Do I still have to pay a fine that was on my account prior to LCLC going fine free?***

All overdue fines, no matter how old, will be waived.

- ***Can I return items that are long overdue or have been declared lost?***

We want to put overdue materials back into circulation so that they can be enjoyed by more patrons, so when you bring back those overdue books, DVDS, and CDs, we'll forgive any related overdue fines. This doesn't just apply to materials that are a day or a week late - if you're still hanging on to items that are long overdue, or items that were declared lost, we'll gladly take them back and waive the overdue fines

- ***Fines have been waived, so why does my account still have a balance?***

While LCLC is doing away with overdue fines on normal items such as books, DVDs and CDs, fines and fees will still apply in certain circumstances. Patrons will still be responsible for lost and damaged items, outstanding collection agency fees, and overdue fees on inter-library loan items charged by the library that loaned the item. Special Collection items such as Museum Passes, Stem Kits, Makerspace Items, Musical Instruments, Ipads, Wi-fi Hotspots and other electronic equipment will continue to be charged overdue fines in accordance with each library's policies

- ***How will the Library get people to return borrowed materials?***

“No fines” does not mean “no responsibility.” Patrons with \$10 or more in fees will be temporarily blocked from borrowing additional items until items are returned or the account is settled, and may be blocked from using library databases, e-resources, and in-house computers, depending on each library's policies

- ***Will I still receive overdue notices?***

Overdue notices will continue to be sent, and items that are 28 days overdue will be assumed to be lost and you will be billed for the replacement and processing costs. We have faith that our patrons will be respectful of their fellow library users who may be waiting for items to be returned, especially new items, so that everyone has equal access to our collections.

| NOTICE | METHODS | WHEN |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Reminder | Email only | 3 days before item is due |
| Overdue #1 | Patron preference | 7 days overdue |
| Overdue #2 | Patron preference | 14 days overdue |
| Overdue #3 Bill | Patron preference Patron preference | 21 days overdue After 28 days, patron will be billed for replacement and processing fees |