

Fine Free FAQs

Really? No more late fines?

Yes! Beginning September 1, 2022, all overdue fines will be forgiven and removed from your account.

What about the materials I have at home that are long overdue?

Please return them to the library. You will not be charged any overdue fines.

Will fees for lost or damaged items also be forgiven?

No. Items that are lost, returned with damaged or missing parts, or otherwise are not returned in the same condition as when they were checked out will be billed accordingly. This includes processing fees.

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

Library staff is busy clearing all patron accounts of overdue fines associated with materials checked out at JPL. Fines charged by other Bridges member libraries will remain on your account.

Can I return an item that the Library has considered "lost"?

Yes! Our goal is to get our materials back so that they can be enjoyed and checked out by more patrons. Once the "lost" material has been returned, any replacement fees affiliated with them will be removed from your account.

Are there any exceptions to the fine free policy?

Yes, overdue fines will still be charged for materials that are part of the following collections: equipment, kits, Lucky Day items, and interlibrary loans.

What's the difference between a fee and a fine?

A fee is a charge for library services and products such as library cards, copies, faxes, materials replacement costs, etc. A fine is a charge for returning an item late.

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

Library staff is working as quickly as time allows to remove overdue fines from patron accounts. If overdue fines are preventing you from checking out, please contact the Library.

Also, while overdue fines on JPL materials have been waived, lost or damaged items, and ancillary charges such as copies, faxes, and notice fees, will remain on the account.

I use more than one Bridges member library; how will that work?

Whether or not fines are charged is determined by the lending library policies. Materials from other Bridges libraries that are checked out at JPL will be fine free and can be returned to any

Bridges library for check-in. Likewise, any JPL item checked out at another library's location will follow their lending policies.

However, there can be a wrinkle with renewals. If you check out at JPL but renew at another Bridges library, the original checkout policies are nullified, and the renewing library's policies take over. To avoid this situation, we recommend you renew at JPL or another Bridges library with the same fines policy.

How will the library get people to return borrowed materials?

"No fines" does not mean "no responsibility." Our overdue notice procedure will not change. Materials not returned thirty (30) days after the due date are assumed lost and will be billed to the account for the replacement cost and processing costs.

Doesn't the library need overdue fines to purchase more books?

The Library's collection budget is a percentage of the overall budget and won't be affected by the change.

Will the Library's budget be affected if you eliminate overdue fines?

Library fines are a decreasing part of the overall budget. In 2021, overdue fines made up less than 1% of Library General Budget and there is also a collection cost in terms of staff time, keeping cash on hand, banking and accounting. Due to the growing popularity of digital materials, library revenue from overdue fines has been steadily declining in recent years.

How can I support the library if I'm not paying fines?

We appreciate your support! Donations to the Library or the Friends of the Library are accepted. You can make your donation in person or by mail.