

FINE FREE FAQs



**Starting
June 1, 2020,
Rochester Public
Library will
no longer charge
fines on
overdue items.**

BACKGROUND

Library Board members have discussed going fine-free over the past year as a way to reduce barriers to library access. Other libraries across the country, including St. Paul Public Library, have witnessed the benefits of eliminating fines. Outcomes typically include more equitable access to library services and increased library usage. Two previous pilot programs at RPL yielded similar results.

HOW DOES GOING FINE-FREE IMPROVE LIBRARY ACCESS?

National and local data shows that fines create greater hardships in communities with higher rates of poverty. By removing overdue fines, everyone in our community will have access to the resources they need, without the burden of worrying about fines.

WILL PEOPLE STILL BRING ITEMS BACK?

Yes. All loan rules will stay the same for library materials, and RPL will still use due dates but fines will not accrue for late items. National data shows fines have little impact on the return of materials.

WHAT ABOUT LOST OR DAMAGED ITEMS?

In June 2020, all cardholders will receive a Fresh Start (see box). Items that are lost or damaged in the future will still have fees associated with replacement or repair.

HOW IS THIS FUNDED?

Over the last several years, revenue from late fees has declined, proving them to be an unreliable source of income. At approximately 1% of the library's annual budget, the lost revenue will be absorbed in other areas.

A FRESH START FOR EVERYONE

Starting June 2020, all library accounts will be wiped clean of all charges. Overdue fines, lost item fees, and all other fees will be removed, giving all cardholders a Fresh Start.

To support this initiative, the Rochester Public Library Foundation has committed to raising funds to help cover the loss in revenue for 2020.



**Rochester
Public Library
FOUNDATION**

Learn more at rplmn.org/finefree