

**LEWIS & CLARK LIBRARY
FINE POLICY**

POLICY

The Lewis & Clark Library Board of Trustees understand that libraries exist to enrich the community and strive to provide stress free and open access to all our patrons; therefore the Board of Trustees has adopted a fine free policy.

Libraries across the nation have demonstrated that imposing late fees on patrons is not an effective deterrent to the return of late materials. Instead, it commonly creates barriers for youth or may cause patron guilt, making library use less likely. The Library strives to overcome these barriers and increase access to patrons, trusting that the Library's show of good faith will encourage patrons to return materials in a timely manner.

This policy will take effect upon the successful migration of patron records to the Montana Shared Catalog in the first week of May, 2019.

PROCEDURE

LATE MATERIALS

While traditional overdue fines will not accrue, a replacement cost will be charged if an item is not returned within a reasonable time. For books and materials that check out for 28 days, once an item is 30 days past due the patron's account will automatically incur the full replacement cost of the item. If a past due item is returned however, the full replacement cost of the item is waived. Once a past due item has been paid for, materials are the property of the patron and replacement fees will not be refunded.

Patrons with charges for items that have not been returned in the period listed in the previous paragraph will have their account blocked until related fees have been paid or have been satisfactorily worked out with the library director/library staff.

If an item is late due to being lost or damaged, patrons should notify Lewis & Clark Library of the items' status. Librarians will work with patrons to extend due dates (when possible and within reason) for missing items.

OVERDUE NOTICES

An email reminder will be sent 3 days prior to an item being due, and reminder emails will be sent 1, 14 and 30 days after the due dates. To ensure patrons receive these emails, the Library will make every attempt to make sure an up-to-date email address is attached to patron's accounts. If patrons do not have an email address listed in account details, patrons will receive a written notice when item is 14 and 30 days past due. Not receiving library emails or notices does not negate the patron's responsibility for returning library items.

PRIOR LATE FINES

All late fines existing before the adoption of this policy will be waived. Lost/damaged item charges will remain.

Approved by the Board of Trustees March 19, 2019