

Smith Public Library

**FINE FREE
INFORMATION**





Articles shared with Library Board

- Long Overdue: Why public libraries are finally eliminating the late-return fine
- Imagining a Fine Free Future
- Fine Farewells: LJ's 2022 Fines and Fees Survey.



Why fine?

- **As a motivator to return items on time.**
- **Patrons think the library is getting those funds, therefore they are supporting the library.**

The Reality of fines

- **Fines affect families and economically disadvantaged patrons most.**
- **Instead of encouraging them to return the items, those late items do not come back at all for fear of fines.**
- **Reduced use of the library because of fines on accounts.**



Breakdown of the numbers

Amounts Tendered	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 - 3 quarters
Printing (3D & Paper)	\$6,015.41	\$6,774.09	\$6,712.16	\$8,532.78	\$6,313.47
Circulation Fees (Card replacement, processing)	\$912.21	\$1,065.60	\$1,275.01	\$1,254.30	\$988.79
Damaged & Lost Items	\$6,440.42	\$8,744.50	\$8,563.41	\$10,141.95	\$7,271.93
Meeting Room Rentals	\$625.00	\$922.50	\$165.00	\$1,455.00	\$930.00
Overdue items	\$20,673.02	\$17,808.78	\$14,863.40	\$15,152.38	\$12,536.80
Overall Totals:	\$34,666.06	\$35,315.47	\$31,578.98	\$36,536.41	\$28,040.99
All fines and fees except Overdue Items	\$13,993.04	\$17,506.69	\$16,715.58	\$21,384.03	\$15,504.19
Overdue items	\$20,673.02	\$17,808.78	\$14,863.40	\$15,152.38	\$12,536.80

The City takes in on average \$4 million dollars in fees across all departments. Using an average of the overall totals for library fees, the total contributed by the library would equal .875%. Overdue items alone equal only .4265% of total City fees.

What fines cost the library.

- **Staff time/stress**
- **Inferior customer service creating a combative atmosphere**
- **Lessens library use**
- **Loss in materials**



Fine free is all around us

North Texas Fine Free Libraries

Addison	Dallas	Grapevine	Richardson
Arlington	Denton	Howe	Richland Hills
Aubrey	Desoto	Irving	Rowlette
Bedford	Duncancville	Keller	Royce City
Benbrook	Euleess	Kennedale	Sachse
Burleson	Flower Mound	Lewisville	Saginaw
Carrollton	Forest Hill	McKinney	Sanger
Cedar Hill	Fort Worth	Mesquite	Sherman
Colony	Frisco	Minteral Wells	Southlake
Coppell	Garland	Plano	Weatherford

How would this work?

- **With Council approval, an amendment to the City Ordinance would be made to eliminate overdue library fees.**
- **We can begin as early as October 1st coinciding with the new fiscal year.**
- **Patrons with lost items on their accounts could then return their items with no fear of being fined.**

