DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
FINES AND PENALTIES

BACKGROUND
The DC Public Library strives to be customer-centered, equitable, and open to all. Yet overdue fines create barriers to access for the very populations the library works to serve - low-income residents - and are not an effective tool to encourage on-time return of library material.

Removing overdue fines will help dismantle inequity and improve access to those who need it most. The Library recommends that the Board of Trustees vote to eliminate the imposition and collection of all overdue fines for late return of library materials. In 2015 the Board voted to eliminate fines and fees on youth accounts only (19 years of age and under).

The Library further recommends that it continue to charge adults replacement fees for lost or damaged materials and equipment.

NEW POLICY LANGUAGE
DC Public Library assesses and collects fees for materials and equipment that must be replaced. Replacement may be required when items are returned damaged. Damage may include but is not limited to water damage and/or missing parts. Normal wear and tear is expected and will not be included in the assessment of damaged items. Normal wear and tear may include loose pages, loose book jackets or bindings, and missing media cover art.

Replacement fees:
- Hard cover books - $20.00 each
- Paperback books - $15.00 each
- CDs and DVDs - $15.00 each

Adults (20 years of age and older) with more than forty dollars ($40) in replacement fees will have their borrowing privileges suspended until the fees are paid or items are returned.

The librarian or designee can at his/her discretion forgive replacement fees for library materials. This option can be utilized when the borrower provides reasons such as: hospitalization, death in family, incarceration, fire, flood, or other catastrophic personal hardship.

The librarian or designee is authorized to cancel replacement fees when the borrower claims that the library material was returned undamaged and it is found in the library or the library was closed due to an emergency.

Approved by Board of Library Trustees
May 14, 2020