



FINE FREE FAQs

YOUR library is now fine free! We no longer charge fines on late items. This ensures that all people have access to library books and materials, which is our primary purpose as a public library. Here you'll find information about this new policy and how it affects you.

WHY GO FINE FREE?

It's good for our community. Our community is stronger and healthier when people have access to the programs, services, and materials they need to pursue their educational, career, family, and life goals. We hope this will encourage prior users to come back to the library and attract new users to experience our offerings.

Late fines are not effective. Studies have shown that small fines have no impact on return rates. According to "Removing Barriers to Access," a Colorado State Library whitepaper: "The scant research on the impact of library fines and fees does not indicate a clear benefit to administering these policies and may be costly to enforce."

It's fiscally responsible. Due to the rise in electronic materials (which do not accrue late fines) and other factors, fines are not a sustainable form of revenue for the library. Money collected from fines and fees has gone down steadily for the past ten years, especially with the advent of autorenew.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- You will no longer receive a daily late fine on overdue items.
- You are still responsible for returning your items. We do want all items back!
- The library will send you reminders to return your items.
- If you have overdue fines from other libraries in the Finger Lakes Library System, you are still responsible for paying these at the library where these fines accrued. If you check out materials while visiting another library in the Finger Lakes Library System, you could still be charged fines based on that library's fine policy (some have fines, some do not).
- Materials that are 30 days overdue are assumed lost and you will be billed for the replacement costs.
- Past replacement fees charges for lost or damaged items still apply.
- If you have overdue fines from LCL that you accrued before we went fine free, you are no longer required to pay these fees. We have cleared many of the accounts, but if you still have a fine that appears on your account, please ask at the Circulation Desk for your over due fines to be waived.
- \$1.00 a day out-of-system interlibrary loan fees set by the Finger Lakes Library System still apply.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

If you've returned all materials, your fine has been waived.

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

While LCL is doing away with overdue fines, fees for lost or damaged materials remain. Late fines from other libraries can not be waived.

3. How will the Library get people to return borrowed materials?

“No fines” does not mean “no responsibility.” Materials that are 30 days overdue are assumed lost and you will be billed for the replacement and processing costs.

4. Will I still receive reminders about returning materials?

NOTICE	METHODS	WHEN
Reminder	Email only	2 days before item is due
Overdue	Patron preference	5 days overdue
Overdue	Patron preference	15 days overdue
Bill	Patron preference	30 days overdue Patron billed for replacement and processing fees

5. How is the Library budget affected by the loss of fine income?

Overdue fines on average make up less than one percent of the Library’s annual budget.

6. I’ve always thought of paying my fines as my donation to the library. Can I still donate?

Yes! Now and in the future, donations can be made to the Library, to the Friends of Lansing Community Library, or to our endowment at the Community Foundation of Tompkins County. Your donation will support critical Library programs and services. Check out website www.lansinglibrary.org/get-involved

7. What is the difference between a fine and a fee?

Fines are punitive. Fees are for library services and products such as library cards, copying, printing, material replacement costs, etc.