

Eliminating Late Fines:

Improving access to your library

Background

- Siouxland Libraries is eliminating late fines as a way to make the library more accessible to everyone in our service area.
- Siouxland Libraries research has shown that late fines do not encourage people to bring items back on time.
- When Siouxland Libraries eliminated late fines on children's items, use of the collection increased.
- Bottom line: Eliminating all overdue fines will have only a positive effect for the citizens of Sioux Falls and Minnehaha County.

Fines are not a sustainable or dependable form of revenue.

Overdue Fines

\$49,673

Collected in 2016

\$15,500

Estimated amount to be collected in 2022

Money collected from fines and replacement fees has gone down steadily for the last seven years.

SIOUXLAND LIBRARIES
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Many people are unable to check out library materials due to fines.

10%

10% of cardholders (8,923 customers) have fines/fees.

2.7%

2.7% of cards are blocked from checking out library materials.

Percentages tend to be higher in economically challenged neighborhoods.

How fines and fees impact the library and the community:

"For some of our families, fines- even small ones – are unaffordable. It becomes a difference between feeding the belly and feeding the mind. By eliminating the overdue fine, families don't have to choose."

--Jodi Fick, Library Director

Fines don't bring back materials faster.

Libraries that have eliminated overdue fines get materials back at the same rate (or even faster). Your Library will continue to send overdue notices and charge borrowers for items not returned.

5%

Salt Lake Public Library's late-return rate dropped from 9% to 4% following fine elimination.

42%

Vernon (Ill) Public Library's average number of days an item is overdue fell 42% after ditching fines.

Dropping fines will increase use.

8%

8% ↑ in juvenile borrowers at High Plains Library District (CO)

10%

10% ↑ in check-outs and borrowers in Salt Lake City

40%

40% more youth borrowers in San Rafael (CA)