

LPLD is Fine Free FAQs

Welcome! Thank you for stopping by to learn more about our fine free policy. Need more assistance? Stop by or call the Lawrenceburg Main Library (812-537-2775) or the North Dearborn Branch (812-637-0777) or email us at lawplib@lpld.lib.in.us. We are happy to help!

What is fine free?

No more late fines. Past late fines are erased, and future ones will not be charged. The policy was passed by the Lawrenceburg Public Library District Board of Trustees during their May 2023 meeting. It officially goes into effect Sept. 1, 2023.

Why go fine free?

Our mission is to provide our community with equal access to resources - for life. Late fines can result in an unequal financial burden on community members who likely need free library resources the most.

Are there any exceptions?

No exceptions. Everything you check out will be free from late fines. However, all items will be billed to your account if not returned in a timely fashion, and hotspots will have access shut off if they are late.

Does that mean no charges on a library card- ever?

No. You still need to bring materials back by the due date- in the same condition they left. Remember, sharing is important. These items are usually purchased with tax dollars (or someone was kind enough to donate them.) If an item is not returned within 15 days of its due date, it is considered "lost" and you will be billed for the item. At that time, you have 45 days to return the item before it is sent to collections. You can return the item after it is sent to collections, but a collections processing fee will remain on your account. If an item is damaged, you also may be charged. Past, present and future lost and damaged item fees will remain on the card until they are paid, or the item is returned undamaged. In the meantime, library privileges may be suspended.

What if I pay a fee for an LPLD library card because I do not live in the district?

Non-resident cards will continue to have a fee set annually by the Board of Trustees. Educational cards will remain free to out-of-district students and teachers at school districts included in the library district. Both types of cards will have no late fines, but other fees still apply.

Learn more about out-of-district and educational cards at the circulation desk.

What about other fees?

Patrons also will continue to be charged the current established fees for using the printer, purchasing headphones, and replacing a library card. Have a habit of losing your physical library card? Download the LPLD app for free on Google Play or the Apple App Store.

Learn more at: <https://www.lpld.lib.in.us/e-media19>

Do late fines provide a significant revenue source to the library district?

Great question! We can tell you read a lot of books. Late fines are an unreliable source of income. It is not an amount that can be planned. We certainly do not want materials to be late and community members stuck with late fines just to boost our revenue stream! The reality is late fines make up less than 1 percent of the library district's budget. Plus, digital borrowing continues to become more and more popular, which has led to a natural downturn in late fines collected. Digital books, movies and music automatically "return" to the system after the due date.

I always return my items on time. Will this policy result in me waiting longer for holds?

Many library districts that have gone fine free have not seen a significant jump in hold times due to the policy. If there is a big demand for a book or other material, additional copies may be purchased, which is the current practice.

Are there other benefits to going fine free?

Yes! It will free up staff to offer more help to community members. It also is a boost to employee morale. No one wants to block access due to late fines, especially when our materials can benefit people in many different ways- including childhood literacy.

What if I really, really miss paying late fines? 😞

It is OK. Wipe away those tears. Some patrons like to pay late fines. They see it as a way of supporting the library district. We love you for that! But you can support us in other ways. The Friends of the Lawrenceburg Public Library District is 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to support the library and its programs, run by an amazing group of volunteers. You can become a member, volunteer, or even just stop by one of their book (and more) sales to give back to LPLD.

Learn more at: www.lpld.lib.in.us/friends-of-the-library

What if I want to help, but cannot stop happy dancing about the fine free policy?

We are dancing too! You need to keep the money you save in your pocket. We understand. There are other ways to help. You can volunteer. You can tag us in your social media posts sharing your positive experiences at Lawrenceburg Main Library, North Dearborn Branch or the Mobile Library. You can donate books in good shape you no longer need. Of course, we also always love smiles and a quick thank you to our hard-working employees. (Also, you could name a pet after one of us. No pressure. Just a suggestion.)

Learn more about volunteering at: www.lpld.lib.in.us/volunteer

Additional Resources

American Library Association- Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/economicbarriers

Urban Library Council's Fine Free Map www.urbanlibraries.org/initiatives/democracy/fine-free-map

Indiana State Library- Reducing barriers to access: Fine-free libraries

<https://blog.library.in.gov/reducing-barriers-to-access-fine-free-libraries>