



Frequently Asked Questions

No Overdue Fines for Children's Materials

Why is the library doing this?

To promote childhood reading, facilitate access to children's books, and encourage children and families to use the Commerce libraries, starting Monday, April 8, 2019, the library is eliminating overdue fines for children's books and materials. Children and families may be hesitant about borrowing children's books because of late fees if not turned in on time. This program will allow them not to worry about returning children's books and materials late.

What is "No Overdue Fines" and how does it work?

Starting April 8, 2019, all children's books and materials can be borrowed just like before with a due date to return them. You will have up to 30 days from the due date to return the items you borrowed and not get charged a late fee. After the 30 days, the item(s) are considered lost and you will be charged the cost of the item and a processing fee.

Which materials will not have overdue fines?

All children's books, magazines, audiobooks, book and CD sets, and portable audiobooks will not have overdue fines after April 8, 2019.

What about teen or adult materials?

At this time, teen and adult materials will still accrue overdue fines.

What about children's/family DVDs and CDs?

The new policy is to promote reading. Children's DVDs and music CDs will still accrue overdue fines.

What about PACE supplies for school projects?

At this time, PACE supplies will still accrue overdue fines.

So, if I check out a children's book, I never have to return it or pay?

Children's items not returned 30 days after the due date will be charged the cost of the item and a processing fee.

As an adult, will I have to pay fines for overdue children's materials?

No. Starting Monday, April 8, 2019, there will be no overdue fines on children's materials, no matter who borrows them.

Read Away Fines Program

Which fines can be read away?

Starting April 8, 2019, fines that were charged to a child or teen's account before April 8, 2019 are eligible for the Read Away Fines program.

My child has overdue fines on their library account, but they are too young to read. Can I read to them to read away the fines?

Yes, a parent or caregiver (age 18 or older) may read to a young child or pre-reader to clear fines from the child's account. The fines must be from before April 8, 2019.

Can my child read away fines on their account for DVDs or other items that were returned late?

Yes, a child/teen may read away any fines on their account from before April 8, 2019.

My child has a lost book or DVD on their library account. Can lost item fees be read away?

Yes, a child/teen may read away lost item fees on their account from before April 8, 2019.

I am an adult and I have fines or fees for children's books on my library account. Can those charges be read away?

No, only children and teens up to age 17 can read away fines charged to their library card account before April 8, 2019.

Can my child read away fines at home or at school?

No, the read away program is only available at the Commerce libraries.

Can library class visit or storytime reading be counted for reading away fines?

No, children and teens must check in individually during library business hours to read away their fines.

My child reads 20 minutes a day in the library for their school reading log. Can those minutes count for reading away fines?

Yes. The child must check in with library staff before they begin reading to get a Read Away form to log their reading time.

How much does a child or teen have to read to clear their fines/fees?

Fines can be read away at a rate of two dollars for every 15 minutes of reading. During National Library Week from April 8 to 13, 2019, fines can be read away at a special double rate of four dollars for every 15 minutes of reading.

When will the Read Away program end?

The program will end December 31, 2019.