



Clifton Springs Library

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The Clifton Springs Library is going “read free”!

Beginning Monday, April 8, 2019 the Clifton Springs Library will no longer charge overdue fines for print materials and audio books checked out at the Clifton Springs Library. This change in policy will coincide with National Library Week, an annual celebration of libraries to promote library use.

Our Mission reads:

The Clifton Springs Library provides free and equal access to cultural and educational experiences. We celebrate ideas, promote creativity, connect people, and enrich lives.

Charging overdue fines for print materials and audio books contradicts this pledge of “free and equal access” and discourages library use.

What does “read free” mean?

- Fines are charged for overdue library materials. “Read free” refers to eliminating the fees charged for returning print materials and audio books after their due date.
- As of April 8, 2019, print materials and audio books checked out at the Clifton Springs Library will no longer incur overdue fines.
- Print materials and audio books will still be assigned a 3-week loan period, and patrons should continue to renew items to extend loan periods. Items without holds can be renewed twice.
- Lost and damaged fees still apply. Items that are overdue more than eight (8) weeks are automatically marked lost.
- With approval from the library’s Director, patrons may choose to replace lost or damaged materials themselves with new, identical items.
- This policy change does not apply to overdue fines for DVDs, Blu-Ray, and video games.
- The library will continue to charge small fees for printing, photocopying, and faxing services.

Why is the library eliminating overdue fines for print materials and audio books?

- Charging overdue fines for print materials and audio books does not support the library’s mission of equity and access.

- Overdue fines disproportionately affect low-income families, adding another barrier library use.
- Research shows no difference in overdue rates between libraries charging overdue fines and libraries not charging overdue fines.

What if there are still overdue fines for print materials and audio books on my library account?

- Previously accrued overdue fines will remain on patron accounts, however, no new overdue fines for print materials and audio books will be charged as of April 8, 2019.
- We cannot waive overdue fines for items owed to other libraries or waive fees for lost or damaged materials.
- Patrons with economic hardship or special circumstances that make it difficult to pay already accrued fines or for lost/damaged materials are encouraged to speak to the library's Director.

Doesn't the library need overdue fine money to run the library?

- Overdue fines make up a very small part of the library's budget and have been trending downward in recent years.
- The library actually incurs expenses to collect overdue fines, including staff time collecting fines, staff time handling fine disputes, and billing postage.
- The majority of the library's funding comes from donations, fundraising, municipal support, school district tax levy, and investment income.
- Please see our Annual Report to the Community (available on our website) for more information regarding Funding Sources.

The purpose of our library is to supply the Clifton Springs community with resources that can be borrowed for education and enrichment. We believe removing overdue fines for print materials and audio books will promote literacy and increases access to the Clifton Springs Library.

For more information on your library account, please visit the library staff at the Service Desk. Final decisions regarding patron accounts are made at the discretion of the Director.