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# Newfield Public Library has gone Fine Free!

## What does “fine free” mean?

We no longer charge fines for items returned later than their due dates.

## Why have we gone fine free?

In January 2019, the Tompkins County Public Library announced it was going fine free and provided the below information on the benefits. Newfield Public Library has used the same reasoning in our decision to 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 auto-renew.

## What does this mean for our Newfield Public Library patrons?

- You will no longer receive daily late fines on overdue items.
- Existing fines from past overdue items issued by NPL will be waived. It will take some time to remove all past overdue fines in the system. If you still have an overdue fine that appears on your account, please let our staff know at the Circulation Desk.
- You are still responsible for returning all library items by the date due.
- 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

finer accrued; some libraries have fines and some do not, as this is a policy established by each individual library.

- All items are assumed lost when they reach the 30 day overdue point after the final due date, and you will be billed for the replacement costs.
- Past replacement fees for lost or damaged items still apply and will remain on account balances.
- \$1.00 a day out-of-system interlibrary loan fees set by the Finger Lakes Library System still apply.

### **Are there still fees for other library services?**

Yes; fees for library services and products such as library cards, copying, printing, faxing, item replacement costs, book sale cart items, etc. still are necessary in order to cover the costs of and ensure continued services.

### **Does this impact the library's budget?**

Overdue fines have made up a very small amount of the library's overall budget. Going fine free will not significantly impact the budget moving forward. The amount of fines accrued in the system did not reflect the amount of fines actually collected each year.

### **If I'm not paying late fines, how can I still support the library?**

We appreciate the wonderful community support we receive, and are always happy to accept monetary donations, gifts of needed items or volunteer time! Donations can be dropped off or mailed to the Newfield Public Library at the contact information below. If you are interested in becoming involved with the library, please stop by and chat with our staff or send us an email and we would love to talk with you about opportunities.

Please keep in mind that all patrons are still responsible for returning all items in a timely manner and in good condition. You will be billed replacement costs for any items that are 30 days overdue past their final due date or returned damaged.