



**For Immediate Release
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LIBRARY TRUSTEE BOARD ELMINATES DAILY LATE FINES

Orange County, VA – The Orange County Library Board of Trustees voted to eliminate daily late fines for overdue materials and the clearing of all existing overdue fines from library accounts effective January 1, 2023.

What Does It Mean for Library Cardholders?

- No more daily late fines charged on overdue items (except Wi-Fi hotspots.)
- Existing late fines shall be waived from all library accounts.
- Existing charges for lost and damaged materials will remain on customer accounts.

The new policy will continue to support wireless hotspots (which carry a 14-day checkout period) to be subject to a fine of \$1.00 per day. An overdue book or media item should be returned within a reasonable amount of time. Orange County Public Library (OCPL) items kept longer than 30 days past the due date will block a customer's account from additional check outs. The library will continue to charge a lost fee for items which have not been returned by 60 days past their due date.

Why We Are Doing It:

Putting Our Community First:

We believe in providing equal access to knowledge and information to all. This means actively working to eliminate barriers to access and to encourage community-wide use of the Library's vital materials, resources, programs, and services. The decision to eliminate fines reinforces the role of the library as the community's source of materials they need to pursue their goals or interests, whether it is for entertainment, research, or professional growth.

Advancing Equity:

Late fines, no matter how small, are a very real and significant burden for many individuals, children, and families. Library fines worsen existing inequities that disproportionately affect lower socioeconomic households. This barrier can discourage some people who need the library the most from using our resources.

Improving Literacy:

Early literacy skills are crucial to school readiness, so it is important that parents and caregivers from all income levels in our community have access to materials they can use daily in the home to practice reading, singing, talking, writing, and playing with their children. We are thrilled when we see families checking out a stack of books, and families should be encouraged to do so, rather than be fearful of the late fines that might accrue.

For more information about the elimination of daily late fines for overdue materials and the clearing of all existing overdue fines from library accounts, please contact Katie Hill, Library Director at (540) 672-3811 or at khill@orangecountyva.gov.

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