



SCUGOG MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

FINE FREE

FACT SHEET

On October 15, 2020, the Scugog Memorial Public Library Board voted unanimously to adopt a Fine Free Initiative and abolish late fees for our patrons. **Here are the top reasons for this decision:**

- ✓ Enhanced access to library materials for all members of our community no matter what their background or economic status.
- ✓ Fines are not a sustainable or dependable form of revenue. Due to increasing use of the digital collections (which do not incur fines), fine revenue has fallen more than 40% since 2011.
- ✓ Evidence from libraries across North America has repeatedly demonstrated that fine free status has increased circulation, enhanced good will among customers and encouraged lapsed and non-users to return to the library.

Late fines are not effective.

Studies have shown that small fines do not have any impact on return rates.

“The scant research on the value and impact of library fines and fees does not indicate a clear benefit of administering these policies, and they may be costly to enforce.”

- REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACCESS
(COLORADO STATE LIBRARY WHITE PAPER)

In fine-free libraries, people still return items.

- **Library users still need to return items, and** will still receive reminders when a due date approaches and when it has passed.
- Most libraries that eliminate late fines will still block accounts of library users who do not return materials.
- Most libraries still collect fees for lost and damaged items.

Libraries across the country are eliminating late fines, with no reported negative outcomes.

Since the American Library Association called for public libraries to go fine free in January 2019, more than 270 libraries have gone fine free including more than 30 in Ontario.

HOW WILL SCUGOG LIBRARY MAKE SURE PEOPLE BRING THEIR BOOKS BACK?

- We have increased email notifications to make sure everyone is aware of when their items are due. We know how busy life gets!
- Once an item is more than 2 weeks overdue we may limit the library card so no more items can be checked out until the overdue item is returned.
- If an item is 6 weeks overdue we will add a replacement charge to cover our cost for the item, **however** if the item is returned in good condition, the patron will not have to pay any fee. We just want both our items and our patrons to come back!