

# Nelson Public Library is now

## FINE FREE!

AS OF

January 1, 2023!

We are committed to:

### Removing Barriers

Overdue fees put up barriers to many people, and disproportionately impact specific populations.

Eliminating overdue fines is just part of our commitment to the Canadian Urban Libraries' Council Statement on Race & Social Equity.

### Investing In Community

The best investment we can make is ensuring that the Nelson Public Library and its resources are available to all in the community.

### Meeting Community Needs

By focusing on materials recovery versus charging overdue fines, we are meeting needs through responsive library services.

### Providing Access

Equitable access to resources is key to the Library's mission and we wish to invite back those whose memberships may have lapsed.



Removing fines will have a positive impact on our community and on Library services. Fines provide a significant barrier to many, and eliminating them ensures that all residents are able to access the Library's physical and virtual services equally.

And now, more than ever our community needs access to the Library.

More than 200 public libraries across Canada have either eliminated or reduced fines, including: Vancouver, Burnaby, Cranbrook, Grand Forks, Creston, Fernie, Richmond, Surrey & Whistler.

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## How Will it Work

- \*Initial loan periods and renewal options will stay the same.
- \*After the due date, a 45-day grace period will be applied.
- \*Items not returned by the end of the grace period will become "lost", and replacement fees will be applied.
- \*The item(s) will need to be returned, or replacement fees paid, prior to borrowing additional materials.

NOTE: The above applies to Nelson Public Library cardholders only. Local library policies apply for patrons whose home membership is with another library.

## Going Fine Free Myths & Facts

**Myth:** People won't return their Library items.

**Fact:** Studies of public libraries that have gone fine free show that there was no marked increase in late returns, and in some cases saw a drop in the rate of late returns. Patrons will still receive reminder notices, and are still responsible for returning their items.

**Myth:** I'll have to wait longer for my holds.

**Fact:** Of the libraries studied that have implemented a fine free model, there was no marked increase in hold wait times or gaps in collections.

**Myth:** The Library relies on fines as a revenue source.

**Fact:** Our overdue fine revenue has consistently declined with the growth in use of e-materials, which do not accrue overdue fines. Studies show that it costs a library more in time and resources to collect fines than the revenue it brings in. This is one more way for NPL to responsibly manage the public dollars we receive and reinvest in our community.

## Overdue Fines Impact Patrons in Different Ways

- \*Patrons can't always pay overdue fines, which may prevent materials from being returned.
- \*Patrons may be embarrassed or ashamed to have overdue fines so may avoid the library altogether.
- \*Patrons may stop borrowing items in order to avoid accruing overdue fines.
- \*Overdue fines may disproportionately impact specific populations: including youth, people living in poverty, families with children, older adults, newcomers to Canada and marginalized individuals.

As of January 1, 2023 if you have overdue fines on your account, they will be waived. Please note that other library fees may still apply (lost materials etc.).

For more information, and if you have questions, please contact NPL at 250-352-6333 or [library@nelson.ca](mailto:library@nelson.ca).

