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Regina Public Library to stop charging overdue fines

Beginning January 1, 2021, Regina Public Library will no longer charge fees for overdue books and other library materials.

“Our customers will no longer have to worry about overdue fines,” said Sean Quinlan, Chair of the RPL Board of Directors. “You won’t be penalized if you miss a due date for books, magazines, movies and other items.”

RPL has been waiving late fees since its branches closed in March and has extended this amnesty to the end of the year. Prior to the COVID closures, customer access to library services was cut off if they incurred \$10 or more in library fees.

“Paying late fees might not be an issue for some people, but for others it’s a significant cost,” Quinlan said. “This change will remove a barrier to ensure everyone in our community has access to library services.”

Removing fines will not remove the accountability to return library materials. Due dates will remain in place, and customers who do not return library materials after 30 days will be charged replacement fees and/or have their membership suspended until items are returned.

“We do encourage people to return their library materials on time,” Quinlan said. “There are always many people anxious to borrow materials, especially now that we’ve re-opened our branches.”

RPL has been researching and assessing the idea for some time and joins a growing number of North American libraries eliminating late fees.

RPL customers are encouraged to donate to the library in lieu of paying fines. Our donations website offers further information on donating: <https://www.reginalibrary.ca/support-your-library/donate/>.

Each year over the past five years, an average of 2,080 RPL cardholders incurred enough overdue fines to limit their access to library materials. Total revenue from overdue fees amounts to about 0.4 per cent (\$100K) of RPL’s annual budget.

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