

AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

FINES & FEES POLICY

Policy Statement:

The Austin Public Library strives to maximize access to all library materials. The library and its patrons share a responsibility for the collection and as such, the library expects its patrons to return borrowed materials on time and to treat them with care. However, to ensure equitable access to materials and services, the Austin Public Library no longer charges fees for overdue materials owned by APL. Patrons will be responsible for charges resulting from damaged or lost items, and for payment of fines on late materials owned by other libraries.

Guidelines:

Fees:

- The library charges fees to all patrons who damage or lose library materials.
- All patrons can check their accounts online (at austinpubliclibrary.org), or in person at the library, to view whether they have a balance owed for fines or other charges.
- Patrons are required to provide the library with accurate contact information when completing a library card application and to promptly update that information when there are changes.
- The library may use a third-party collection agency for those patrons who do not promptly pay their fees.
- The library will advise new patrons of the late fee policy when a card is issued. Fee amounts are subject to change at the discretion of the library and may vary for items borrowed from other libraries through the inter-library loan system.

Restriction on Library Privileges:

The library will restrict privileges of patrons who owe fees greater than the “fee threshold” specified in the Checkout Policy. The current threshold amount is listed on the information sheet provided to new patrons at the time a card is issued. The threshold is subject to change at the discretion of the library.

Waiving Fees:

At its discretion, the library may waive some fees for patrons who have experienced extreme hardship such as long-term hospitalization, imprisonment, eviction, fire or theft. It is the customer’s responsibility to complete a Request for Waiver and to provide valid supporting documentation verifying the hardship.

Refunds:

Fees paid for lost items may be refunded if the item is returned in good condition and is still in the library’s inventory system. The library’s inventory is frequently updated. A credit will be automatically applied to the patron’s account if the item is accepted. Credit refunds exceeding \$20.00 may be paid to the patron via check issued by the City of Austin and sent via US Postal Service.

Reviewed: April 2021
Approved: August 2015

**AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF FINES AND FEES**

Policy on Waiving Fees:

At its discretion, the library may waive some fees for patrons who have experienced extreme hardship such as long-term hospitalization, imprisonment, eviction, fire or theft. It is the customer's responsibility to complete a Customer Service Form and to provide valid supporting documentation verifying the hardship.

Name: _____ **Lib. Card Number:** _____

Address: _____
Street City State ZIP

Phone: _____ **Best day/time to call you:** _____

Email: _____

Name on card (if different from your own – e.g. a child's card):

_____ **Lib. Card Number:** _____

Amount owed: _____ **Amount you are able to pay:** _____

Amount you are requesting to be waived: _____

I am willing but unable to pay the amount stated above due to a hardship related to one of the following situations (check one):

Financial difficulties Change in employment Medical circumstances Other

Please provide details of your situation and attach any supporting documentation:

I certify that all of the information I have provided on this form and in any accompanying document is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

This Section To Be Completed By Library Staff Only

Payment arrangements agreed upon: _____

Amount to be waived: _____ Waiver recorded in Horizon: _____ (date)

Library Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Patron signature: _____ Date: _____