



Starting June 1st we will no longer charge fines for overdue materials.

What does it mean to be fine free?

It means we do not impose late charges on our materials. We want ALL people to be able to use our resources without money creating a barrier. There will be no late fines on items that are returned within 30 days of being overdue.

Are all Berks County Libraries Fine Free?

No, not all of the Berks County Public Libraries are going fine free. Libraries that are going fine free beside us include Bernville, Boyertown, Exeter, Fleetwood, Muhlenberg, Reading Main, Reading Northeast, Reading, Northwest, Reading Southeast, Schuylkill Valley and Village.

What is the difference between a fine and a fee?

Fines are time based—items borrowed longer than their limits. Fees are item based- if an item is lost or damaged it needs to be replaced and there is a cost to replace those items. Fees that apply to lost or damaged items will still be charged. The fine free program applies only to overdue fines.

Will my existing overdue fines be forgiven, even if I have materials at home that are long overdue?

We want to put overdue materials back into circulation so that they can be enjoyed by more patrons, so when you bring back those overdue books, DVDS, and CDs, we'll forgive any related overdue fines. This doesn't just apply to materials that are a day or a week late—if you're still hanging on to items you checked out before the shutdown we'll gladly take them back and waive the overdue fines if they are Brandywine items or items from other participating fine free libraries.

Can I return materials that the Library considers "lost"?

Any item overdue by 30 days will go to "Lost" and the patron account will be blocked from borrowing until that item is returned. Once the "lost" materials have been returned in good condition, any overdue fines and replacement fees affiliated with them will be removed from your record if the materials belong to one of the

participating Fine Free libraries. Our goal is to get our materials back so that they can be enjoyed and checked out by more patrons!

Will lost or damaged fees also be forgiven?

No. We need to replace lost or damaged materials, patrons are still responsible for costs associated with those materials. You also have the option to provide a copy (in good condition, of course!) of the item that was lost or damaged instead of payment if the item is owned by Brandywine Community Library.

How will the Library encourage people to return their overdue materials?

We will provide an email reminder a few days before materials are due and a letter 10 days after they are overdue. After 30 days overdue, we will assume that overdue materials are lost and notify the patron by letter. At that point, the customer will be responsible for the cost or replacement of the materials. Once the cost of lost materials totals \$10 or more, customers will be unable to check out physical materials, place holds, or request Interlibrary Loans until the materials have been returned, replaced, or their lost fees paid.

Will there still be due dates?

Yes. The library still has a set time limit for materials to be borrowed and we expect items to be returned. Be respectful of your fellow library users who may be waiting for items to be returned, especially new items so that everyone has equal access to our collections.

What happens if I have outstanding fines on my account?

If you have outstanding fines accrued on your Brandywine Community Library Card account, stop in and we will help you clear them. If you have charges from lost or damaged material, please speak with us and we will work with you to find an equitable solution.

What if I borrow items from another Berks County Public Library?

Fines are set by the lending library. If an item is borrowed from a library that still imposes fines, you will be assessed that late fine. The Brandywine Community Library is not charging late fines on items we own or send to other Berks County Libraries.

Are there items that are not fine free?

Certain types of materials will still accrue overdue fines. Items owned by other Berks County Public Libraries that are not participating in the Fine Free pilot may incur late fine charges. Overdue fines will still be charged on the following items: items owned by other Berks County Public Libraries not participating in the Fine Free pilot, Reading Public Museum Pass, Elmwood Park Zoo Pass, Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles Pass and Interlibrary Loans (materials borrowed from outside the county).