

## **Pike County Public Library Eliminates Overdue Fines**

The Pike County Public Library is proud to announce that, effective April 15, 2025, overdue fines will no longer accrue on most library materials. This change builds upon our 2022 decision to eliminate fines for juvenile accounts and reflects our ongoing commitment to promoting equitable access to library resources for all members of our community.

By removing overdue fines, we are breaking down barriers that can discourage library use, particularly for individuals and families with limited financial resources. This initiative is designed to support literacy, encourage lifelong learning, and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from the library's educational and cultural offerings.

While overdue fines will be eliminated, we will continue to hold patrons responsible for the return of borrowed materials. Charges will still apply for items that are lost or damaged and certain high-value materials like the Library of Things items and museum passes. We trust that our patrons will continue to return items in a timely manner so that others in the community can also enjoy them.

This policy change is backed by national trends and research. In 2019, the American Library Association (ALA) passed a resolution highlighting evidence that eliminating fines leads to increased library usage and cardholder registration. The ALA also recognized fines as a form of social inequity and encouraged libraries to move toward eliminating them. Libraries across the country that have adopted fine-free policies have reported no decrease in the return rate of materials, and many have seen a resurgence in community engagement.

At the Pike County Public Library, our mission is to foster literacy and lifelong learning. Going fine-free is a meaningful step toward making our library more inclusive, welcoming, and accessible for everyone in our community.