

The Whitehall Public Library is now Fine Free!

The Whitehall Public Library is now officially fine free. We will no longer charge fines on late items. This ensures that all people have access to library books and materials, which is our primary purpose as a public library. This is a nation-wide trend, including New York Public Libraries and Chicago Public Libraries.

Why?

- Fine free is good for the community. We are stronger when everyone has equal access to the programs, services, and materials they need to pursue their education, career, and life goals.
- Late fines are not effective. National studies have shown that small fines have no impact on return rates.
- It's fiscally responsible. Due to the rise in eBooks (which do not accrue late fines), fines are not a sustainable form of revenue for the library. Money collected from fines and fees has gone down steadily for years and is expected to continue to decrease. Fines are not a significant revenue stream in the library's annual budget.
- We are here to be welcoming and to improve your life, not add stress or challenges.

So, what does this mean for you?

- If you check out or return materials to the library, you will no longer receive a daily late fine on overdue items. Not all libraries are fine free. Only items that are checked out or returned directly to Whitehall Library will not have overdue fines.
- You are still responsible for returning your items in a timely manner so that others have the chance to enjoy them.
- The library will send you a series of reminders to return your items. Most items will be automatically renewed for you up to six times, as long as there are no holds on them.
- Items that are overdue by 6 weeks or more will be considered lost, and you will be billed for them. If you return the items, the bill will be cleared from your account. Again, we just want our items back!