



PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 3, 2023**

No more fines at Musser Public Library

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Library fines have become a thing of the past at Musser Public Library effective today (Jan. 3, 2023), as the library stops charging fines for overdue materials and institutes the forgiveness of past fines. These policy changes will have an impact on more than 2,500 Musser Public Library (MPL) patrons.

The RiverShare Library Consortium – Musser Public Library and six other library systems in eastern Iowa – has elected to discontinue applying overdue fines to items returned late. Some of the consortium's libraries, including Musser, have also decided to waive existing overdue fines. The changes are based on the findings of the American Library Association (ALA), who in January 2019 passed a resolution encouraging libraries to eliminate overdue fines because they are a barrier to equitable access.

"Our vision at Musser Public Library is to be the gateway to learning and information for all ages. By becoming a fine-free library, we go a step further towards attaining this goal," Musser Public Library Director Bobby Fiedler said.

Studies cited by the ALA indicate that some community members can feel discouraged from checking out library items or even obtaining a library card if there is the potential of racking up



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finer for overdue materials. The studies also show that overdue fines on library materials have no impact on ensuring materials are returned on time.

In eliminating fines, our local library aims to bring back library users whose accounts are blocked due to unpaid overdue fines and encourage more people to sign up for a library card and use library materials without the fear of incurring overdue fines.

“We are dedicated to making our library as accessible as possible to those who need it most,” Fiedler said.

Two types of fees Musser Public Library will retain are for lost and damaged items and for equipment usage and rentals, such as copying, printing and renting equipment including hotspots and tablets.

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