

Rachel Crocker FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Albany County Public Library

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*Albany County Public Library announces removal of overdue fines and forgiveness of all existing bills*

Albany County Public Library announced Monday that it will no longer charge overdue fines on any check out items. Overdue fines had been temporarily suspended during the pandemic for all patrons. The ACPL Board of Directors have voted to make this a permanent change.

While the library is eliminating overdue fines, fees for lost or damaged items and shipping costs for inter-library loans will not change. Printing costs will also remain the same.

The change follows national trends and recommendations from the American Library Association.

“We asked staff to do a cost benefit analysis and determined that this was the best move for our community,” said Board Chair, Scott Shoop. “For me this is an equity issue. Overdue fines can block access to members of the community, so this change will help lower barriers and increase access.”

Collecting fees has not been a significant source of revenue for ACPL. Income from overdue fees falls into the library’s operating revenue area of the budget. This area is already a small portion of the overall budget, and overdue fees were the smallest share of operating revenue.

To celebrate ACPL going fine free, the ACPL Board of Directors is doing a one-time fine forgiveness on all past library bills before Feb. 1, 2021. Any bills posted by ACPL prior to that date have now been waived and patron accounts have been reset to $0.

Patron library cards are blocked when fines reach $25 dollars, so this fine forgiveness will unblock all patron cards.

“We are so grateful for our community and the outpouring of support we have received this past year,” said Library Director, Rachel Crocker. “We know that 2020 was a hard and complicated year and that many in our community are struggling. We hope this one-time fine forgiveness will help.”

For those community members who are able and inclined to financially support the library, ACPL always welcomes donations to the Albany County Public Library Foundation at foundation.acplwy.org.

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For more information, contact Rachel Crocker at rcrocker@acplwy.org