El Paso Public Libraries Go "Fine Free"
Fines for Overdue Materials to be Forgiven

EL PASO, Texas—In an effort to increase access to library resources, the El Paso City Council approved to eliminated all overdue fines for El Paso Public Library (EPPL) materials, effective immediately.

The move comes as library systems across the nation do the same in an effort to make their collections more accessible.

While overdue fines have been forgiven, other fees, such as those for damaged or lost materials, will still apply.

The change is expected to benefit many of the nearly 40,000 library patrons, including children, who had been blocked from borrowing due to unpaid fines. These patrons can now resume borrowing materials and enjoying the library's services once again.

"We want to remove any barriers preventing our community from accessing valuable educational, informational, and recreational materials," said Norma Martinez, Library Director. "By eliminating fines, we hope to make it easier for all El Pasoans to engage with our library and take full advantage of the resources available."

Previously, patrons were charged 15 cents per day for each overdue item and were blocked from borrowing once fines reached $5.

Recent studies have shown that late fees do not effectively encourage timely returns and, in some cases, can actually deter the return of library materials. Library systems nationwide that have gone "fine-free," including cities like Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio, report higher rates of material returns and greater patron satisfaction.

For more information on the elimination of overdue fines or for any other service request visit www.ElPasoLibrary.org.

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