

NEW THIS FALL

AT THE GERMANTOWN COMMUNITY LIBRARY



FINE FREE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Starting Monday, September 14, 2020, the Germantown Community Library will be lowering all overdue fines for adult material to \$0.10 per item per day and eliminating all overdue fines on children's and young adult material. Below you will find information about this new policy and how it affects you.

What is the fine if I do not return library items on the due date?

All overdue fines for adult items (books, audiobooks, magazines, DVDs, etc.) are \$0.10 per item per day. There are no longer any overdue fines for youth material (including children and young adult).

How is this different from the previous amount of overdue fines?

Prior to September 14, 2020, all DVDs & Blu-Rays were \$0.50 per item. All other children, young adult and adult material including books, audiobooks, magazines and CDs were \$0.10 per item.

Does this mean that I no longer have to pay any fines at the library?

No, overdue fines on adult material as well as fees for any lost or damaged items will still occur. If any item is over 60 days overdue, you will receive a final notice/bill and you will be charged for the cost of that item. The library will also continue to charge fees for services such as printing, copying, faxing, library card replacement and meeting room rental for profit groups or businesses.

Do I still need to return items to the library?

Yes! You are still responsible for returning any item (children, young adult or adult) back to the library. We want to ensure that all community members have access to the items in our library.

Do I still need to renew items if I would like to keep them for a longer time?

Yes! Please still renew items if you are not able to return them on the due date. Even if they are youth items, we would appreciate if you renew them through your library account. This helps the library keep track of where items are and helps other people have a better idea of when they can expect items to be returned back to the library.

The library also receives about 1/3 of its funding based on the number of checked out and renewed items each year. Renewing items if you need to keep them past the due date helps the library stay funded so that we can continue to provide the community with material, programs and other services.

Do I still need to pay overdue fines on items from other libraries?

You will not be charged for youth items checked out at the Germantown library that were placed on hold from other libraries and checked out at Germantown. You may need pay overdue fines if you go to another library to check out items. Each library has their own fine & fee policy.



Germantown Community Library
N112 W16957 Mequon Rd
(262) 253-7760 www.germantownlibrarywi.org

What happens if I don't return items to the library?

You will receive a reminder notice after the item is 7, 14 & 28 days overdue. After the item is 60 days overdue, you will receive a final notice/bill and we will charge your library account for the cost of that item. Your library card will be blocked if this amount is over \$5 and you will not be able to check out any additional items. The library may also send your account to collections if the item is not paid for after 74 days.

Where can I find out when my library items are due?

You can log into your account at <https://www.monarchcatalog.org>. Go to "My Account." Under "Barcode," enter your 16-digit library card number. Under "Password/Pin," enter your pin number. This is usually the last 4 digits of the phone number that you used to sign up for your library card. Click on "Log In."

You can also check when your items are due through the Monarch2Go app or by calling the library at (262) 253-7760 (press 2 for the Circulation Desk).

How can I renew my library items?

Once you are logged into your library account, select the items that you want to renew. Scroll down and click on "Renew Selected Items." You can also click on "Renew All Items" if you want to renew all of the items that are checked out on your account. Items may not renew if another person has a hold on that item or if you have already renewed the item 2 times.

You can also renew your items through the Monarch2Go app or by calling the library at (262) 253-7760 (press 2 for the Circulation Desk).

Do I still need to pay my overdue fines that occurred prior to September 14, 2020?

Yes! Previous fines will still be on your library account. Due to COVID-19, no overdue fines were charged from March through August of 2020.

Why lower the overdue fines to \$0.10 on all adult material?

When the current fine structure was set decades ago, DVDs were a very small collection in the library and were in high demand. They were often more expensive to purchase and the fine structure was more in line with video rental services in the area. This is no longer the case and the reasoning to have a higher overdue fine for DVDs and Blu-Rays is not relevant. A number of neighboring libraries have also made overdue fines consistent on all material.

Why eliminate overdue fines on children's and young adult material?

The mission of the Germantown Community Library is to provide our community with access to material, services and information regardless of their income level. Strong libraries build strong communities. The community is stronger when all residents have equal access to information. Charging overdue fines can be seen as a barrier to access for these services. Youth items are not typically as high in-demand as adult DVDs or books. Studies have also shown that small fines have little or no impact on return rates. Eliminating fines for youth material is especially important when providing the children and families of our community with library material and resources. We hope eliminating overdue fines for youth material will encourage prior users to come back to the library.



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Why not eliminate overdue fines on all library material?

Good question! Currently, new adult items (especially DVDs and fiction) have a high number of other people on the hold list waiting for that item. This is something we may look at in the future.

If there are no overdue fines on children's and young adult material won't people just keep the items forever?

If an item is not returned on time, the person will receive a reminder notice after the item is 7, 14 & 28 days overdue. After the item is 60 days overdue, they will receive a final notice/bill and we will charge their library account for the cost of that item. Their library card will also be blocked if this amount is over \$5 and they will not be able to check out any additional items.

Who made the decision to lower and eliminate overdue fines?

This decision was recommended by the Library Director to the Germantown Community Library Board on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 based on current practices and data. The Library Board voted unanimously to lower all overdue fines to \$0.10 per day per item and eliminate overdue fines for all youth items.

Have other libraries eliminated fines?

Each library is different and has their own fines & fee policy. A number of libraries throughout the nation and Wisconsin have gone fine free or are looking to do so. Many libraries in the area charge overdue fines, but about 1/4 of the libraries in Washington County and adjacent counties (Dodge, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan and Waukesha) are completely fine free. A little less than 1/2 of these libraries are fine free for youth material and/or have lowered the overdue fine rates on DVDs and Blu-Rays.

Isn't the library funded by overdue fines? How will lowering and eliminating overdue fines affect library services?

The library is primarily funded by taxes - both from residents in the Village of Germantown and in areas in Washington County that do not have a library (such as Jackson and Richfield). Overdue fines make up only about 1% of the annual budget and this change will have very little impact on library material, programs and services. In comparison to overdue fines, other sources of reimbursement that make up about 1/3 of the annual budget equal between \$2.33 and \$3.50 per item that is checked out.

I see paying overdue fines as a donation to the library. Can I still donate money to the library?

Yes! We have a change jar available at the Circulation Desk. We can also accept checks made out to the Germantown Community Library Board.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions about this decision?

The following individuals are available if you have additional questions about any of the information listed above:

Diane Long, Circulation Manager
dlong@germantownlibrarywi.org
(262) 253-7760 (ext. 2017)

Trisha Smith, Library Director
smithp@germantownlibrarywi.org
(262) 253-7760 (ext. 2005)

Joyce Nelson, Library Board President
jnelson@germantownlibrarywi.org



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