

# **BERTHA BARTLETT PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

## **FINES, FEES, AND REPLACEMENT COSTS POLICY**

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### **1. Purpose**

**1.1** To establish consistent and equitable practices for lost or damaged Library materials, account charges, and replacement costs.

**1.2** The Library seeks to encourage the timely return and responsible use of Library materials while maintaining equitable access to Library services.

**1.3** The Library does not charge overdue fines for Library materials.

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### **2. Overdue and Lost Materials**

**2.1** Library materials are expected to be returned or renewed by their due dates.

**2.2** Materials that remain overdue beyond the period established by the Library's circulation system may be declared lost.

**2.3** When an item is declared lost, the patron's account will be charged the actual replacement cost of the item.

**2.4** The Library Director or designee may adjust or waive charges when circumstances warrant.

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### **3. Returned Lost Materials**

**3.1** If a patron pays for a lost item and subsequently returns the item before the Library has purchased a replacement, the replacement cost paid by the patron will be refunded.

**3.2** No refund will be issued after the Library has purchased a replacement for the lost item.

**3.3** An item returned in a condition that prevents its continued Library use may be considered damaged beyond repair and will not qualify for a refund.

**3.4** Refunds will be processed according to Library and City financial procedures.

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## 4. Damaged Materials

**4.1** Patrons are responsible for Library materials borrowed on their accounts and may be charged for damage beyond normal wear and tear.

**4.2** Normal wear and tear resulting from reasonable Library use will not result in a charge.

**4.3** Library staff will determine whether damaged material can reasonably be repaired and returned to circulation or must be replaced.

**4.4** Materials damaged beyond reasonable repair will be charged at the actual replacement cost of the item.

**4.5** Charges for repairable damage or for missing or damaged components will be determined on a case-by-case basis. (i.e.\$1 per page of damaged books, DVD case \$5)

**4.6** Factors considered may include the extent of the damage, cost of repair or replacement components, age and condition of the material, and whether the item can reasonably remain in circulation.

**4.7** If repair is not practical or appropriate, the patron may be charged the actual replacement cost of the item.

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## 5. Borrowing Restrictions

**5.1** Adult patrons with account charges exceeding **\$25.00** may not borrow additional materials until the balance is reduced to \$25.00 or less or other arrangements have been approved by the Library Director or designee.

**5.2** Patrons under 18 years of age with account charges exceeding **\$25.00** may, at the discretion of the Library Director or designee, continue to borrow a limited number of materials while the outstanding balance is being resolved.

**5.3** The Library Director or designee may make reasonable exceptions when doing so supports continued Library access while protecting Library property.

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## 6. Library Cards

**6.1** Replacement Library cards may be issued for lost or damaged cards without charge.

**6.2.** Patrons who request a lost card more than once per year may be charged up to \$5 at librarian discretion.

**6.3** Patrons should promptly notify the Library when a Library card is lost or stolen.

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## **7. Replacement Costs**

**7.1** Patrons are responsible for the actual replacement cost of Library materials that are lost or damaged beyond reasonable repair.

**7.2** The actual replacement cost will be based on the Library's cost to obtain a substantially equivalent replacement at the time the charge is assessed.

**7.3** When an identical replacement is unavailable, Library staff may determine the cost of a comparable replacement.

**7.4** The Library is not required to accept a replacement item purchased by the patron in place of payment unless approved in advance by the Library Director or designee.

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## **8. Payment and Account Adjustments**

**8.1** Payments will be credited to the patron's Library account.

**8.2** The Library Director or designee may waive or adjust charges when appropriate, including circumstances involving Library error, unusual hardship, or other extenuating circumstances.

**8.3** Refunds for lost materials subsequently returned will be governed by Section 3 of this policy.

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## **9. Patron Responsibility**

**9.1** Patrons are responsible for materials checked out on their Library accounts.

**9.2** Parents or legal guardians are responsible for materials borrowed on accounts established for their minor children to the extent permitted by applicable law and Library policy.

**9.3** Patrons should promptly notify the Library of lost or damaged materials or circumstances affecting their ability to return Library materials.

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## **10. Policy Administration**

**10.1** The Library Director or designee is responsible for administering this policy and establishing procedures necessary for its implementation.

**10.2** Questions or disputes regarding account charges may be referred to the Library Director.

**10.3** Decisions of the Library Director may be appealed to the Bertha Bartlett Public Library Board of Trustees.

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## **Policy History**

Established: January 1986

Revised: August 2006

Updated: December 2008

Revised: August 2011

Updated: December 2014

Updated: October 2018

Reviewed: July 2021

Updated: January 23, 2023

Revised: August 2026