



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Contra Costa County Library

(925) 608-7700

### **Contra Costa County Library is saying goodbye to fines**

Beginning January 1, 2019, the Contra Costa County Library will eliminate overdue fines on all library materials. The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors voted today, Tuesday, December 11 in favor of the proposal to eliminate daily fines on overdue books, magazines, DVDs and other materials.

By eliminating fines, the library is removing barriers and making access easy, equitable and enjoyable for everyone.

“Our libraries are open for the entire community to take advantage of all they have to offer,” said Contra Costa County Supervisor Karen Mitchoff. “Saying goodbye to fines gives everyone an opportunity to restart their relationship with the library.”

Of more than 650,000 cardholders countywide, 118,450 (18%) currently have their cards blocked due to fines. Forty-three percent of youth accounts currently owe a balance and approximately 21,000 youth cards are blocked at a critical time in their lives.

“Families are staying away from the library because it’s simply too expensive for them,” said County Librarian Melinda Cervantes. “We don’t want people to have to choose between putting food on the table and reading.”

Overdue library material fines and library material replacement charges make up approximately 2 percent of the library’s revenue. Since 2013, revenue from fines and charges has decreased by 31 percent. During this same period, circulation of eBooks and other e-resources have increased 128 percent. E-resources are already fine free and benefit those with greater access to technology.

Eliminating overdue fines will also result in more positive customer interactions and allow staff to focus on creativity and exceptional service.

“We have so many outstanding and enthusiastic staff members who would much rather spend their time helping someone find the next great read or learn how to use one of our online

resources,” said Deputy County Librarian Nancy Kreiser. “They can spend more time making people smile.”

The Contra Costa County Library is the first county library in California and largest in the state to eliminate fines for everyone. The Library joins others across the country that have gone fine-free.

Patrons will still be expected to return library materials on time. Checkout periods on materials will remain the same and patrons will incur a replacement charge if materials are not returned 30 days after the due date.

For media inquiries, please contact Public Information Officer Brooke Converse at [bconvers@ccclib.org](mailto:bconvers@ccclib.org) or (925) 608-7713.

**For general questions, please contact Library Administration at [libadmin@ccclib.org](mailto:libadmin@ccclib.org) or (925) 608-7700.**