

Fees & Forgiveness

The Library must occasionally assess fees for late, lost, or damaged items. The Library follows the Evergreen Indiana Circulation Policy and Procedures when charges are necessary. The following is a clarification of the fee structure and explanation of circumstances when fines may or may not be forgiven.

When materials are not returned in a timely manner, the patron could be charged for multiple fees, including:

- Late fines up to \$10
- A processing fee of \$10
- The damaged/lost materials fine for that item
- A collection fee of \$10 for balances over \$25

Types of Fines

The most common type of fine is a **late fine** of 25¢ per day, per item.

In some cases, a patron may be charged an additional amount. The **processing fee** occurs when a material has been listed in the system as lost or damaged. This fee is to have the reordered item reprocessed and cataloged.

Accounts that have generated fees over \$25 will be charged a \$10 **collection fee**. If the collection fee was applied due to the fault of the patron, *it will not be forgiven*.

If a material is returned damaged, the patron will be charged a **damaged materials fine**, which is the value of the item when it was purchased.

The **lost materials fine** is for the value of the item when it was purchased. An item becomes listed as lost in two ways, either when the patron notifies the library the item has been lost, or the system switches the item status from long overdue to lost after 45 days.

The damaged or lost materials fine varies. It is the value of the item at the time the item was purchased. Occasionally, the library receives donations that become a part of the collection. For those materials, the library also keeps a standard list of replacement costs, depending on the type of material. *Under no circumstances will a patron be allowed to purchase a replacement item on behalf of the library.*

If a lost item is returned, then the lost materials fine will be forgiven if there still is an outstanding balance; however, any collection fee, processing fee, or late fees will still apply. *Once the fines for lost and damaged materials have been paid, the patron owns the item. There are no refunds.*

Claimed Returned

Mistakes happen. That is why the Bloomfield-Eastern Greene County Public Library follows the standards set by Evergreen Indiana, which states that each patron can have up to three items claimed returned without being charged a lost materials fee. This option is to be used as a last resort only after both the Library and the patron have searched for the material.

If a patron states that an item was returned, but it is still showing as checked out, the staff member will search for the materials on the shelf. If they are found, the materials will be checked in with a back date of when the material was returned. These items will not be counted in Evergreen towards the claimed returned allowable amount. If the item cannot be found on the shelf, the item will be considered claimed returned.

If the item was claimed returned before the due date, the patron will not be charged a late fee. If the patron claims the date returned was after the due date, late fees up to the date the item was claimed returned will still apply.

The patron will not be charged for the lost item fee. In addition, as a claimed returned item, the processing fee should be forgiven. After adjusting the account for claims returned, if the total cost of late fees on the account are less than \$25, the collection fee should also be forgiven.

If the patron has more than three claimed returned materials in one instance, and the items cannot be found, the Director should be notified. If the patron exceeds the allowable 3 claims returned, the patron will be charged for all fees.

Exceptions

The Bloomfield-Eastern Greene County Public Library understands that sometimes there are exceptional circumstances that can occur. Fees due to the result of those circumstances will be reviewed individually by the Director.