



# Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library

## Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Fines Policy

Whereas libraries exist to enrich their community and strive to provide stress-free and open access to all our patrons, Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library is adopting a fine-free policy with regard to the majority of our checkout materials.

Libraries across the nation have demonstrated that imposing late fees on patrons is not an effective deterrent to the return of late materials. Instead, it commonly creates barriers for youth or may cause patron guilt, making library use less likely. We strive to overcome these barriers and increase access to our patrons, trusting that our show of good faith will encourage patrons to return materials in a timely manner.

### LATE or DAMAGED MATERIALS

While traditional fines will not accrue, a replacement cost will be charged if an item is not returned within a reasonable time. All materials will be assumed lost **after 28 days past due** and the patron's account will automatically incur the full replacement cost of the item. Once paid for, materials are the property of the patron and replacement fees will not be refunded.

Patrons will be responsible for the full replacement cost of an item if it is returned damaged.

Patrons with charges for lost or damaged items will have their account blocked until related fees have been paid or have been satisfactorily worked out with the library director/library staff.

If an item is late due to being **lost or damaged**, patrons should notify Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library of the items' status. Librarians will work with patrons to extend due dates (when possible and within reason) for missing items.

**Replacements** may be accepted for lost or damaged items if:

- The library has been notified within a reasonable amount of time
- The replacement is in "new" condition and matches the description of the item lost/damaged (i.e. hardcover, paperback, large print)
- Has been approved by library staff

### EXCLUDED MATERIALS



# Fortville-Vernon Township

## Public Library

The Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library cannot make policies governing what happens to materials belonging to other libraries, this policy does not apply to Interlibrary Loans.

### **OVERDUE NOTICES**

Patrons who provide an email address and/or SMS text messages will receive an email/text message notice three days before their materials are due and a notice on the day their materials are due. They will also receive overdue notices at 7 and 14 days. They will further receive notices for lost and damaged billing in applicable situations.

Overdue notices are sent as a courtesy from the Evergreen Indiana Libraries. Failure to receive notices does not exempt patrons from the responsibility for payment for library materials or overdue fines and fees.

### **HOLDS**

We are confident that our patrons will strive to continue returning library materials in a timely manner. When items with holds have not been returned on time, library staff will make an effort to contact patrons with the items checked out to ensure timely access to desired items.

### **PRIOR LATE FINES**

All late fines existing before the adoption of this policy will be waived. Lost/damaged item charges will remain.

Approved 7/19/2022