

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT:

AGENDA DATE:

PUBLIC HEARING DATE:

CONTACT PERSON NAME:

PHONE NUMBER:

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:

STRATEGIC GOAL:

SUBGOAL:

SUBJECT:

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH:

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

REPORTING OF CONTRIBUTION OR DONATION TO CITY COUNCIL:

NAME	AMOUNT (\$)

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

Norma P. Martinez

DEPARTMENT HEAD: _____

(If Department Head Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)



El Paso Public Libraries

MAYOR

Renard U. Johnson

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Norma Martinez, Director of Library Services *npm*

CITY COUNCIL

Date: 3-18-2025

District 1

Alejandra Chávez

Subject: Fine Free Proposal

District 2

Dr. Josh Acevedo

Requesting an amendment to Ordinance No. 10739, as amended by Ordinance Nos. 15658, 15167, 15006, 12909, and 12141 to revise the overdue fines charged by the El Paso Public Library, which originally established the manner in which the fees charged by the City will be set and that all current fines be forgiven.

District 3

Deanna M. Rocha

District 4

Cynthia Boyar Trejo

The El Paso Library will implement the Fine Free program and requests to amend Schedule C to remove the overdue fine, \$0.15/per day which in accordance with Section 46 of the FY2025 Budget Resolution, requires Council approval.

District 5

Ivan Niño

District 6

Art Fierro

District 7

Lily Limón

District 8

Chris Canales

CITY MANAGER

Dionne Mack

Norma Martinez – Director of Library Services
Library Administration | 915-212-3200 | www.EIPasoTexas.gov



DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 10739 AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NOS. 15658, 15167, 15006, 12909, AND 12141, AND AMENDING THE BUDGET RESOLUTION FEE SCHEDULE TO REVISE THE OVERDUE FINES FOR MATERIALS CHARGED BY THE EL PASO PUBLIC LIBRARY TO \$0.00 AND FORGIVE ANY OUTSTANDING FINE BALANCE FOR OVERDUE MATERIALS

WHEREAS, in 2019 the American Library Association passed a resolution encouraging libraries throughout the nation to discontinue fees for overdue library materials as a mechanism to increase library usage and expand access for all populations; and

WHEREAS, City Council desires to adopt a fine of \$0.00 for overdue materials by El Paso Public Libraries because the accumulation of overdue fines deters patrons of the Library from continuing to utilize the Library’s services and deprives others of the use of such items; and

WHEREAS, City Council desires to forgive all outstanding fine balances to help ensure the public purpose that library resources remain accessible to everyone; and

WHEREAS, the amount of lost Library material exceeds the revenue collected from fines and libraries around the State have seen a positive impact on Library use as a result of forgiving and eliminating fines.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

1. That the overdue fine charges for the El Paso Public Library currently contained in Ordinance No. 10739, as amended by Ordinance Nos. 12141, 12909, 15006, 15167, and 15658 shall be amended to read as follows:

OVERDUE FINES

All items (adult and juvenile books, paperbacks, fotonovelas, revistas, videotapes, audiocassettes, kits, and compact discs) \$0.00 per day.

2. That Schedule C Line Item Number 863 for Overdue Fines at the Library in the City’s Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025 be waived and that future Budget Resolutions also remove the charge for Overdue Fines at the Library.
3. That all current overdue fines be forgiven.
4. That the schedule of overdue fines for items described above shall become effective as of April 29, 2025.
5. Except as expressly herein amended, Ordinance No. 10739, as previously amended by Ordinance Nos. 12141, 12909, 15006, 15167, and 15658, shall remain in full force and effect including current fees for damaged or lost materials.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

Renard U. Johnson
Mayor

ATTEST:

Laura D. Prine
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Jesus A. Quintanilla

Jesus A. Quintanilla
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Norma B. Martinez

Norma Martinez, Director
El Paso Public Libraries

ORDINANCE NO. _____

FY 2026 Department Schedule C

DEPARTMENT: Library
 GOAL: 4

Please select all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> New Fee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services no longer provided
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing Fee Increased Cost

FY 2025 Line #	Account	Fee Description	Detail	FY 2025 Adopted	FY 2026 Requested	Change	Comments
857	443000	Overdue Fines		\$0.15/day	\$0.00/day	Delete	It is not cost effective to charge overdue fees
893	450567	Library Fees	Scanner	\$0.10	\$0.00	Delete	Our equipment does not have the capability to charge the fee

Fee Changes Description (Mandatory) <small>(Briefly describe the Fee changes and its associated impact - including revenue impact)</small>	Performance Management <small>(Provide a listing of how the successful implementation of this request will be measured)</small>
<p>Overdue Fees - it is not cost effective in charging fees to the patrons, because of all the indirect costs associated in processing the fees. Scanner Fees - Our Kiosks and scanning equipment were not able to communicate to apply the fee to the patrons. Comprise and City IT tried to make it work but were unsuccessful.</p>	



CITY OF EL PASO



El Paso Public
LIBRARIES

Enhancing Educational Opportunities Through Policy

Norma Martinez
Director of Library Services

El Paso Public Library Proposes To Eliminate Late Fees

- Ordinance establishes late fees at the Library
- The present fine is **\$.15 cents/item/day** - Capped out at **\$5.00/item**
- Patrons blocked: **39,506**
- There are **177,116** overdue library items checked out by patrons
- Over the previous 5 years, the average annual revenue collected from these late fees is **\$24,963**



Purpose of Eliminating Late Fees

- Bring back the 39,506 patrons presently blocked
- Make library services and resources more accessible to all El Pasoans
- This change would apply only to late fees
- Fees for damaged/lost materials will still apply
- Patrons *can* still be blocked for overdue items, but they do not accrue financial fines



Practice that has been eliminated in many Library Systems across the County

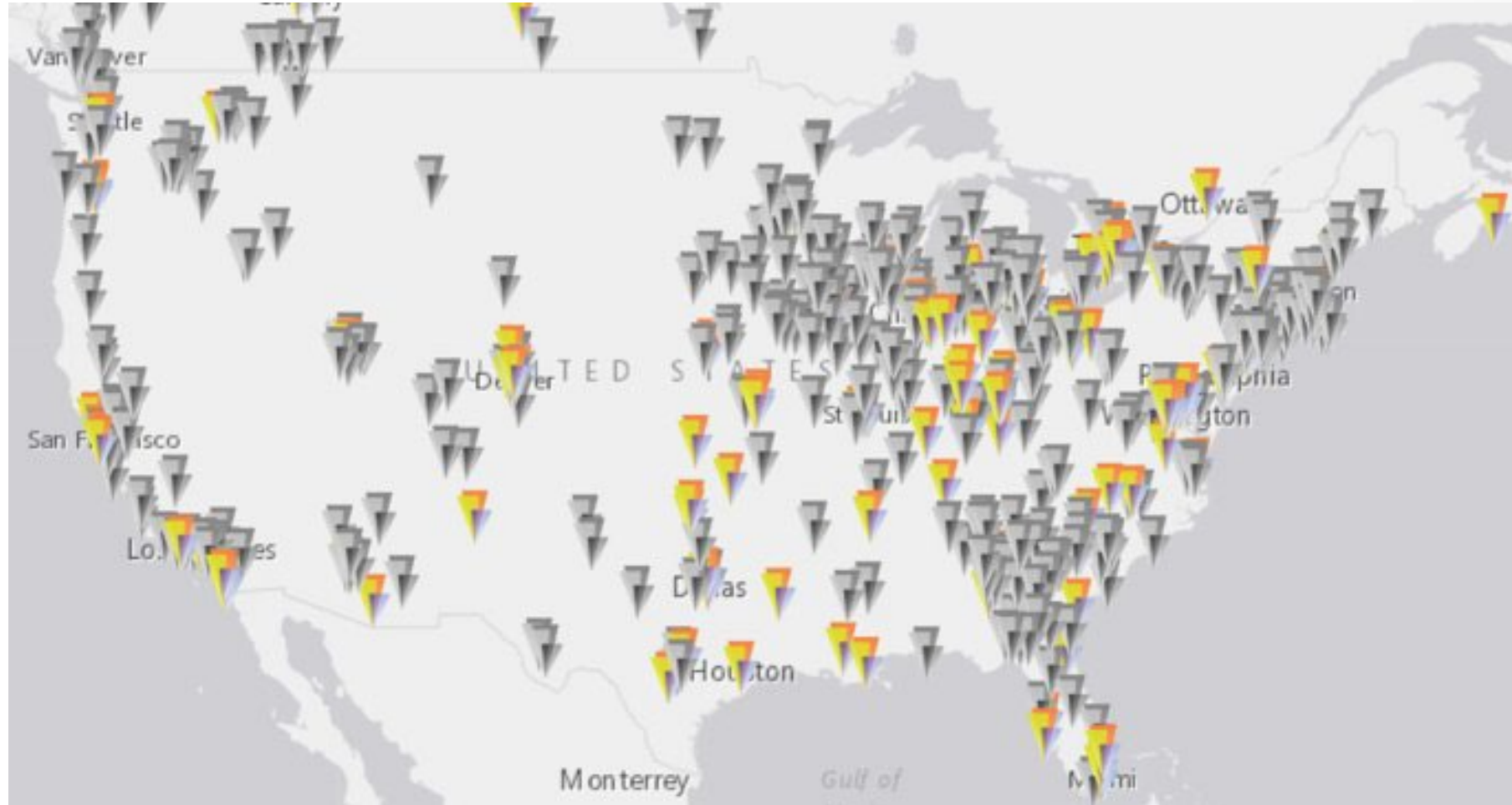
- Research on the topic suggests that late fees have a tendency to cause people to avoid visiting library systems and may influence patrons not to return overdue library items
- Administrative efforts in collecting fines are resource-intensive for libraries, and the revenue collected is minimal compared to the replacement costs of outstanding items
- Libraries that have eliminated late fees have experienced an increase in library usage and a downward trend in lost library materials
- Fines also tend to disproportionately affect financially disadvantaged communities

Fine Free Libraries in Texas

- Arlington Public Library
- Austin Public Library
- Dallas Public Library
- Ft. Worth Public Library
- Houston Public Library
- Harris County Public Library
- San Antonio Public Library
- Seguin Public Library
- Tom Green County Library
- UT System Libraries
- Others

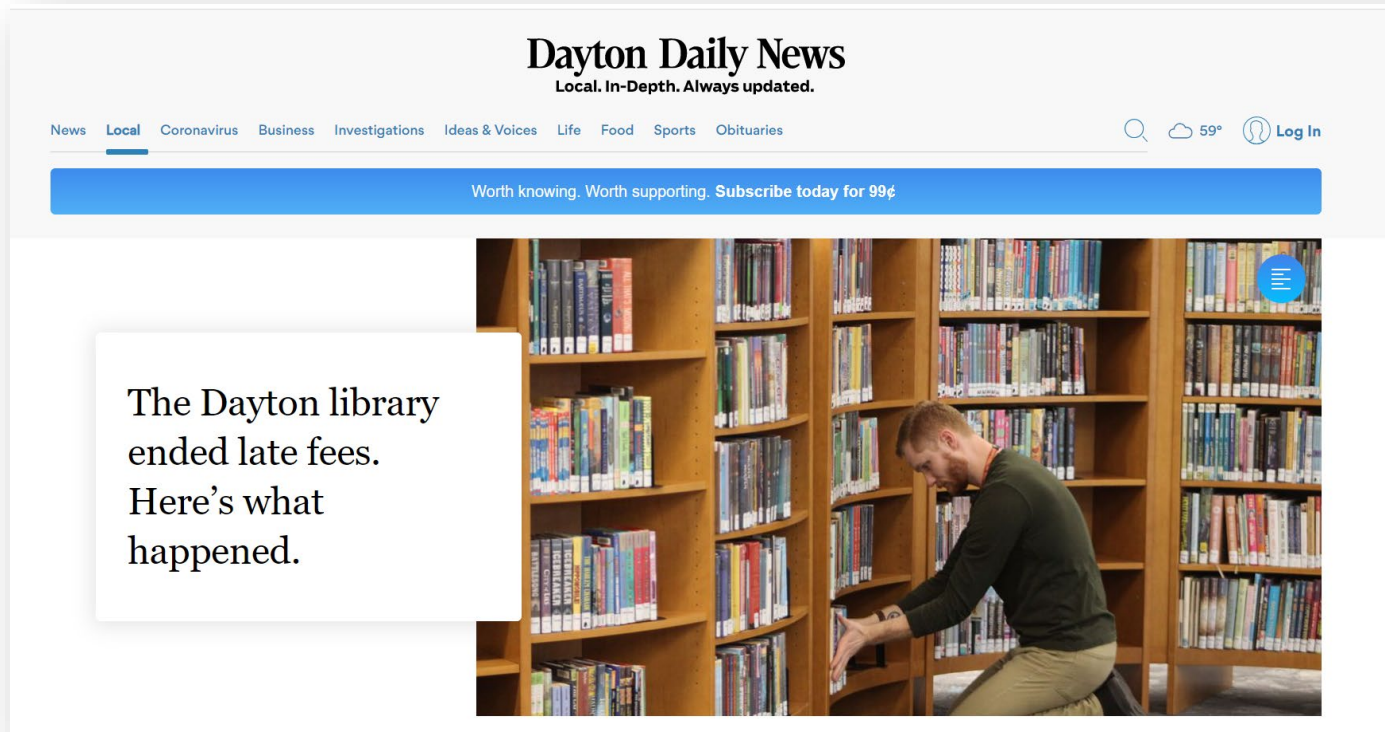


Growing Trend



Hundreds of Libraries Across the Country Are Now Fine Free

Results Can Be Surprising



The screenshot shows the Dayton Daily News website. The header includes the site name "Dayton Daily News" with the tagline "Local. In-Depth. Always updated." Below the header is a navigation menu with categories like News, Local, Coronavirus, Business, Investigations, Ideas & Voices, Life, Food, Sports, and Obituaries. A search bar and weather information (59°) are also visible. A blue banner below the navigation menu reads "Worth knowing. Worth supporting. Subscribe today for 99¢". The main content area features a photograph of a man kneeling in a library aisle, surrounded by bookshelves. A white text box on the left side of the image contains the text: "The Dayton library ended late fees. Here's what happened."

“...surprisingly, fewer borrowed materials have become overdue, and borrowers actually have returned more overdue materials than they did in 2017”, officials said.

...(libraries) have little empirical evidence that charging fines results in greater circulation of library materials, or indeed the return of items in a timely manner.

- Study by the Colorado State Library

Requested Council Action

An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 10739 as amended by Ordinance Nos. 15658, 15167, 15006, 12909, and 12141, and amending the Budget Resolution Fee Schedule to revise the Overdue Fines for Materials charged by the El Paso Public Library to \$0.00 and forgive any outstanding fine balance for overdue materials.

Questions



El Paso Public Library
www.elpasolibrary.org



MISSION



Deliver exceptional services to support a high quality of life and place for our community.

VISION



Develop a vibrant regional economy, safe and beautiful neighborhoods and exceptional recreational, cultural and educational opportunities powered by a high performing government.



VALUES

Integrity, **R**espect, **E**xcellence,
Accountability, **P**eople