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Town of Acton

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Acton Memorial Library Trustees Vote to Forego Most Late Fees

ACTON – Town Manager John Mangiaratti and Acton Memorial Library Director Danielle Savin announce that the Library will forego late fees for most overdue materials, continuing a policy that was adopted temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Library's Board of Trustees voted to continue the policy based on the staff's recommendation.

Library staff researched systems that no longer charge fines, both locally and nationally. The survey determined that eliminating fines increased both check-outs and returns; increased the number of patrons who renewed their library card; and led to more positive interactions between staff and patrons.

The American Library Association, the world's oldest library organization, in 2019 urged public libraries nationwide to discontinue fines for outstanding materials.

The Acton Memorial Library policy eliminates fines for most, but not all, materials:

- Replacement fees for lost or damaged items still apply.
- Patrons will be charged a replacement fee if an item is overdue by 30 days or more. The charge will be removed once the item is returned.

- Museum passes will be charged a late fine of \$10 per day.
- Fines will be assessed for an interlibrary loan from Acton Memorial Library if the borrowing library charges fines.

“The core vision is that libraries should be accessible to all, regardless of income. Charging fines creates a barrier to access to information,” Director Savin said. “The Library has waived fines during the COVID-19. Patrons have been very supportive, and we’ve seen the positive results.”

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