

BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

FINE – FREE POLICY

Adopted: February 14, 2022

In keeping with public libraries across the country, the Board of Trustees of Berkeley Heights Public Library is instituting a Fine-Free Policy, starting March 1, 2022. BHPL stopped charging fines during the Covid-19 quarantine in 2020 and removed outstanding fines from patron records. Only fees for lost and/or damaged items were retained. Removing fines also restored the ability to borrow materials and use downloadable resources for cards that had been blocked.

Although Fine-Free will apply to the majority of the collection, fines will still be charged for high demand titles. Popular items such as New Books (adult), new DVDs (adult and children's) and WiFi hotspots will continue to accrue fines. Patrons will have the ability to renew these items from their home computers and phones or by calling BHPL. Renewals will be blocked only if other patrons have placed reserves or the renewal limit per item (2) has been reached.

In order to make materials and titles available to as many residents as possible, overdue reminders will be sent by email at 14 days and a bill for replacement value will be sent by mail at 28 days. When the bill is sent, the patron's account will be blocked until all items are returned and any applicable fines paid.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) materials, borrowed from other libraries for BHPL patrons, will also incur fines. BHPL is responsible for these items and, as necessary, will charge any replacement costs/fees to the patron. The same will apply to items borrowed from MUF and MURAL libraries through Reciprocal Borrowing agreements. Any charges will be passed along to the patron.

This policy is subject to change as new formats and collections are added.

New fee schedule:

WiFi Hotspots	.25 per day
New adult books	.10 per day
New DVDs	.25 per day
ILL materials	.25 per day