

Library Board of Trustees Authorizes Use of Collection Agency

News Release Date:

Apr 20 2010

For Immediate Release

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Bloomington, IND--The Monroe County Public Library Board of Trustees has authorized the library to use a collection agency for long outstanding fines and billed materials. The library is seeking to encourage responsible lifelong library use and to optimize stewardship of taxpayers' investment in library resources. The policy takes effect on May 1. **To help patrons "clear the decks" of fines and charges, the library is holding Double Dollar Days, Sunday, April 25, through Saturday, May 1. During this week, the library will match patrons dollar for dollar to clear their accounts.**

The library makes great efforts to help patrons bring materials back on time. The loan period for most materials is 21 days, and it's easy to renew online, at Express Check, and by calling 349-3090. Email reminders go out two days before an item is due. There are no fines until the third day after the due date, and no fines at all for children's and outreach materials. When patrons owe less than \$10, they may still check out materials.

After patrons have items overdue or missing, the library continues to offer help: a gradual payment plan for those owing between \$10 and \$100, payment by credit/debit card, a Fine Option Program where patrons 14 and older can volunteer at the library to earn credit, and a Read It Off Program for youth 18 years or younger.

Still, the library has a substantial problem with missing/lost items and outstanding charges. Fortunately, only a small percentage of patrons do not return materials. This new policy will not affect the vast majority of the library's patrons.

The Board decision to employ a collection agency was made with fairness to all library patrons in mind. Materials that are not returned are not available for others to borrow. The money the library must take from its budget to replace non-returned items is better used to purchase new items for the collection. The library is serious about recovering overdue materials and charges. Accounts that are 174 days overdue may be reported to a credit bureau by the collection agency.

"The goal of the new materials recovery program is to encourage everyone to return books and movies on time so that others can enjoy them," says Bara Swinson, Circulation Manager. "The library is committed to providing excellent service and to having materials available that patrons want."

Updated June 03, 2013





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- Links:**
- [1] <http://mcgpl.info/print/pdf/newspage/library-board-trustees-authorizes-use-collection-agency>
 - [2] <http://mcgpl.info/print/pdf/newspage/library-board-trustees-authorizes-use-collection-agency>
 - [3] <http://mcgpl.info/print/pdf/newspage/library-board-trustees-authorizes-use-collection-agency>