

Overdue Fine Free & Fee Card Elimination

San Leandro City Council
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San Leandro Public Library



What is Overdue Fine Free?

- The elimination of late/overdue fines on library materials.
- It is NOT the elimination of fees on lost, damaged, or long-overdue items.

Why have libraries across the nation eliminated overdue fines?

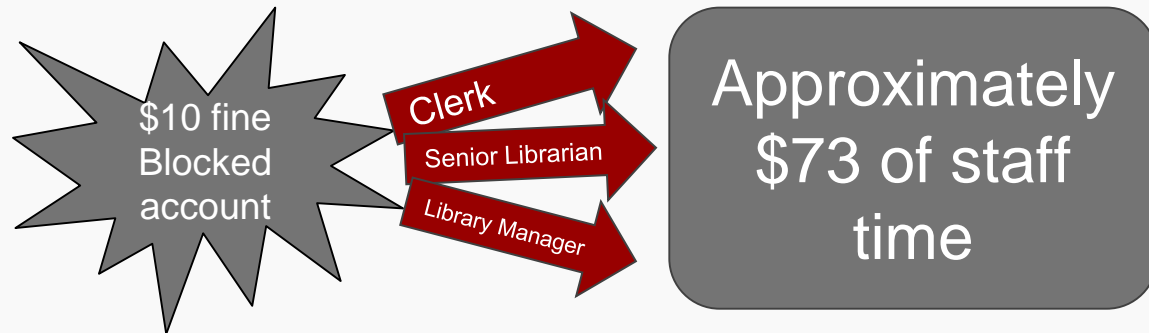
- Overdue fines are not effective incentives.
- Overdue fines pose an economic barrier for patrons, particularly those who need library services the most.

Why continued...

- Libraries anticipate that removing overdue fines will encourage patrons that were previously blocked to become active users again and will motivate new users to join.

Why continued...

- Provide better customer service to our patrons & better use of staff time.

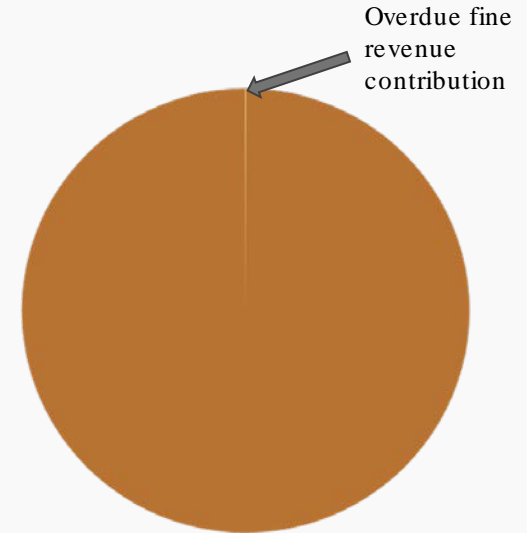


Why continued...

- Minimal fiscal impact

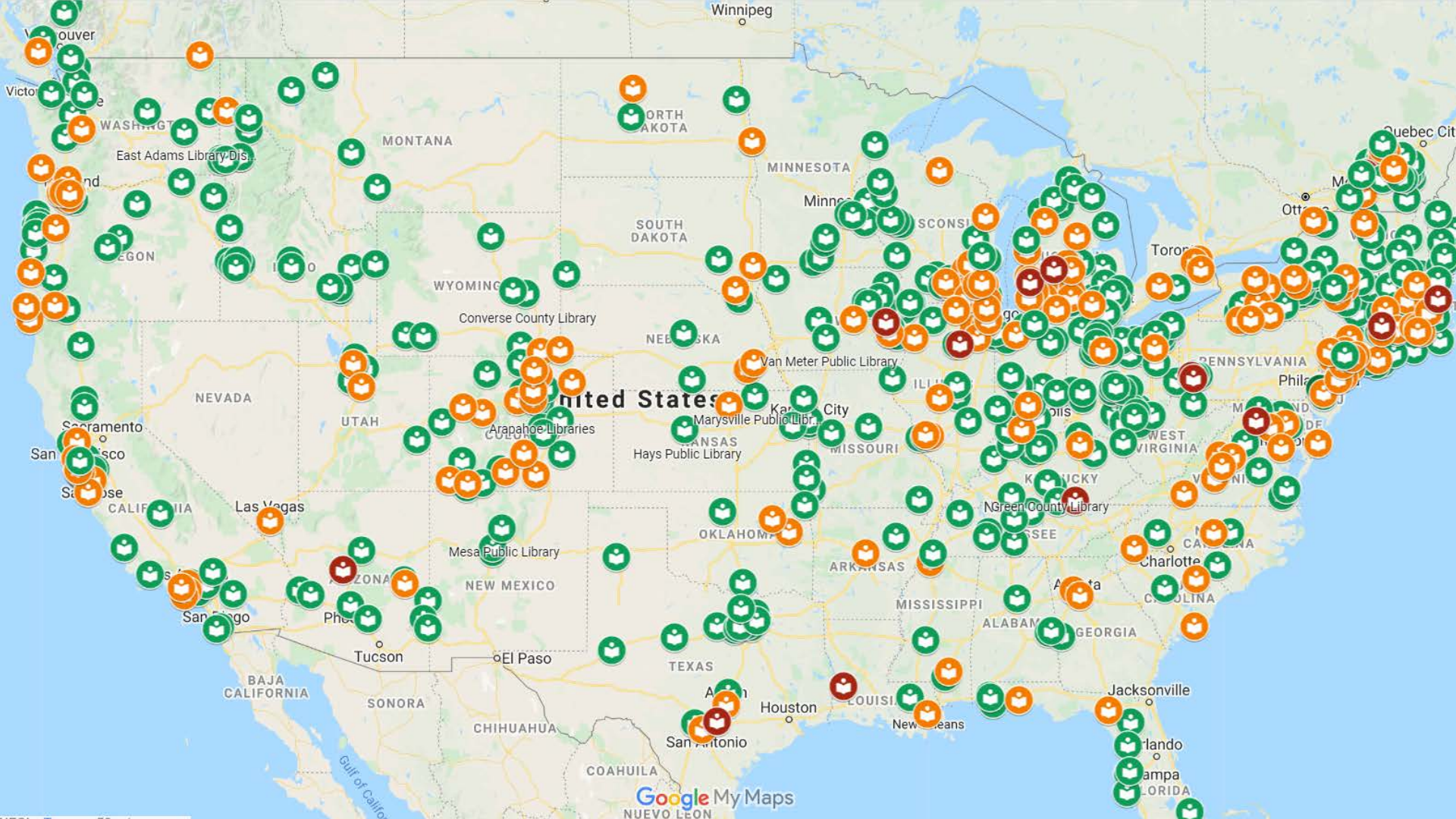
2019 Overdue
fines collected
\$61,435.42

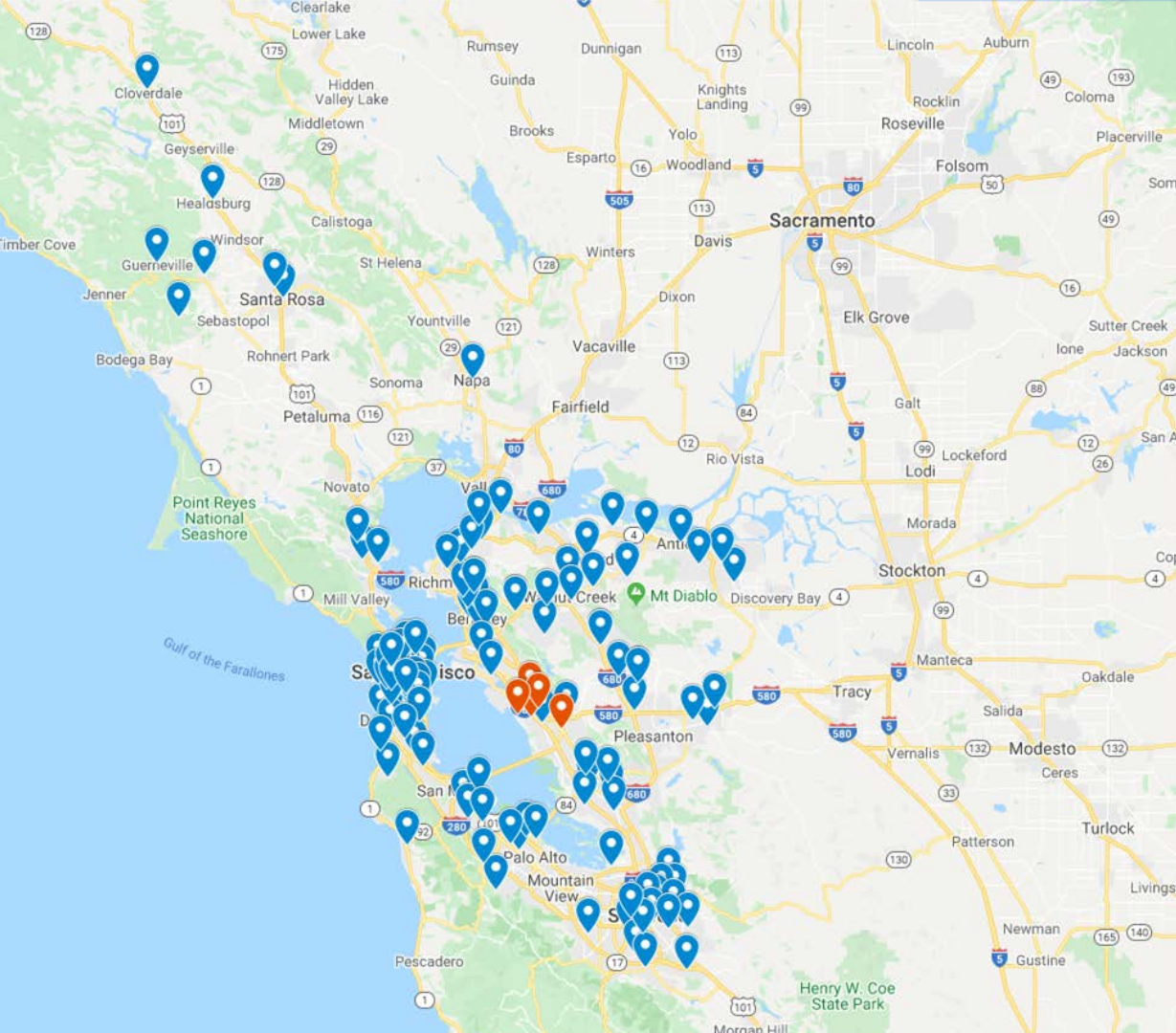
2019-20 General Fund
Revenue
\$116,866,845



Why continued...

- The American Library Association (ALA) recommends that all libraries adopt an overdue fine free policy.





- Alameda County
- Alameda Free
- Belvedere Tiburon
- Berkeley
- Contra Costa County
- Daly City
- Hayward Public Library
- Marin County Free
- Menlo Park
- Napa
- Oakland
- Peninsula Library System
- San Bruno
- San Francisco
- San Jose
- San Mateo
- San Mateo County
- San Rafael
- Santa Cruz
- Sonoma
- South San Francisco

Experience from local fine free libraries

Berkeley Public Library

- Circulation up 20% (October 2019)

Contra Costa County

- Circulation up 7% (October 2019, 6 months after going fine free)

San Mateo County

- Circulation up 28% (October 2019)
- Library card holders up 70% (October 2019)

Our recommendation

Step 1

Policy changes

Step 2

Amnesty on overdue fines

Step 3

Only collect money on
lost/damaged/long overdue
items



Questions?

What is the Fee Card Policy?

- Residents of incorporated San Leandro qualify for a free card
- For everyone else:
 - \$60 yearly fee per household
 - \$30 yearly fee for full-time San Leandro employees

What other California libraries have this policy?

- San Leandro Public Library appears to be one of the only libraries that charges for non-residents to have access to library materials.

History

- 1949 – San Leandro Charter adopted
- 1978 – Fee card charge raised
- 1982 – San Leandro Public Library joined Bay Area Library Information System (BALIS), fee card eliminated
- 1982 – Withdrew from BALIS and reimplemented the fee card
- 2020 – Fee card is \$60/household

Current Fee Card Statistics

562 active fee card accounts

- 446 adult accounts
- 32 teen accounts
- 8 minor accounts
- 76 minor internet accounts

Current Fee Card Statistics continued

Library Card Comparisons

**Total Fee Card
Holders**

562

**Fee Card Paying
Accounts**

249

**Current Library
Account Holders**

25,468

Fee cards make
up 2% of all
active card
holders

Less than 1% of
library accounts
have paid for
access

Only 27% of San
Leandro residents
have a library card

Fiscal Impact

- Minimal fiscal impact

**2019 Fee Card
Payments**
\$14,940

**2019-20 General Fund
Revenue**
\$116,866,845

Why Should This Policy be Removed?

- San Leandro residents already have access to surrounding libraries
- Provide equitable access
- Increase active card holders
- Increase circulation
- Provide better customer service at all public service desks

Why continued...

- Expand our promotional and educational reach
- Expand our resource sharing and access to the greater Bay Area
- Ability to join the Pacific Library Partnership (PLP) and the Bay Area Library Information System (BALIS).

Why continued...

- State Grant opportunities
- During shelter-in-place we have been accepting library card applications without charging fee

Possible Negative Outcomes

- Revenue loss
- Increased demand on print and digital collections
- Increased demand for public computers and printing

Circulation Working Group

Special thank you to the members of the
Circulation Working Group:

Alejandra Magallon, Library Assistant

Jordan DeGuzman, Library Assistant

Kat Kong, Librarian

Questions?