

Jackson County Public Library  
Administrative Policies and Procedures

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## Overdue, Lost, or Damaged Library Materials Policy

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Jackson County, Florida, that:

The Jackson County Public Library circulates library materials to eligible borrowers and seeks the return of all overdue library materials borrowed from the Library.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage patrons to return borrowed library materials by their due date; to establish a procedure and incentives to accomplish the return of overdue materials and the payment for lost or damaged materials; and to establish a procedure and schedule for assessing fines for overdue library materials and charges for lost or damaged materials.

It is the intention of this policy and of the Board of County Commissioners that all monies collected by the Library as payment for overdue, lost, or damaged library materials be made available to the Library for its use in acquiring additional library materials or for other worthy Library expenditures. Any monies collected by the Library in a given fiscal year for overdue, lost, or damaged materials but not spent by the Library in that fiscal year will be carried over and available to the Library during the following fiscal year.

Attached to this policy and incorporated herein are procedures for implementing the Overdue, Lost, or Damaged Library Materials Policy, as adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on September 14, 2010 and effective October 1, 2010.

The Board of County Commissioners may amend these procedures from time to time as it deems appropriate in the best interest of the citizens of Jackson County.

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**A. Fines for overdue materials and charges for lost or damaged materials shall be:**

**Overdue Fines**

**1. Overdue Fines for Circulating Materials**

The overdue fine regular circulating materials shall be \$0.10 per item per day beginning at the time the Library closes on the date the item is due. The maximum fine for each overdue item shall be \$1.00.

**2. Reference Materials**

Reference materials are ordinarily for use in the library building only. If a patron has extenuating circumstance, the Library Director may, at his or her discretion, allow and specify conditions of circulation of reference materials. The overdue fine for reference materials is \$1.00 per day up to a maximum of \$10.00 per item.

**3. Non-Print Materials and Equipment**

Non-print circulating materials and circulating equipment may have different loan periods as determined at the time of the addition of that format to the collection. The overdue fine for non-print materials and equipment is \$1.00 per day up to a maximum of \$10.00 per item.

**Charges for Lost or Damaged Materials**

4. If Library materials are lost or damaged beyond repair, the patron on whose account the materials were checked out will be charged an amount equal to the current replacement cost of the item, plus a processing fee of \$5.00 per item. In the case of children under the age of 18, it is the responsibility of the parent to pay for the lost or damaged items. Overdue fines are not charged on lost or damaged materials.
5. If a lost item has been paid for by a patron and is found and returned to the Library in satisfactory condition within thirty (30) days of the date of the payment, along with the library receipt issued to the patron at the time of payment for the item, then the charge paid for the lost item, less any fine that would have been accrued, and less the \$5.00 processing fee, shall be refunded to the patron.

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## **B. Overdue Library Materials**

The Library may send a patron up to three notifications of overdue materials. However, the responsibility for returning borrowed materials and paying all fines is not conditional upon the patron receiving overdue notification.

1. An overdue first notice shall be conveyed to the delinquent patron by telephone, email, or mail when an item or items become fourteen (14) days overdue, informing the patron of:
  - a. the overdue status of the borrowed materials
  - b. the rate at which overdue fines are calculated
  - c. the cost to the patron of the materials if not returned or if returned damaged
  - d. the library's policy that additional library materials cannot be borrowed nor other library services used until either the materials are returned and overdue fines paid or, if materials are lost or damaged beyond repair, the charge for lost or damaged books is paid.
2. If no response is received, material is not returned, and overdue fine is not paid within fourteen (14) days of the date of the first notice, then a written second notice, with an invoice, will be sent to the patron requesting that the item(s) either be paid for or be returned and all fines paid.
3. If no response is received, material is not returned, and overdue fine is not paid within ten (10) days of the date of the second notice, then the patron will be sent a written third notice informing the patron that the account, in accordance with F.S. 257.261, will be turned over to a collection agency and/or prosecuted in Small Claims Court if not satisfied in full within seven (7) business days of the date of the third notice.
4. If a patron has any overdue library materials or has not paid for lost materials or materials damaged beyond repair, then that patron will not:
  - a. be allowed to check out any additional materials
  - b. be allowed to use any library services
  - c. be allowed to renew his or her library card or be issued a new library card
5. If action in Small Claims Court is required, the amount claimed shall be an amount sufficient to reimburse the County for court costs and the Library for the current replacement cost of the overdue materials, including processing cost, and all fines accrued.

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## **C. Fines: Amnesty and Alternatives**

The Jackson County Public Library Director, upon consultation with the Jackson County Library Board and County Administration, and receiving endorsement, may declare fine free amnesty periods to encourage the return of overdue items.

**Effective Date:** October 1, 2010

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Jackson County, Florida, that Policy No. 06-0510 entitled Overdue Library Materials Policy be adopted by the Board of County Commission on September 14, 2010