

Fine Payment Policy

This policy was developed to set guidelines for the collection and distribution of fine payments collected at a library other than the billing library.

The Policy

When a patron wishes to pay a fine at a library **other than the billing library**, the policy is as follows:

- Fines for **lost** and **damaged** items and are to be collected and sent to the **owning** library
- Fines for **referral** payments are to be collected and sent to the **billing** library (Referral payments are fees assessed when a patron's account is referred to Unique Management for collection)
- **All other fines** are to be collected and kept by the **receiving** library, regardless of amount

Approved at 2-19-16 Governing Council

History

During the early days of member libraries' use of the shared automation system there was a clear policy on paying off the library fines owed to another library. In all cases, patrons were to be referred to the library they owe to pay their fines.

As more libraries came online the policy was adjusted to allow libraries to collect and keep overdue fines belonging to other libraries (with payments for lost or damaged items returned to the owning library). Patrons at the circulation desk that were willing to pay their fines were no longer turned away. Factors involved included the inability of the system to determine where a library bill was paid, the normally small size of overdue fines, the belief that the fine collection would generally even out, and the desire to provide better service to patrons.

Recently, the policy was adjusted to call for overdue fines of \$10 or more to be returned to the owning library. This was, in part, due to the higher overdue fines generated by DVD charges. However, the application of that policy led to confusion.

To simplify matters, and with the understanding that overdue fines over \$10 represent 0.28% of all overdue fines, 4CLS developed a range of policy options for vote at Governing Council. A unanimous vote led to the approval of this policy.