

OPERATING BUDGET FISCAL NOTE

DATE OF COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:

2/17/22

CONTACT DEPARTMENT(S):

Library

FUND:

General Fund

SUBJECT: Approve an ordinance amending Exhibit A to Ordinance No. 20210811-002 (City of Austin Fee and Fine ordinance for Fiscal Year 2021-2022) to remove the fees for overdue library materials for adult library patrons.

CURRENT YEAR IMPACT:

	2021-22 Approved	This Action	2021-22 Amended
General Fund Revenue (Austin Public Library)			
Library Fines	376,622	(300,000)	76,622
Total	376,622	(300,000)	76,622

FIVE-YEAR IMPACT:

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Total Revenue	(300,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)
Total Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0
Net Impact	(300,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)

ANALYSIS / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This fee schedule amendment will result in an estimated \$300,000 in unrealized revenue to the General Fund for FY 2022. The FY 2022 budget for Library Fines is reduced from \$376,622 to \$76,622 for the reduction in revenues projected by eliminating overdue fines for adult library materials for the remainder of the fiscal year. In subsequent fiscal years, the estimated unrealized fines revenue for the General Fund is projected at \$350,000 annually based on historical revenue trends. The Library will continue to charge fees for lost or damaged library materials.

On January 24, 2022, the City of Austin Library Commission unanimously recommended that Council eliminate the collection of fees for adult patrons' overdue Austin Public Library materials for the purposes of expanding equitable access to our libraries' resources and materials. In 2019, in acknowledgement that monetary library fines are a form of social inequity, the American Library Association passed a resolution encouraging libraries throughout the nation to discontinue fees for overdue library materials as a mechanism to increase library usage and expand access for all populations.

In 2019, the Austin Public Library eliminated fines for overdue children's materials. Unpaid late fees result in blocked access to our libraries' rich array of materials and resources. From 2018 to 2021, there were approximately 15,579 Austin Public Library patrons who had accrued late fees.

According to the Austin Public Library, approximately 400 libraries in the United States have opted to remove fines for overdue materials. The Austin Public Library's vision statement assures that "all members of the Austin community have equal access to Library services and programs."