



# Media Release

15 June 2020

## **City cancels overdue loan item fines for Cockburn Libraries members**

Members of the City of Cockburn's three libraries will no longer receive a fine when they return long overdue loan materials.

The \$5 administration fine has been permanently deleted as part of ongoing efforts to make the City's libraries free and equitable for all.

City of Cockburn Library Services Manager Linda Seymour said the move was part of financial measures introduced by the City to reduce financial hardship in the community caused by COVID-19, but it was also in line with a global movement to make libraries more accessible to all.

"There is a growing trend to remove obstacles such as the charging of 'fines' on overdue library items and a move towards a connection with the community that does not involve negative association with fines," Ms Seymour said.

"Cockburn staff report that collecting the \$5 fine creates more 'unhappy' customer experiences than any other interaction.

"The fine may seem a small price to pay, however for many families the costs build up when there are 3-4 family members involved."

Ms Seymour said it was important to note that library members would still receive an invoice for items overdue for 28 days, but if materials were returned in good condition, their invoice would be waived.

"Removing the fine is a strong incentive for borrowers to return overdue items as no financial penalty is applied," she said.

"Many public libraries across the nation support this approach.

"The City of Sydney ran a trial waiving fines which resulted in three times as many overdue items being returned to its libraries than previously, and many other libraries report similar results.



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“While this measure was introduced in response to coronavirus, the City has cancelled the fine indefinitely.”

All existing \$5 fines have been permanently deleted. Cockburn Libraries welcomes new and existing members to enjoy the library fine-free.

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