
LIBRARY FINES AND FEES POLICY

Summary Statement

This policy outlines The Cooper Union Library's approach to fines and fees for borrowed materials. The library doesn't charge fines when general circulating materials like books and other physical media, such as DVDs, are returned late, but expects users to be responsible and thoughtful in returning items, so others can use them. Fines may be charged for course reserve materials (time-sensitive items set aside for specific classes) if there is a persistent pattern of lateness. Fees are collected for damaged or lost materials with staff assessing replacement/repair costs plus an additional processing fee. Unpaid fines and fees can result in a library account block preventing checkout or renewal of materials or for Cooper Union students, a block on registration for classes or participation in graduation.

Policy Metadata

Volume Number	6. Library
Policy Number	6.7
Responsible Officer	Library Director
Impacted Office(s)	All Cooper Union Library Users
Date Issued	11/10/2022
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Contact	Lisa Norberg, Library Director (lisa.norberg@cooper.edu)
Recent Changes to this Policy	N/A

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The collections held by The Cooper Union Library are intended to support the Cooper Union academic community. As a member of the [Research Library Association of South Manhattan \(RLASM\)](#) and the [Partnership for Academic Library Collaboration and Innovation \(PALCI\)](#), the Library commits to sharing our collections for the collective good. To ensure our collections are maintained for the benefit of all fees are collected only for materials that are returned damaged or those reported lost. The Cooper Union Library does not charge fines for overdue materials from the main circulating collection, but we do rely on library users to act responsibly and thoughtfully and to treat all library materials with care and respect.

II. ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

All users of The Cooper Union Library who are eligible to borrow materials are affected by this policy.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Library User: an individual who is eligible to use The Cooper Union Library.
- B. Regular Circulating Materials: Library materials that can be circulated regularly such as books, DVDs, as well as materials loaned from another library through interlibrary loan.
- C. Overdue: an item that is checked out to a library user and it is past the due date.
- D. Billed: the user is billed when an item has been deemed damaged beyond repair or lost.
- E. Notices: Messages sent to library users, typically in the form of an email, either by The Cooper Union Library or a consortium lending library to remind users to return materials by their due date.
- F. Library account block: user is blocked from checking out or renewing library materials.

III. FINES AND FEES

This section outlines the instances when fines and/or fees will be assessed:

- A. Library users are not charged fines for materials from the Cooper Union Library's main circulating collection that are overdue but are eventually returned.
- B. Fees are charged for materials returned damaged. Library staff will assess the damage and determine the cost of repairing or replacing the material. A processing fee will also be charged. Damage to library materials includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Spills from food and drink or other substances
 - b. Damage to the cover or spine
 - c. Cutting, tearing, or dog-eared pages
 - d. Excessive writing on the pages with pen or other markers
- C. Fees are charged for materials that are checked out, never returned and deemed lost. Library staff will determine the cost of replacing the material. A processing fee may also be charged.
- D. The library user is responsible for all fines or fees levied by libraries of the RLASM consortium.

IV. FINDING MATERIALS AFTER PAYMENT

If the library user locates material after payment, the borrower may apply for a refund at the Library Circulation Desk if the item is returned within the fiscal year (i.e., July 1-June 30) from when it was paid for. The processing fee, if included in the total, may still be deducted from the refund at the Library's discretion.

V. BLOCKS

Unpaid fines and fees may result in a user's library account being blocked. If a user's library account is blocked, the user will not be able to check out or renew library materials.

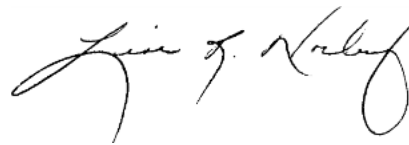
At the end of each academic year, the Library reports outstanding obligations for the graduating class to Cooper Union's Office of the Registrar. According to the [Registration Regulations and Financial Obligations Policy](#): "Students will be held accountable for all individual obligations, financial and other, entered into with The Cooper Union. Students who fail to meet all financial obligations to The Cooper Union will not be permitted to register. No student will be included in the graduating class unless all obligations have been accounted for prior to graduation."

VI. RELATED POLICIES & RESOURCES

- The Cooper Union Registration Regulations and Financial Obligations Policy (<https://cooper.edu/about/policies/registration-regulations-and-financial-obligations>)

This Policy was prepared by staff of The Cooper Union Library, November 2022.

Reviewed and approved by The Cooper Union Library Director, 12/15/2025



Lisa R. Norberg