



City of Seattle
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

Mayor Durkan's Libraries for All Proposal

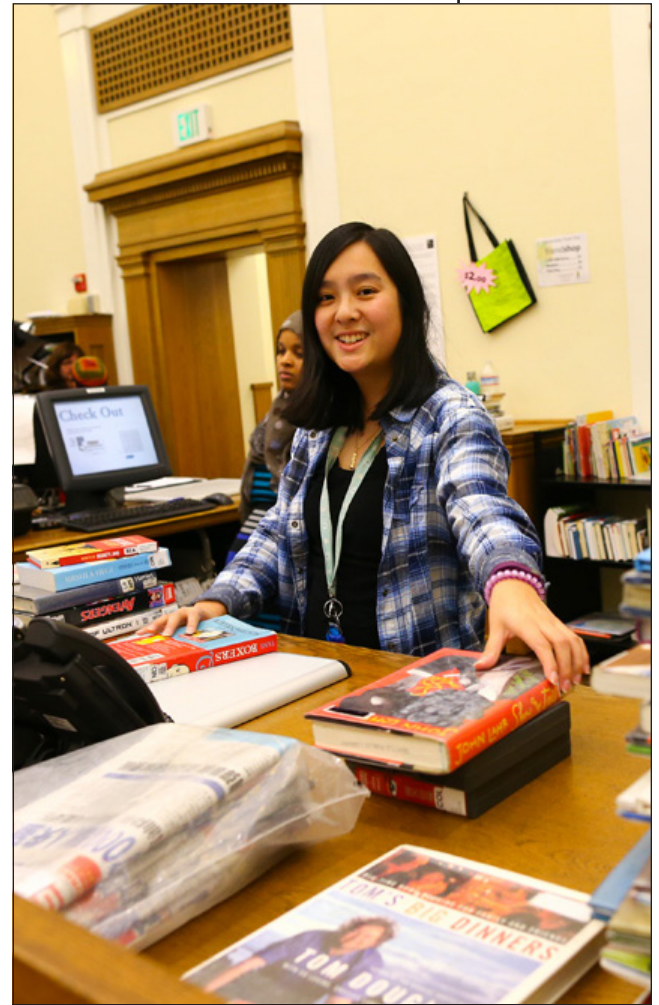
Reducing Barriers by Eliminating Fines

By renewing our shared investments in The Seattle Public Library, we can expand access to education and opportunity, promote equity, lift up the places where communities come together, and invest in libraries of the future. Under Mayor Durkan's plan, The Seattle Public Library would expand hours, eliminate fines, improve technology, and make seismic retrofits of existing libraries.

Why Eliminate Fines for Overdue Materials?

Fines are a barrier to using Seattle's libraries, and Mayor Durkan's plan eliminates fines for overdue materials. Research has shown that fines have little impact on whether materials are returned on time, and disproportionately impact low-income individuals.

- About 20 percent of patron accounts are blocked (meaning materials can't be checked out) due to fines. Residents in historically underserved neighborhoods are more likely to have blocked accounts and higher balances owed.
- In 2018, SPL ran a pilot called Fresh Start which offered a one-time waiver of overdue fines for young adults. Sixty-seven percent of young adults used their accounts to check out materials after their accounts were cleared through this pilot program.
- Higher average balances and blocked accounts occur in greater numbers in lower-income and lower-opportunity areas.



Investments

\$8 million over the next seven years will provide fine-free access to library books, materials, and resources for all residents.