

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 5, 2019

TO Honorable Members of the Quality of Life, Arts & Culture Committee: Sandy Greyson (Chair), Mark Clayton (Vice Chair), Rickey D. Callahan, Jennifer S. Gates, Scott Griggs, B. Adam McGough, Omar Narvaez

SUBJECT **Library Without Fines: An Equitable Approach to Removing Barriers**

On Monday, March 25, 2019, you will be briefed on Library Without Fines: An Equitable Approach to Removing Barriers.

The briefing materials are attached for your review.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joey Zapata'.

Joey Zapata
Assistant City Manager

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney (I)
Carol Smith, City Auditor (I)
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Assistant City Manager and Chief Resilience Officer
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Laila Aleqresh, Chief Innovation Officer
Directors and Assistant Directors

Library Without Fines: **An Equitable Approach** **to Removing Barriers**

**Quality of Life, Arts
and Culture**

April 8, 2019

Jo Giudice
Director
Dallas Public Library



City of Dallas

Presentation Overview

- Fines and Fees today
- Removing fines while still retrieving materials
- Fresh start for past fines
- Grace Days

Purpose

- Public Library's role is to make information and materials free and accessible to all residents
- Eliminate barriers to access which will create greater equity

Dallas Public Library – Current Fines and Lending Structure

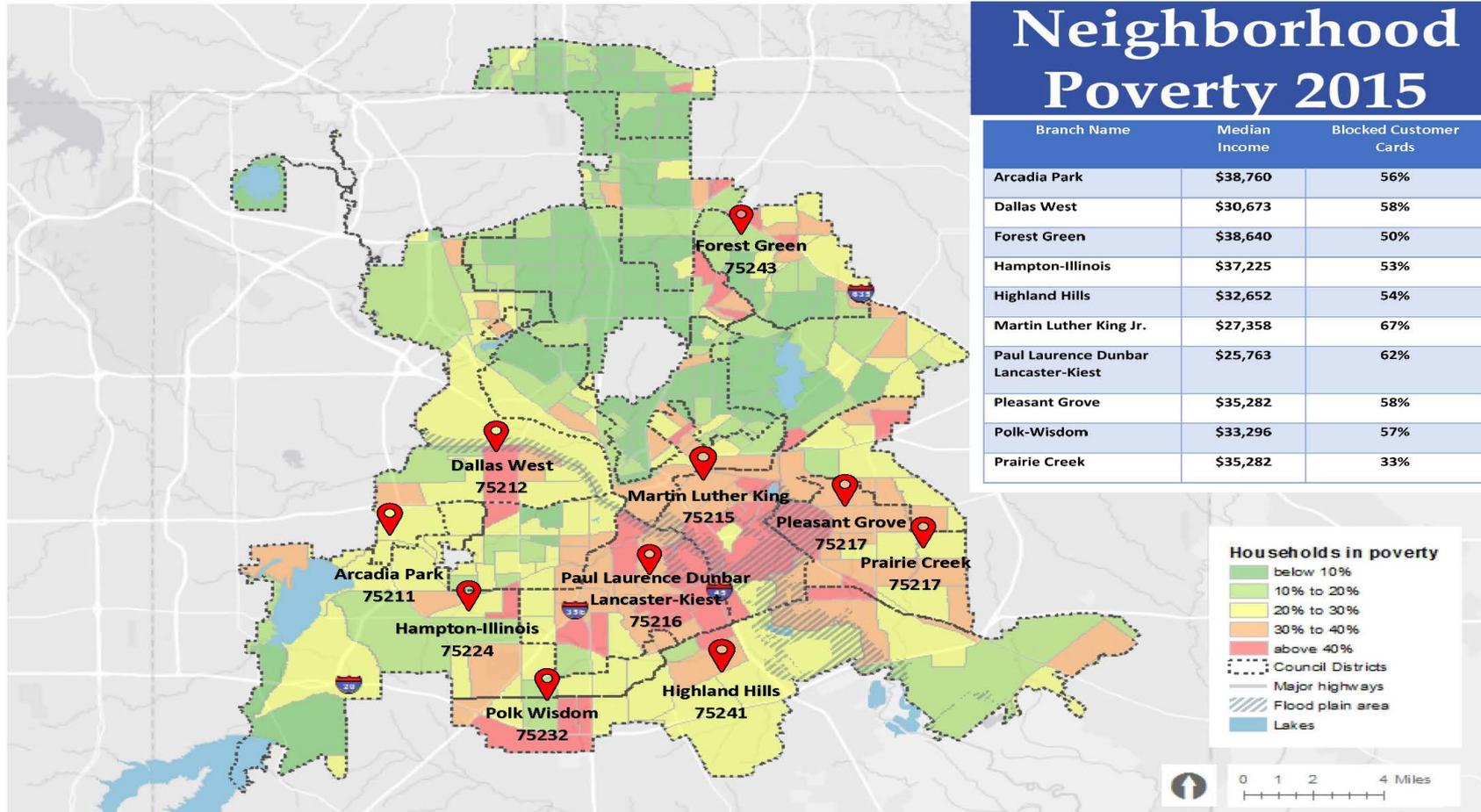
Material type	Length of Checkout	Overdue fine	Maximum fine per item
Book and Magazines	21 days	\$0.30	\$12.50
Video Media Box Sets	14 days	\$1.00	\$20.00
Video and Audio Media	7 days	\$1.00	\$20.00

- DVD, Blu-Ray and Audio includes CD and Audiobook media
- **Automated Unlimited renewals** until an item is requested by another customer

Dallas Public Library – Current Fees and Fee Structure

- **At 21 days overdue, the item enters lost status**
 - The patron is charged the replacement price of the item PLUS a \$28 processing fee
 - Processing fee is waived when the item or a similar item is returned
- **Resident Library card replacement fee: \$4**
- **Resident Library card look-up fee: \$1**
- **Account is blocked for use once fines and/or fees reach \$5**

Barrier to Access



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990, 2000, 2010; American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates. Map produced by City of Dallas Department of Planning and Urban Design

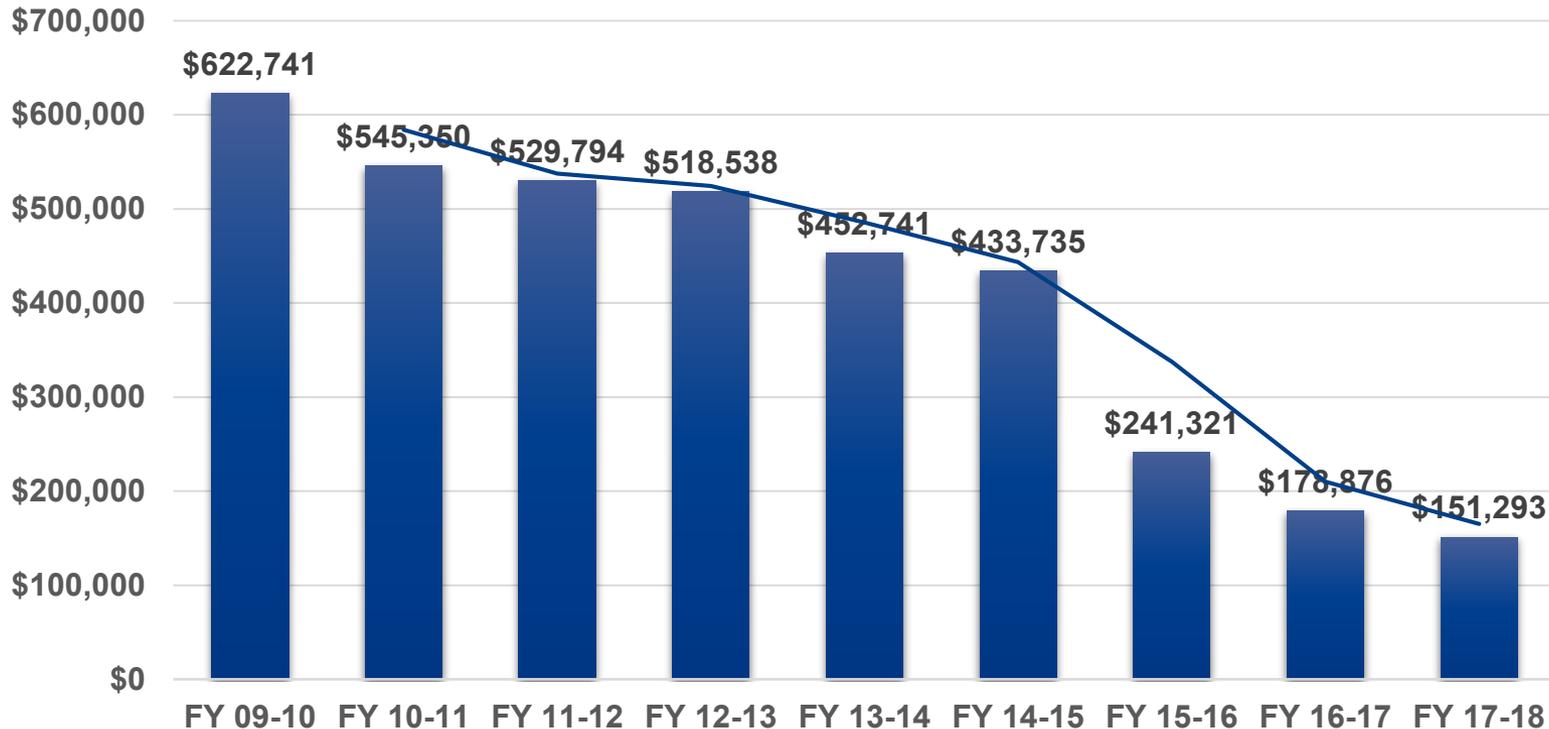


Look Ahead- If Not Fines, Then What?

- Existing research suggests that nominal fines do not improve return rates
- If fines are eliminated, card holders will be charged the replacement price of the item and a \$28 processing fee if not returned in 30 days
- Processing fee is waived when the item or a similar item is returned

Barrier to Access

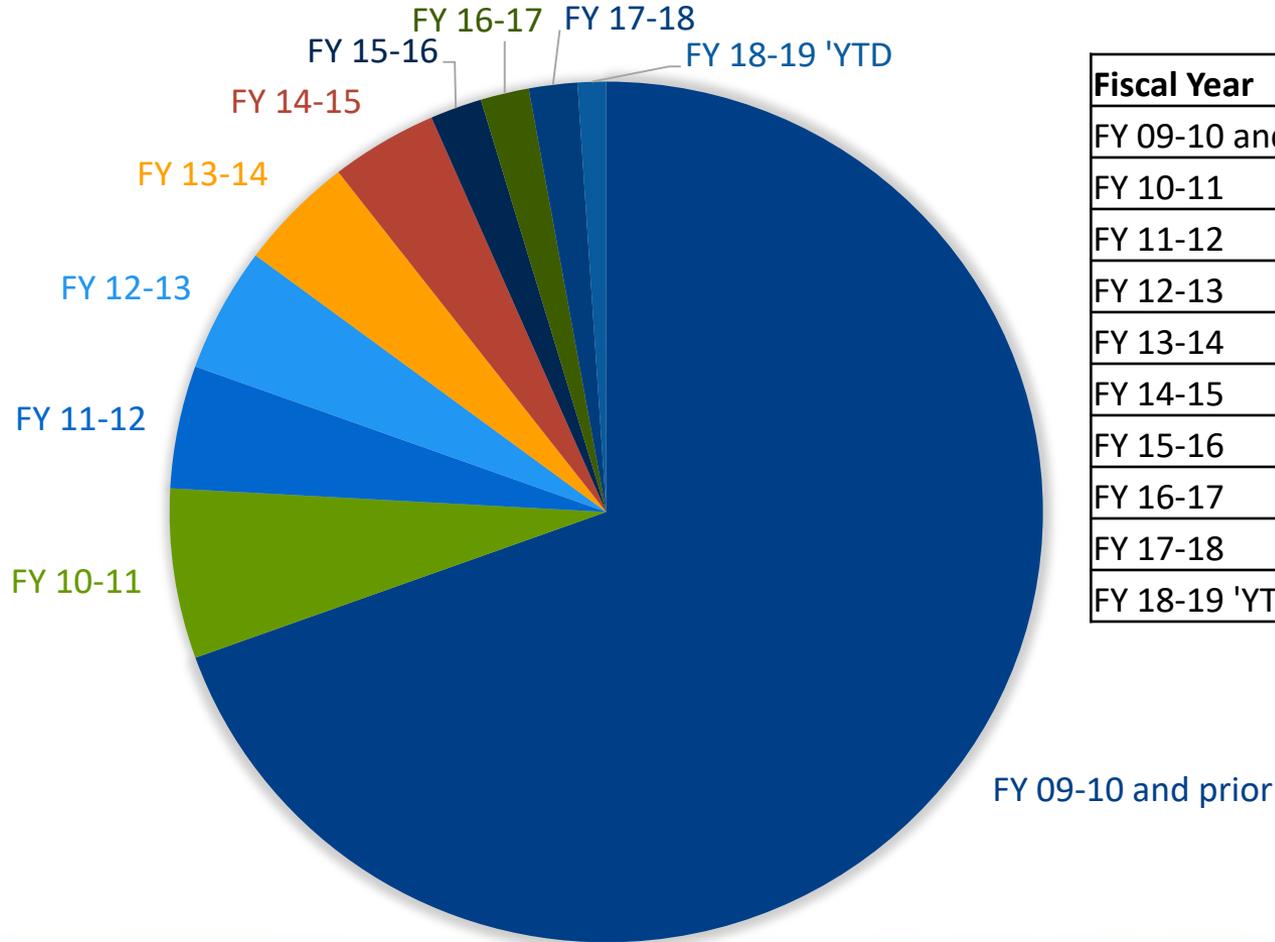
Funds Collected via Fines



Decrease in fines collected is mainly due to auto-renewals and e-materials, which garner no fines.

Barrier to Access

BALANCE OF OVERDUE ACCOUNTS



Fiscal Year	Total
FY 09-10 and prior	\$4,977,989.62
FY 10-11	\$456,732.92
FY 11-12	\$330,303.89
FY 12-13	\$334,946.80
FY 13-14	\$309,811.03
FY 14-15	\$283,509.21
FY 15-16	\$137,090.56
FY 16-17	\$128,579.66
FY 17-18	\$128,210.79
FY 18-19 'YTD	\$75,398.23

Barrier to Access

“One mom had 10 items in her arms and 3 kids watching her as I told her she could not check out due to fines on her card. She was embarrassed. She got mad and stated, ‘we are never coming back here’. That just broke my heart.”

Crystal Thompson,
Circulation Supervisor



Clearing Up Old Accounts

- Clear accounts with old overdue fines
- Accounts with items out will remain blocked
- Create Grace Days twice a year to ‘work off’ past lost and replacement fees

Proposed Actions

- Eliminate overdue fines, lost card and card lookup fees
- Clear all existing overdue fines from customer accounts
- Establish grace programs for customers to work off future fees
- Seek Council approval to amend Dallas City Code, Chapter 24, Section 24-2 and Section 24-4.

An Overdue Discussion- Creating Equity

Quality of Life, Arts
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Dallas Public Library

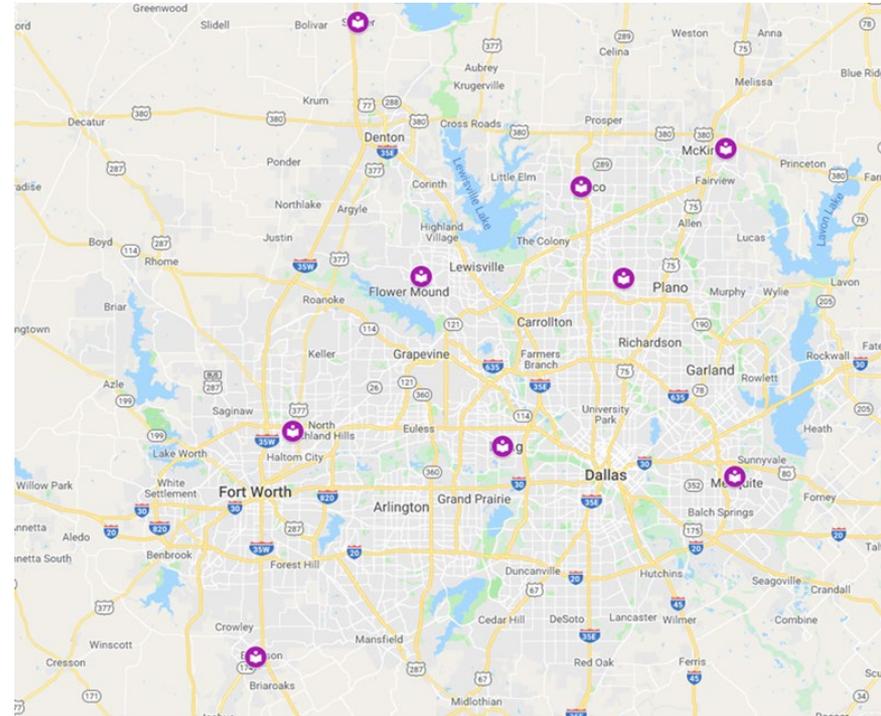


City of Dallas

Appendix

Area Fine-Free Libraries

- Burleson Public Library
- Flower Mound Public Library
- Frisco Public Library
- Haltom City Public Library
- Irving Public Library
- McKinney Public Libraries
- Mesquite Public Library
- Plano Public Library
- Sanger Public Library



Appendix

Urban Libraries who are Fine-Free

- Columbus Metropolitan Library (OH)
- Dayton Metro Library (OH)
- DC Public Library (Washington, DC)
- Denver Public Library (CO)
- Enoch Pratt Free Library (Baltimore, MD)
- Nashville Public Library (TN)
- Saint Paul Public Library (MN)
- Salt Lake City Public Library (UT)
- San Diego Public Library (CA)
- San Francisco Public Library (CA)
- Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library (FL)

Appendix

Blocked Customers - All Branch Locations

