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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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### **NEWS RELEASE**

## **Talbot County Free Library turns the page to a fine free future**

**EASTON (JUNE 30, 2022)** – Talbot County Free Library announces the start of a new chapter by going fine free starting on July 1, joining a number of Eastern Shore libraries that are fine free including Somerset, Caroline, Worcester, and Queen Anne's Counties.

For those who have library cards with fines, the current fines from overdue library items that are not returned by the due date will be waived. Fines may still apply to items borrowed and returned at other Maryland public libraries. For those who still see a fine after July 1, do not be concerned, as the library is working to update the system.

“The Talbot County Free Library is proud to now be fine-free to ensure everyone in our community free and open access to library materials,” said Dana Newman, Talbot County Free Library Director. “Fines have been proven to discourage and decrease library use, and disproportionately affect low income and minority communities. Hundreds of libraries nationwide who have already gone fine free are seeing an increase in patrons coming to check out books.”

Fees for library materials that are lost, damaged, or missing will not be waived, nor will collection fees.

In order to keep the collection available for others to enjoy, materials that are not returned by 30 days after the due date will be considered lost. Patrons will be billed for the replacement cost of each item.

Library card holders may return materials at any time to have lost item fees removed from their account. If an account has charges of \$20 or more, borrowing privileges will be suspended.

E-mail reminder notices will be given to patrons for up to 21 days. Automatic renewals will continue and eligible items will be automatically renewed three days before the due date.

“Last summer, we went fine free for kids and now we want to eliminate fines for all ages to encourage all community members to come in this summer and enjoy reading,” Newman said. “While costs are rising for everyday necessities like food and gas, it is even more important

to make sure there are no barriers for people to access information and self-education at the library.”

Most items can be renewed up to two times. Automatic-renewals do not work with: Items that have been placed on hold (requested) by another patron; Items that have reached their renewal limit; Express items; Blocked library accounts – customers with a balance of \$20 or more will be blocked from renewing, checking out, or placing holds.

For more information about our new fine free system, visit [www.tcfl.org](http://www.tcfl.org).

### **About Talbot County Free Library**

*It is the mission of the Talbot County Free Library to enrich and renew the lives of the people it serves. There are two locations: The main library in Easton is located at 100 W. Dover St., and the St. Michael branch is at 106 Fremont St. The Maryland Room in the Easton branch holds a voluminous collection of genealogical resources and historical documents. Services at both locations include the circulation of books, DVDs, digital devices, free Wi-Fi, public computers, exhibits, and programs for both children and adults. For more information, please visit [www.tcfl.org](http://www.tcfl.org). Be sure to like the library on Facebook and follow us on Instagram @Talbotcountyfreelibrary.*