

# Max Fines vs. Max Bills

The terms 'Max Fines' and 'Max Bills' can be easily confused, so the descriptions below are written to distinguish between the two.

## Maximum Bills

*Relates to patrons.*

Once a PINES patron reaches (or surpasses) \$10.00 in fines and fees, the patron's account is automatically blocked. The patron will be unable to check out or renew items until the total amount owed on his or her account drops below \$10.00.

Depending on which local library system the patron uses, the patron might also lose access to public computers and downloadable ebooks/audiobooks. There is no maximum limit on how high a patron's bills might go, although many PINES libraries will refer patrons to collection agencies once they reach a certain point and do not pay it within a certain amount of time.

## Max Fine Levels

*Relates to items.*

Each library system within PINES chooses the Max Fine Level they wish to use for overdue fines. Most library systems use \$5.00, but a few use a higher amount (see the [PINES Circulation Matrix](#)). If the Max Fine Level is set to \$5.00, then overdue fines on an item will accrue each day the item is overdue until the fines reach \$5.00 and will then stop. If the patron has multiple items checked out and overdue, then the fines on each one will accrue until each of them reach \$5.00.



Overdue fines will accrue at their full amount until reaching the Max Fine Level. Therefore, items may have overdue fines associated that are more than \$5. For example, if a patron checks out a realia item with a recurring fine of \$10, the overdue fines will stop after the first day because the Max Fine Level of \$5 has been reached, but they will still be charged the full \$10 overdue fine.

If an item is not returned and marked as either Lost or Long Overdue, the overdue fines are removed and the patron is billed for the cost of the item instead. Some library systems will also charge a non-refundable processing fee if this happens.

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