

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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News Release

The Kern County Library is Forgiving Fines (Again) This Year

August 2019 | All Kern County Library Branches

For the second time ever, the Kern County Library is holding an Amnesty Program for kids, teens, and adults during the Summer. For the entire month of August, Kern residents will have the opportunity to clear fees on their Kern County Library card by reading, donating, or returning materials at any of the Kern County Library’s 24 branches or 2 bookmobiles. This limited offer does not apply to accounts already in collections. **Other exceptions may apply.**

The concept of Amnesty in libraries is not new. It has resulted in many successful programs across the country, and has helped systems promote the return of much needed library materials and the increased use of library services. Often, fees that were intended to encourage a prompt return of materials do the exact opposite of what they are intended to do. Instead, customers hang on to materials, for fear of financial consequences. In effect, fines become a serious barrier to access for many, especially for those who can least afford it. At this time, there are over 30,000 library cardholders that are blocked from checking out library materials due to fines and fees on their accounts. For Kern County, the most important element of the program is the reunification of families with the Library; last year, over 1,000 residents were able to access their library accounts again through the Amnesty Program.

Andie Sullivan, Director of Kern County Libraries, states that “Last year, our first-ever Amnesty Program was well-received by the community. We are listening to our customer’s needs and that’s why providing an opportunity to fine forgiveness is so important to us. We are changing our traditional image, fostering a friendlier culture of goodwill in Kern County Libraries, and encouraging the community to rethink their public libraries. Through this second year of Amnesty, we want to welcome Kern residents back to KCL.”

-----Clear fees by reading, donating, or returning-----

KIDS & TEENS: Pick up a “Read As Much As You Can” Reading Log or sign-up on Beanstack.* Turn it in.

ADULTS: Donate one item from the donation list or branch wishlists. A donation list is available online at kernlibrary.org.

LOST / NOT-RETURNED MATERIALS: Return not-returned or lost books to your local Library branch.

*Pre-Registration for Amnesty for Kids & Teens is possible NOW online through Beanstack. ***Please note that it is recommended that you stop by your local branch or call a library staff member to verify that your account is eligible for Amnesty.***

For more information, visit KCLsummerchallenge.org