

Meeting Rooms Policy

Affirmed June 17, 2014

I. Statement of purpose

The Wethersfield Library provides meeting rooms as one of the Library's basic services and makes these spaces available to community organizations and groups as well as individuals wishing to study.

The Board subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights which states in Article IV, that facilities shall be made available to the public served by the given library on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Granting permission to use library facilities does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Library or the Town.

II. Eligibility

A. Meeting space will be booked on a first come, first served basis, according to the date the application is received. If two applications are received on the same day, priority will be given to a resident of Wethersfield.

B. Except for town commissions and library-sponsored programs, groups or individuals shall be limited to regular bookings of no more than once a month.

C. The rooms shall be used only for non-commercial, tax-exempt, cultural, civic, professional, educational, political or governmental groups.

D. Local businesses may use the facilities for staff meetings or training.

E. Youth groups may use the rooms if they are accompanied by an adult supervisor of the group (21 yrs. or older) who assumes full responsibility for supervision of the group for the entire time they are in the Library.

F. The Library reserves the right to suspend or cancel meeting space privileges to any individual, group or organization that fails to comply with the stated policies.

III. Availability

A. Study rooms.

1. There are four study rooms in the Library.

2. The study rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis for two hours at a time.

3. If no one is waiting to use the room, the time may be extended.

B. Meeting room scheduling

1. There are several meeting rooms available for use. The size of the group will determine which room is booked. A larger room will not be booked if a smaller room is available which will comfortably accommodate the group.

2. Scheduling priorities

a. In early December, the Library staff shall book rooms for library programs for the coming year.

b. In mid-December, once the library programs have been booked, the meeting rooms shall be made available to town departments and commissions.

c. In January the meeting rooms shall be made available to members of the public on a first come, first served basis.

3. Once established, meeting room bookings for Library programs will not be changed to accommodate a non-Library event.

4. Requests to use the Community Room and Children's Program Room must be made by Thursday of the previous week in order to have adequate time to prepare the rooms.

C. Meeting room hours

1. Meeting rooms are available for use during regular library hours.

2. Groups using the large Meeting Room on the ground floor or Conference Room #1 on the ground floor may stay beyond library closing hours with prior notice.

D. Exception to the above shall be made for library-sponsored groups and for other groups at the discretion of the Library Director.

IV. General rules for use

A. All publicity is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.

B. The Library will provide a public list of the day's meetings, including the rooms in which they will be held. Groups may not post their own signs.

C. The group using the room is responsible for:

1. Setting up chairs, tables and equipment.

2. Proper supervision.

3. Restoring the room to the same condition in which it was found.
4. Costs arising from any damage or loss during use.

D. Refreshments are allowed. Groups must remove food before they leave. Groups using the meeting rooms on the ground floor may make use of the ground floor kitchen. The kitchen must be left in an orderly condition. **(Please note: the kitchen is unavailable till further notice)**

E. Groups may not store materials at the Library.

F. Political rallies for the purpose of supporting or opposing a specific candidate or promoting legislation shall not be held in the Library.

G. Materials and signs shall not be affixed to the walls or doors.

H. The Library is not responsible for damage or loss to equipment, supplies, exhibits or exhibit materials or other items owned by an individual or group and used in the meeting rooms.

I. The Library Board and the Town of Wethersfield or their employees or agents are not liable for any claims rising out of the use of this facility.

J. Groups may not charge admission.

K. No fees are charged for use of the rooms; however, donations to the Library are encouraged.

V. Supervision and Responsibility for Order

A. The organization using the meeting room is responsible for supervising the meeting and ensuring that meeting attendees adhere to the Library's Behavior and Environment Policy. Meetings that will interfere with normal library use will not be permitted.

B. Failure to comply with the Behavior and Environment Policy or other Library policies will result in a cancellation of the event and/or denial of future requests for use of a meeting room.

C. The Library reserves the right to deny requests for use of a room, or cancel a reservation which has been made, when attendance over the maximum capacity for the room can reasonably be expected.

D. The Library Director may require the presence of a public safety officer, when in the judgement of the Director, there is a chance that there may be a risk to the safety of the Library users, staff or members of the public. In such cases, the cost of the public safety officer will be the responsibility of the group booking the room.

VI. Application and responsibilities

A. In order to book the large Meeting Room, Children's Program Room or the conference rooms a representative of the group must fill out and sign a meeting room application before the day of the meeting.

B. Study rooms are available on a first-come, first served basis for two hours. The time may be extended if no one is waiting to use the room.

C. A copy of this policy and the Behavior and Environment Policy will be given to the group representative.

D. Groups who have booked a room must notify the Library as soon as possible in advance of the meeting date if they decide not to use the room. Failure to do so may result in loss of meeting room privileges.

E. Rooms may be booked only for the current calendar year.

F. Groups or individuals using the rooms must fill out the attendance sheet provided by the Library before leaving the Library. The attendance sheet is required and is the "fee" for using the room.

G. Groups (except those using the Community Room and Ground Floor Conference Room #1) must leave promptly before the Library closes.

VII. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director.

VIII. The Library reserves the right to cancel any meeting if it deems necessary.

IX. Appeals process

Any denial to any party to the use of the meeting rooms, or to the conditions of use dealing with occupancy or need for a public safety officer, may be appealed in writing to the Library Board within five (5) days of the denial of use.

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