



MEETING ROOM POLICY

The Washington County Library System (“WCLS”) encourages the use of its meeting rooms to advance public benefit for public meetings of an informational, educational, cultural, or civic nature. Public benefit, rather than private benefit, is the primary objective of the following policies and guides the interpretation and application thereof. This policy applies to all meeting rooms managed by the WCLS.


- I. Only patrons with a current and valid library card in good standing may reserve a meeting room. The patron and/or group representative reserving the room is called the applicant. Local, state, and federal governmental agencies may also be applicants for public meetings or hearings if coordinated with the Library Director. The applicant can designate authorized representatives to access the room on their behalf, but the applicant is solely responsible for any damages to the room.
- II. Meeting room application forms are furnished by any branch library in the WCLS. Completed applications should be returned to the branch library where the meeting will occur. Upon approval, reservations will be made in the order the applications are received.
- III. The meeting rooms are provided on an equitable basis, regardless of the subject matter or content of the meeting or the beliefs or affiliations of the individuals or groups requesting the meeting room. Permission to use meeting rooms does not constitute endorsement by the library of any points of view expressed in any meetings, programs, or promotional literature. No advertisement or announcement claiming or implying endorsement by the library is permitted.
- IV. Neither the name nor the address of the library may be used as the official address, mailing address, or headquarters for any individual or groups using the library or the meeting rooms.
- V. Library activities take precedence for scheduling, and confirmed reservations may be subject to change if the room is needed for a library program. In its discretion, the library may substitute facilities or cancel permission to use the meeting rooms if the scheduled room is needed for library purposes.
- VI. Meeting rooms may be reserved up to one year in advance of the meeting date.
- VII. Meeting rooms will not be available before the scheduled time. Meeting rooms should be vacated promptly upon completion of the reserved time to allow the next group to enter the meeting room. An applicant’s repeated failure within a six-month period of time to vacate meeting rooms promptly may be denied meeting room privileges for a period of up to six months.
- VIII. Applicants may not reserve a meeting room more frequently than once per week, unless special permission is granted by the Library Director. Applicants may reserve meeting rooms for up to six consecutive meetings without re-application.

- IX. If a meeting room is no longer needed, the applicant shall notify the library as early as possible, so the room may be made available to other applicants. An applicant's repeated failure to notify the library at least 24 hours in advance of a cancellation, in a six-month period of time, may result in revocation of the applicant's ability to reserve meeting rooms for a period of six months. This revocation may be waived by the Library Director for good cause presented by the applicant in writing.
- X. As outlined in the application, the library charges a non-refundable fee to use library equipment, including AV and piano equipment. Applicants bringing personal audio-visual equipment are responsible for operating and ensuring such equipment is compatible with the library's equipment, floor space, and utilities. The library will not provide storage, even temporarily, for the property of any applicant. The library is not responsible for any loss or damage to property, including equipment, personal belongings, decorations, or any other items, owned by any applicant.
- XI. Decorations in the meeting room must be approved in advance by a library representative. Nothing may be fastened or affixed to the walls, ceilings, or floors, in any manner. The applicant is responsible to clean the room and arrange the furniture to its original location. Library employees must authorize the movement of tables, chairs, and other library furniture or equipment from one meeting room to another. Patrons are responsible for moving furniture as needed for their purposes, and returning it to its designated place. Failure to comply may result in the denial of any future meeting room use for the applicant and/or group for a period of up to six months.
- XII. The applicant is also responsible for the reasonable care of the room, library furnishings, and library equipment and will be responsible for any damage thereto, whether or not the applicant is present at the time of the damage. No individual or group will be allowed use of meeting rooms if the individual or group has failed to pay for past damage to the premises, furnishings, or equipment and may also be subject to legal action.
- XIII. The applicant shall not charge any fees, solicit donations, or receive contributions on the library premises before, during, or after any meeting and shall not solicit business, directly or indirectly. Even if the point of sale does not occur at the meeting, applicants shall not engage in any for-profit or commercial business activity at the library. Exceptions: Authors may sell books when participating in a reading or program at the invitation of the library; education tutors may be permitted even if they charge a fee, in the discretion of the library.
- XIV. Meeting rooms shall not be used for social functions, such as private parties or reunions; for religious ceremonies, such as worship or wedding or religious ceremonies; for commercial use; for illegal purposes; or for purposes which would interfere with the operation of the library.
- XV. Applicants wishing to show copyrighted materials such as videos, DVDs, films or similar materials, whether on library-owned or privately-owned equipment, must first secure permission to do so from the holder of the copyright and public-performance rights for the material. The library may

deny permission to show copyrighted materials in its meeting rooms if evidence is available that public-performance rights have not been granted.

- XVI. Rulings of the city fire marshal as to room capacity, aisle space, etc. must be observed.
- XVII. Smoking or the consumption of alcoholic beverages, is not permitted in the library or on library property.
- XVIII. Groups wishing to serve light refreshments, defined as finger foods and beverages, may do so in specified Community Rooms as approved by library staff and in accordance with this policy. Refreshments shall not be taken from the specified meeting rooms or served in other areas of the library. The following community/food guidelines and fees apply:
 - a. The applicant for the meeting room shall pay for any damage to library property, including upholstery and carpet cleaning.
 - b. A non-refundable fee of \$10 must be paid before each meeting at which refreshments are to be served. This fee covers use of library supplies and equipment to lightly clean the area after the meeting, and staff time to verify that the area has been appropriately cleaned.
 - c. If the meeting room and furnishings are not left in a clean and orderly manner, the applicant will be charged a cleaning fee of at least \$50 on their library account. The exact amount, and any adjustments to the cleaning fee will be coordinated through the branch manager. Any library account with \$50 or more in fines or fees not paid within seven days is sent to Unique collection services for assistance in repayment.
 - d. Beverages which contain dye or food coloring are not permitted in carpeted meeting rooms and areas. The following products are specifically not permitted: Kool Aid and other similar powdered products, fruit juice, cranberry juice, and tomato juice. The Library staff is authorized to prohibit the serving of any other drinks which pose similar risks to the carpet but which are not listed here. It is recommended that applicants with any questions regarding the beverages they plan to serve discuss the matter with the library staff in advance.

XVIII. Any exception to the meeting room policy must be approved in writing by the Library Board.


Daniel J. McGuire, Library Board Chair


Alan Anderson, Interim Library Director

Adopted by the Washington County Library Board September 30, 2008
Revised and Approved by the Washington County Library Board October 12, 2022