

Meeting Room Policy

INTENDED USES

The meeting rooms in the Library are intended for Library programming and for public gatherings of a civic, cultural, or educational nature in accordance with consideration of the principles set forth in the [Library Bill of Rights](#): Accessibility, equity, and inclusiveness.

The Library encourages use of the meeting rooms by local groups and organizations, according to the following guidelines and conditions:

1. Priority for meeting room use will be given as follows: 1. Library and Library-sponsored programs, 2. Town departmental business, 3. Library-related organizations, 3. Durham non-profit and community groups, 4. all others.
2. The Library's meeting rooms are available for use by local groups and organizations, adhering to a first-come, first-served basis. However, reservations are only granted for meetings that comply with the Library's Meeting Room Policy and do not interfere with ongoing library services or programs. Notably, non-profit and community groups can reserve rooms for free, provided their meetings are open to the public. Exceptions requiring closed-door meetings are rare and necessitate approval from the Library Director.
3. The Library subscribes to the equitable use of its facilities regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of the individuals or groups requesting use. Use of the meeting room, however, does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of an organization's policies or beliefs.
4. Groups may not imply in their advertising or during meetings that the Library sponsors or supports the meeting, group, or presentation without prior written permission from the Library Director.
5. Groups may identify the Library and provide its address in their publicity as the meeting location but may not publish the Library's phone number for the purposes of Library staff helping to organize/plan meetings or answer questions about meeting content.
6. The Library Director is responsible for the final approval of all Library meeting room requests and the execution of this policy and exceptions therein. Requests for review of a decision made by the Library Director can be initiated by completing a Library Resource Reconsideration Form available online here, or at the library circulation desk. Reconsideration forms will be forwarded to the Personnel and Policy Committee of the Library Board of Trustees for consideration. No meetings will be booked until the committee renders a decision. The decision of the Library Board of Trustees is final.

MEETING ROOM USE

1. The Durham Public Library has four rooms available for use by community groups and associations. The Oyster River Room seats 72 people and can be partitioned into two rooms, one accommodating 52 people and a smaller one seating 20. The Heritage Room contains a large conference table that seats up to 12 people.
2. Two small study rooms, each seating up to 4 people, are also available via day-of-use sign-ups at the front desk. Study rooms may not be reserved. They are first come/first served only. The Library reserves the right to reserve study rooms for special purposes.
3. Meeting rooms are not available for parties and celebrations for the benefit of private individuals or for commercial enterprises. All Library-sponsored meetings shall be open to the public.
4. Meeting Rooms may not be reserved when the library is closed to the public, including but not limited to Sundays and legally observed holidays, unless arrangements are made with the Library Director at least 72 hours in advance.
5. Meetings that are expected to extend past the Library's open hours must be arranged in advance. **The Library will not allow meeting room use after hours without prior arrangements.** The sponsor for the group must meet with the Library Director and review the security procedures for after-hours use and agree to the terms of use. **After-hours meetings must end by the agreed upon time.**
6. No admittance fee may be charged, or contributions solicited except for Library fundraisers. Fundraising events sponsored by the Library, Friends of the Library, or other organizations affiliated with the Library are permitted. However, other groups may charge a reasonable fee to recover the cost of craft supplies or literature. Arrangements for any such fees must be made during the application process (i.e., stated clearly on the web-based form and approved by the Library Director). Collection of such fees is the responsibility of the meeting Sponsor.
7. The size of the group cannot exceed the capacity of the specific meeting room (see the Library's web-based Meeting Room Application for specifications).

RESERVATION AGREEMENT

1. To reserve a Library meeting room, completed applications must be submitted at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting. Applications are available online at the library web page or by clicking [here](#). Only Durham residents aged 21 or older (herein referred to as "the Sponsor") can apply. The Sponsor will be responsible for the meeting's conduct, adherence to library regulations, payment of any fees or charges, and any damage to property.

2. Meeting rooms may be reserved up to 3 months in advance of the meeting to allow flexibility in scheduling Library programs. This limit applies to both single and repeat bookings. Community groups desiring to use a library meeting space more than 12 times per calendar year are encouraged to contact the Library to discuss.
3. The Sponsor shall be in attendance when the meeting room is in use.
4. The Sponsor is responsible for the security, safety, and behavior of the group. Pick up of children must be monitored by the Sponsor. (Please see the Library's Children's and Young Adult Behavior Policy).
5. The Sponsor will be responsible for picking up and returning any Library keys.
6. The Sponsor will promptly reimburse the Library for any expense or damage resulting from the use of the facility, whether accidental or deliberate. Damage and accidents must be reported to the Library Director or a designated staff member immediately. Neither the Trustees of the Durham Public Library, nor the Town of Durham, shall be held responsible for injury to persons or property that may occur while a meeting room is being used. The Library cannot be held responsible for materials, supplies, or equipment owned by the group and used by them in the Library.
7. Users of Library equipment are assumed to be familiar with their operation in advance of the meeting. If instruction is needed, staff can be available by appointment to assist.
8. The Sponsor is responsible for setting up the meeting room to his/her requirements. The Library staff is not available to assist with this task. All equipment and furnishings used during the meeting must be returned to their proper place (i.e., where they were found) when the meeting is over.
9. Refreshments may be served in the community meeting room. A small kitchen adjacent to the Community Room may be used by groups, with permission from the Library Director provided the area is completely cleaned by the group after the meeting.
10. No custodial services are provided in connection with use of the meeting rooms. Storage facilities are not provided.
11. The Sponsor is responsible for placing trash generated by the meeting in receptacles provided in the rooms or in the trash barrels near the Library service entrance. Cleaning equipment is available.
12. All inquiries concerning meetings will be referred to the Sponsor who completed the application or a designated contact person. Should the Sponsor cancel the meeting, it is their responsibility to promptly notify the Library, participants, and audience members of that decision.

13. In case of emergency closure, the Library Director will notify the Sponsor as soon as possible prior to the event.
14. Permission for use of the room is not transferable.
15. Any infraction of the Library Behavior Policy and the Library Meeting Room Policy may result in the loss of meeting room use privileges for the Sponsor, the group, or organization. Any false, misleading, or incomplete statement on the application form shall be grounds to forbid the use of meeting rooms by the applicant.
16. The Library Director reserves the right to deny a reservation request.
17. The Library Director reserves the right to determine whether any proposed use of a meeting room will require a police detail or other extraordinary police protection, and if so, the anticipated cost thereof which shall be the responsibility of the meeting Sponsor. Payment shall be made to the Library prior to the event.
18. Library staff telephones are only available to the public for emergency use. Incoming calls will only be relayed to meeting rooms during emergencies.
19. No smoking is allowed on Library property. No alcoholic beverages may be dispensed or consumed by the public on Library property. No open flame is permitted at any time.

Objections to Library Resources/Policies

The Library will review, consider, and respond to all comments and questions about library resources and policy, although greater weight may be given to the requests of eligible cardholders, who are the Library's constituents. Any individual who wishes to provide comments or questions about any item(s) in the collection or the services and programs the Library provides to the community should complete a [REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LIBRARY RESOURCE FORM](#) located on the Library website.