

Holyoke Public Library Meeting Room Use Policy

Purpose

This policy has been formulated and revised to ensure that Holyoke residents have the greatest possible access to educational, civic and cultural opportunities and meeting spaces.

Introduction

When Meeting Rooms are not in use by the Library, they are made available as a public service, to be used by Massachusetts-based educational, civic, cultural, and other non-profit groups for activities that do not conflict with the Library's mission and function. Booking a room in no way constitutes an endorsement of the program or philosophy of the group or the individuals using the facilities.

Meeting Rooms are available during hours that the library is open.

September-May: Monday-Thursday, 9am-8pm; Friday and Saturday, 9am-3pm.

June-August: Monday-Thursday, 9am-5pm; Friday and select Saturdays, 9am-3pm.

The library follows the City of Holyoke [mask guidelines](#).

Rooms available

- **Community Room**
Ground level – (**Maximum of 75 attendees**). Equipped with lectern (podium), six 6' x 4' folding tables, chairs, AV system, and a device for remote or hybrid programs. Light refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages may be served.
- **Board Room**
First floor – (**Maximum of 15 attendees**) Equipped with a large conference table, chairs, and whiteboard. Portable projector available by request.
- **Study Rooms**
Fourth floor - (*Available on a first-come, first-served basis.*) Designed for 1-2 people. Equipped with table, two chairs and a whiteboard.

Eligible organizations (in priority order)

1. Library-related activities, programs, events, meetings and training.
2. Library-related groups such as the Library Board and the Friends Ad Hoc Committee.
3. Massachusetts-based educational, cultural, civic, or charitable (nonprofit) groups.

Uses not allowed

- Private events/celebrations (e.g., birthday parties, baby showers, etc.)
- For-profit individuals/companies promoting or selling services or products.
- Selling of merchandise, other than to benefit the Library.

Political campaigning

MA law restricts use of public buildings for political purposes. A political party or group may use space at the Library **IF** the following criteria are met:

- The event is not a campaign rally.
- The event is not for fundraising
- The event is open to the public.
- All policy rules are followed.
- Party/group related buttons, flyers, posters, etc. are not distributed on the property.
- Holyoke Public Library is not listed as the host or sponsor on any advertising.
- The event is advertised as *“presented by group x”* and/or *“held at Holyoke Public Library.”*

Reservations

- Room applications may be submitted using the online form.
- The reservation form must be submitted at least one week prior to the date of the event.
- Applicants will receive an automatic email reply confirming that the request has been received.
- A follow-up email accepting or denying the request will follow with relevant details.

Room limitations

In the interest of equity of access, Non-library related groups may hold **only two reservation dates** at a time. Once the first reservation has been used, they may make an additional reservation.

- Meetings may not begin earlier than 9am and the earliest access for setup is 8:30am.
- If not otherwise specified in your request, you will only be able to access the room 30 minutes prior to the start of your meeting.
- If not otherwise specified in your request, groups must be out of the room 30 minutes after the scheduled end of your meeting.
- Evening meetings must end one half hour ahead of the library scheduled closing time unless prior arrangements are met (see After Hours use below).

Responsibility, Liability, and Fees

1. Groups reserving a room are responsible for the liability of attendees.
2. The room and grounds must be returned to the condition in which they were found.
3. Should cleaning or repair be required after an event, the event sponsor will be charged the actual cost of cleaning and/or repairs.
4. Persons using library AV equipment are responsible for any damaged or lost equipment.

5. A group that has caused damage, violated library policies, or failed to comply with the stated conditions of the Meeting Room Policy may be barred from future usage.

Rescheduling and Cancellations

- Cancellations must be communicated clearly, preferably at least five (5) days before the reserved date by emailing reserve@holyokelibrary.org or calling 413-420-8101.
- Organizations that fail to appear or call to cancel may not be eligible for future room use.
- Snowstorms or unforeseen emergencies may cause disruptions of library hours.
 - When the Mayor closes city offices, delays opening or closes early this closure includes the Holyoke Public Library.
 - A booking group may reserve a snow date in advance.
 - Announcements regarding closings and delays are made via TV (WWLP Channel 22 NBC, WSHM CBS 3, and WGGB ABC 40/FOX), and on the library website, www.holyokelibrary.org.
 - Library staff will email organizations if the Library closes for any reason that requires cancellation of a program/event.

The Library Director and Board of Directors reserve the right to cancel an event if library policies are violated.

ALA Bill of Rights

The Board of Directors of the Holyoke Public Library reaffirms the American Library Association's Bill of Rights which states that facilities should be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliation of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Approved by Library Board of Directors May 12, 2015; Revised 6/1/2016; Revised 5/26/17; Revised and approved 8/9/2022. Revised and approved 4/9/2024.