



WESTCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Meeting Room Policy

INTRODUCTION

The buildings of Westchester Public Library ("Library") contain meeting rooms to help fulfill the goals and objectives of the Library and to bring together the resources of the Library and the activities of our community.

The Library invites the public to make maximum use of its meeting rooms. To this end, meeting rooms shall be made available to any local group of citizens for the purpose of holding meetings or exhibits of a cultural, educational (including continuing professional education), intellectual, informational, civic, charitable, or entertaining nature, but not of a primarily private or commercial nature.

The administration of the Library shall (1) formulate specific procedures, forms, and requirements for the implementation of this policy consistent with the guidelines provided in this policy, and (2) provide day-to-day interpretations of this policy.

PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

Any use of the Library's meeting rooms must conform to all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Financial and investment seminars are prohibited. Family events such as wedding and baby showers, and private parties are not allowed. No activity shall be permitted which shall in any manner be potentially destructive to the Library property or disruptive to activities of the Library or other groups using the Library. The use of alcohol shall not be permitted except at Library Board sponsored functions.

All activities **must be free and open to the public**. Open to the public means open to observation and does not automatically give a nonmember observer the right to be a participating member of a meeting room assembly, or the right to address the meeting group, or the right to disrupt the meeting proceeds in any manner. If a meeting room group provides meals or refreshments for its members, the group is not required to share its refreshments or meals with a nonmember.

Use of the Library's meeting rooms shall require the specific permission of the Library. A requesting group must agree to comply with the rules, regulations and procedures adopted by the Library, including if requested, without limitation, (1) provision of general liability insurance naming the Library as additional insured, (2) compensation of Library staff who act as chaperones, and (3) retention of off-duty police for security.

The fact that a group is permitted to meet in the Library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies, beliefs, or activities.

CAMPAIGNING/ELECTIONS

Library meeting rooms may *not* be used for campaigning or any election-related purpose by a candidate, registered third party advertiser, or political party leading up to or during elections

(campaigning periods). Neither are town hall meetings allowed in library meeting spaces leading up to or during elections (campaigning periods).

What *is* permissible in library meeting rooms leading up to or during elections (campaigning periods) is that candidates may hold meet-and-greets as long as every person on the ballot vying for that same particular elected role is invited to participate in the same meet-and-greet. All candidates don't necessarily have to attend, but they must be formally invited by the instigator of the event and the event must be billed as a meet-and-greet for all persons campaigning for that role.

Library meeting rooms may be used by an individual *after* that individual has been elected into office and only during non-election time periods for town hall meetings and meet-and-greets.

Official nonprofits who hold nonpartisan events *solely* to help people register to vote are permitted to use library meeting rooms during both election and non-election periods.

PRIORITY

Library-sponsored activities shall always take precedence in scheduling meeting room use. Friends of the Library meetings and sales, and volunteer recognition and appreciation events are considered to be library sponsored activities. Non-library groups shall be treated as equitably as possible within the constraints of popular demand, availability and size.

USE FEE

There shall not be a basic fee for the use of the Library's meeting rooms. However, expenses for janitorial services, losses, or repairs shall be the responsibility of the group causing the same.

ADMISSION FEE

Groups may not charge an admission fee or collect a donation in conjunction with the use of the Library's meeting rooms. Groups may collect nominal and reasonable dues from the membership and receive reimbursement from their members for actual meal costs.

Buying and selling of products or services is not permitted on the Library's property except in support of the Library. Groups wishing to conduct fund-raising activities for community or other purposes must receive the prior permission of the Director of the Library.

SUPERVISION

Meeting room reservations must be made by a member of the group who is also an adult resident patron of the library district in good standing with the library. Each group requesting use of the Library's meeting rooms shall designate one or more of its members to be directly responsible for the group's use. At a minimum, the designated person shall be responsible for (1) scheduling the meeting, (2) scheduling A/V assistance if necessary, (3) room setup and preparation, (4) meeting room, restroom and building security, (5) room clean-up, (6) insuring that all policies and procedures of the Library are followed, (7) restricting unauthorized attendees from entering the Library proper, (8) returning any borrowed equipment to the appropriate library department(s), and (9) acting as liaison with the Library administration.

Children and young adult groups are encouraged to use the Library's meeting rooms; however, they must be supervised by one or more adult sponsors if under the age of 18.

ABUSES AND APPEAL

Any breach of this policy may be cause for revoking, suspending, or limiting the use of the Library's meeting rooms by the offending group. Any denied group may re-apply for use of the Library's meeting rooms; provided that, the group shows that the conditions that caused the denial have been corrected. Any denial of use may be appealed to the Director of the Library.

Revised and approved Nov. 14, 2019