

EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING ROOM USE POLICY

The Eastern Shore Public Library supports and endorses the American Library Association Bill of Rights which states:

“Libraries which maintain meeting rooms, exhibit space, or other facilities open to the public should make them available on equal terms to all persons, regardless of their beliefs or affiliations.”

Who Can Use the Room

1. The meeting room will be made available on an equitable basis for persons or groups engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, workforce and economic development, civic or charitable activities regardless of their beliefs or affiliation. Applications for use of the Library’s meeting rooms and lobby are available to nonprofit organizations and groups without regard to religious, political, philosophical, or other content of speech at such meetings. Duly constituted continuing political groups may use the rooms, but committees for the advancement of an individual’s political campaign shall be denied such use.
2. All meetings (except lawful executive sessions of governmental bodies) will be open to the public should anyone wish to attend. All meetings shall be publicly noticed in the library. Private parties, like birthdays or anniversaries, are not allowed. Nonprofit organizations wishing to have private meetings may apply to the Library Director for an exemption by written request. The Library Director reserves the right to refer the written request to the Library Board. If a request is referred to the Board, it must be received at least two weeks prior to a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Reservation Process

3. The meeting room is reserved by completing a written request form (attached) and providing it to the Library Director or designated Library staff personnel. Room use is subject to the approval of the ESPL Board of Trustees. Requests for reservations must be made at least two days in advance. Reservations may not be made more than ninety days in advance.
4. Requests for use of the meeting room for purposes that, in the sole judgment of the Library Director, may interfere with the regular activities of the Library or patrons using the Library facilities will be denied. Similarly, any approved use of the meeting room that serves to disrupt the regular activities of the Library or patrons using the Library will be stopped and the persons or groups causing such disruption may be denied future access to the Community Room.

Parameters of Use

5. No products or services may be advertised or sold in the Library except to benefit the Library. Solicitation is not allowed in the Library or on Library grounds. Use of Library space for fundraising is limited to Library-related activities exclusively.
6. No admission fee may be charged. The only exceptions are in the case of paid registration at conferences or institutes, held in cooperation with the Library, or payment of fees for scheduled education courses sponsored by non-profit organizations.
7. Payment for materials required to cover the cost of materials purchased for educational projects are permitted. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to require an accounting of proceeds from any approved activity. If it comes to be known that more was asked for than necessary to cover the cost of materials, a group will not be allowed use of library rooms in the future.
8. Public performances of copyrighted material such as music and movies usually require the permission of the copyright holder. The group planning to show or perform such material is solely responsible for obtaining the required copyright permission and presenting a copy to the Library Director with the request form.
9. In order to provide equitable access to meeting rooms, limitations on frequency and duration of use may need to be imposed. Groups affiliated with the Library are exempt from this limitation.
10. This access does not entitle users to telephone privileges or to other rooms of the Library.
11. A representative eighteen years or older must be present at all times and is responsible for the conduct of the attendees. You should familiarize your group with the Library's Behavior Policy.
12. All meetings need to be concluded 15 minutes prior to the Library's closing for security reasons, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Library Director.
13. The Library Director must be informed in advance if media coverage will be present.
14. This room reservation and event information will be posted on the Library's online calendar. You can take advantage of this publicity by submitting a paragraph size description about the event, contact information, and a website. Flyers promoting the event can be placed in the Library by submitting them to the Library Director.
15. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted under any circumstances within the building or on library grounds.
16. Users of the meeting room are responsible for leaving the room in a clean, neat and orderly condition. The individuals or groups using a room are responsible for furniture set-up and need to return furniture to the original arrangement. The individual or group making the reservation is responsible for the cost of additional cleaning or for any damage to materials or property during the reserved time.
17. No open flames, such as candles, are allowed in the library.

18. The applicant/user needs to inform participants of the location of emergency exits and procedures.

19. The applicant/user is responsible for participant accommodations (e.g. assistive listening devices, etc.) and compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

20. Library personnel need access to meeting rooms at all times.

21. Meeting Room capacity with Fire Code limitations and parking availability should be considered when planning the event at the Library. It is difficult to estimate the number of attendees when reservations are not required and individuals may be turned away once the meeting room and parking have reached capacity.

Cancellations

22. The Library should be notified as soon as possible if the group decides to cancel the reservation and should not make assumptions about the library closing for weather. The reservation holder is responsible for contacting the media about their event cancellation. In the event of inclement weather or other emergency, the Library Director shall provide notification of the closing of the Library to the contact person named on the Request Form as soon as practically possible.

23. Library sponsored and co-sponsored programs will be given preference for the use of the rooms. Reservations are made with the understanding that Library programming and use of the meeting rooms takes precedence over use by community organizations. Your reservation may be cancelled or re-scheduled with a 30-day notice.

Liability

24. Approval of a request for use of the Community Room does not in any way constitute an endorsement by the Library of the ideology, opinions, or activities of the users as may be expressed during the course of meetings or programs held in the Community Room.

25. The use of the name, address or telephone number of the Library as the address or headquarters for any users of the meeting room is prohibited. Publicity generated by any users of the meeting room may recite only the Library name, address and room designation. Any other mention of the Library requires the written approval of the Library Director.

26. The applicant/user accepts financial liability for damage to Library facilities and/or loss of Library property that occurs as a result of the scheduled meeting.

27. The Library Board of Trustees bears the responsibility for protecting the safety of the building and its contents and the health and well-being of those who use the premises. Activities are prohibited which are detrimental to the accomplishment of the mission and goals of the Library. Community groups applying for the use of Library meeting rooms are responsible for communicating fully the scope of activities planned, including anticipated attendance and any out of the ordinary impact their event might have on Library operations.

28. Any and all damages to the meeting room or its contents caused by any users of the Community Room, including the costs of repair and replacement of the same, is the sole responsibility of the users causing such damage.

29. The Library assumes no responsibility or liability for accidents, injuries or loss of individual property in the meeting room or elsewhere in the Library or on Library grounds.

30. Any questions regarding this policy or the use of the meeting room are to be addressed to the Library Director or the Chair of the Eastern Shore Public Library Board of Trustees.

See also Meeting Room Use application form.

Public comments and complaints regarding this policy should be addressed in writing to a member of the Board of Trustees, in care of the Director of the Library. The Trustees will review letters of complaint within 60 days and will respond in writing.

Revised and approved by the Eastern Shore Public Library Board of Trustees, December 5, 2016.