

EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
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.”

Study Rooms

1. Providing study rooms fulfills the Eastern Shore Public Library System’s vision in supporting lifelong learning. Eastern Shore Public Library provides study rooms free of charge to individuals and small groups desiring a space to study or work quietly together. Work in the small room will limit noise from elsewhere in the Library that may otherwise disturb individuals.
2. Study Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis for up to two hours of time. Time may be extended if no other individual or group is waiting for access to the space. If all rooms are in use when an individual or group arrives at the library, a request for use during the next available time may be made at the Circulation Desk.
3. Reservations for Study Room use may be made by the Library Director or their designee.
4. Study Room use is subject to Policies applied to other spaces in the library.

Meeting Rooms

1. Providing Meeting Rooms fulfills the Eastern Shore Public Library System’s vision in supporting lifelong learning and entertainment.

Who Can Use Meeting Rooms

2. Meeting Rooms are used primarily for Library programming, Library-sponsored events, and Library staff training. First priority for use of these spaces will be for these purposes.
3. When available, meeting rooms will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis for library card holders engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, social, workforce and economic development, civic or charitable activities regardless of their beliefs or affiliation. Applications for use of the Library’s meeting rooms are available to individuals, groups, governmental entities, and nonprofit organizations 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.

4. All events shall be publicly noticed in the Library. The Library Director reserves the right to refer the written request to the Eastern Shore Public Library Board of Trustees. If a request is referred to the Library Board, it must be received at least two weeks prior to a regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.

5. When a Meeting Room is not in use, access to the space may be permitted by the Library Director or designee as a Study Room space at no charge.

Meeting Room Reservation Process

6. The meeting rooms may be reserved by a Library card holder 18 years or older by completing a written request form (attached) and providing the form to the Library Director or designated Library personnel. Room use is subject to the approval of the Library Director, or if referred, the ESPL Board of Trustees. Requests for reservations should be made at least two weeks in advance. Reservations may not be made more than ninety days in advance. Reservations are held for 30 minutes after the scheduled start time.

7. 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 meeting rooms.

The "E. A." Harlan McMath Literacy Center and Meeting Room (8 people)	Northampton Free Library	Free
Francis B. Latimer Children's Study Room (3 people)	Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library	Free
"Bea" Johnson Small Study Room (5 people)	Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library	Free
Meeting Room (7 people)	Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library	Free
Dennis R. Custis Lecture Hall (185 people)	Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library	\$50 per hour*

*Library sponsored or affiliated events, events sponsored by non-profit (501c3) organizations or governing governmental bodies will not be charged room fees. Additional fees may be required for reservations extending beyond normal library operating hours. Payment in cash or check is

due at the time of reservation. Reservation fees will not be refunded unless the library is forced to close due to inclement weather and/or emergency.

Parameters of Use

8. 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 exclusively to Library-related activities.

9. 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.

10. Payment for materials required to cover the cost of materials purchased for educational projects are permitted. The Library Board 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 meeting rooms in the future.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. This access does not entitle users to telephone privileges, library supplies, or to other rooms of the Library.

14. The individual who reserved the space must be present at all times and is responsible for the conduct of the attendees. The applicant/user should familiarize their group with the Library's Behavior Policy.

15. 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. Special arrangements must be made in advance with the Library Director for after-hours use of meeting rooms.

16. The Library Director must be informed a minimum of two weeks in advance if media coverage will be present.

17. This room reservation and event information will be posted on the Library's online calendar. The applicant/user 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.

18. Refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages are permitted in meeting rooms. The applicant/user is responsible for the removal of refuse generated by the program/event at the end of the reserved time.

19. 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.

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

21. 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.

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

23. Meeting Room capacity with Fire Code limitations and parking availability should be considered when planning an 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

24. 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.

25. Reservations are made with the understanding that Library programming and use of the meeting rooms takes precedence over use by community organizations. Reservations may be cancelled or re-scheduled with a 30-day notice.

Liability

26. Approval of a request for use of the Meeting Rooms 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 Meeting Rooms.

27. 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.

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

29. The Library Board 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.

30. Presentation equipment must be requested prior to the program date. There is no additional charge for use of available equipment. Users of the equipment will be responsible for operation and for any damages that occur. Staff are not available to assist with presentation equipment in the Meeting Rooms. Individuals bringing a laptop to connect to the library's audiovisual equipment are responsible for connecting their own equipment and for the operation of their laptop, to include bringing required connecting cables.

31. 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.

32. Any questions regarding this policy or the use of the meeting room are to be addressed to the Library Director.

See also Meeting Room Use application form.

Public comments and complaints regarding this policy should be addressed in writing to the Library Director. If the Library Director is unable to answer complaints about the policy, the Library Director will refer the complaint to the Board of Trustees for response. The Library Board 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, August 8, 2023.