



Meeting Room Use Policy for Non-Library Sponsored Events
11/14/2018

Introduction

The Library encourages use of its meeting rooms by non-profit and community groups to help meet the educational, recreational, and informational needs of our community. Library meeting rooms are available to the public provided that meetings/programs do not conflict with or interrupt regular Library service and programs. Meeting room reservations are accepted on a priority basis:

1. Library programs and activities (including Friends of the Library),
2. Meetings of Town boards, committees and commissions,
3. General non-profit and community groups, and
4. Businesses and for-profit enterprises (during off-peak hours only).

The Library reserves the right to cancel any reservation for a meeting room if a higher priority meeting or program needs the space. In this event, all efforts will be made to make alternate arrangements. All meetings and programs must be open to the public, except as otherwise noted below.

Businesses and for-profit enterprises that pay a fee for use of a meeting room may limit public access to meetings provided that such limitations are consistent with applicable Massachusetts and federal civil rights laws including but not limited to prohibitions against discrimination based upon race, gender, national origin, religion, and disability.

The Library recognizes that certain social, community, and civic organizations may limit membership and active participation in its meetings and programs. Nonetheless all meetings of these groups shall be open to the public. Limitations on membership established by a group using a meeting room shall be consistent with applicable Massachusetts and federal civil rights laws including but not limited to prohibitions against discrimination based upon race, gender, national origin, religion, and disability. The meetings and programs of these organizations using a meeting room shall not be by invitation only. Individuals who participate or attempt to participate in an organization's meetings and programs and who are not authorized to do so may be determined to be a disruptive person by the organization's Responsible Person. Such behavior shall be reported to a library staff member by the Responsible Person. The library staff person shall manage the incident in compliance with the Norfolk Public Library's Safety and Security Policy.

Use of the meeting rooms for social gatherings, including but not limited to activities such as birthday parties or family reunions, is prohibited.

Access to Meeting Room Space

Based on the philosophy expressed in the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights, the Library does not discriminate in permitting use of its meeting rooms based on program content. The Library endeavors to offer diverse programs reflecting the community we serve. Provision of meeting room space is always subordinate to the need to provide a safe, peaceful, and respectful environment in which to read and study. Meeting rooms may not be used in a manner likely to disturb Library patrons in their customary use of Library facilities, impede Library staff in the performance of their duties, nor endanger the Library building or its collection.

Requesting to Use a Meeting Room

Meeting room space may be requested under the “Services” tab on Library webpage; (norfolkpl.org). Meeting rooms may also be requested by sending an email to the Library Director oneill@sailsinc.org. Email requests must include the following information:

- Name of Responsible Person
- Name of Organization
- Date, time and name of room requested
- Responsible person phone number and e-mail address
- Estimated number of participants
- Special circumstances or requests

Patrons without access to email are invited to contact the Library Director as 508-528-3380 x4. Requests are confirmed or denied by email or phone call.

Restrictions

Except as described in this policy, meeting rooms may not be used for fundraising, entrepreneurial or commercial purposes, nor for the solicitation of business or profit-making activities. Except as provided in the Exhibition Policy, goods or services may not be promoted, sold, or exchanged upon the Library premises without the express written consent of the Board of Library Trustees.

As a public service to Norfolk community-based nonprofit organizations, the sale of tickets for fundraising events that do not take place on library premises, may be held in the library lobby, during normal library hours. Sales activity must not interfere with Library operation or patron access to the library. Sales of tickets for fundraising events is subject to written permission from the Library Director.

Responsibility, Supervision and Liability

Individuals and groups using meeting space are responsible for all damage to or misuse of Library property, and shall indemnify the Library, its employees, agents and assigns, the Board of Library Trustees and the Town of Norfolk against damages and/or injuries arising from use of meeting rooms, and must provide proper supervision at all times.

Compliance with Rules for Meeting Room Use

Individuals and groups must comply with the Rules for Library Meeting Room Use. Failure to comply with these rules may result in restriction or denial of future use of Library facilities.

Reservation Limitations for Groups

The Library Director and Trustees have identified peak and non-peak hours of usage for the meeting rooms. The peak hours are between 3:00PM and 10:45PM, Monday through Friday. All other times on these days and on Saturday and Sunday are non-peak hours. Normally, groups may reserve a maximum of 12 meeting room events per year during peak hours. Normally, groups may reserve more than 12 meetings during non-peak hours. To help defray the cost of maintaining the meeting room spaces, groups are asked to consider making a donation to the Norfolk Public Library Gift Fund.

Businesses and For-Profit Enterprises

Businesses and for-profit enterprises may use meeting rooms Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm according to the following fee schedule:

- First hour: \$25, each additional hour or part thereof: \$20
- Half-day: (8:00am - 12:00pm) or (12:00pm - 5:00pm): \$70.00
- Full day: (8:00am - 5:00pm): \$120.00

Fees must be paid in full one week prior to room use. Failure to pay required fees may result in cancellation of reservation.

Room Capacities

- Community Room: Up to 125 persons
- Lounge: Up to 12 persons
- Schoolhouse Room: Up to 15 persons

In order to accommodate the greatest number of users, the Library Director or their designate reserves the right to assign meeting rooms based on room availability and group size. The maximum number of attendees in any meeting room is limited to the number determined by the Norfolk Fire Chief.

Meeting Room Use Regulations

All users of Library meeting rooms must take notice of and comply with the following regulations.

Responsible Person: A person requesting to use a meeting room must be a resident of Norfolk (unless this requirement is waived by the Library Director), over 21 years of age, and remain in attendance while the meeting room is in use. The responsible person is accountable for conduct of the group, payment of any bills or expenses incurred during the event, for any fees incurred as a result of failure to comply with meeting room user regulations, and for protection of Library property in connection with the event. The responsible person is accountable to read the Meeting Room User Regulations, and shall promptly reimburse the Library for any expense or damage resulting from their use of Library facilities.

Key: Should a meeting occur outside published Library hours, the responsible person may sign out a key up to 1 day in advance of the meeting. The key **MUST** be placed in the book drop at the conclusion of the meeting. A \$10.00 per day fee is charged for failure to return the key in the book drop. After five days, a key is deemed lost, and a \$50.00 fee is charged.

Security of Library Doors: For meetings occurring outside published Library hours, the responsible person must ensure the Library doors are properly secured at the conclusion of the meeting. Failure to secure the doors may result in the group no longer being permitted to use meeting rooms outside of published Library hours.

Meetings in the Schoolhouse Room: Meetings in the Schoolhouse Room must start and end within published Library hours of operation.

Charges: No person may charge an admission-type fee for any event or program, except only by prior written approval of the Board of Library Trustees. The responsible person or their designee may charge attendees for the cost of meeting materials or other incidental expenses. In all cases, charges must be disclosed to attendees in advance of the meeting.

Endorsement: In approving a request, neither the Board of Library Trustees, the Library, nor the Town of Norfolk implies endorsement of a groups' beliefs, policies, programs or content.

Publicity: Communications about meetings should give the Library address for information only. Publicity must not direct or suggest calling the Library about the meeting, except only as may be included in an official announcement prepared and published by the Library. Groups may not state or suggest in their publicity that the Norfolk Public Library, the Board of Library Trustees, the Town of Norfolk, nor the Library staff sponsors or endorses the meeting, the group, or any particular set of ideas, beliefs, concepts or point-of-view to be presented or discussed.

Artwork: Artwork is not to be touched or moved, except only by authorized library staff or exhibit sponsors.

Refreshments: Light refreshments may be served in the Community Meeting Room and Lounge, but not in the Schoolhouse Room. Possession and/or consumption of alcohol on Library premises is prohibited except as may be authorized by the Board of Library Trustees & Board of Selectmen in compliance with local, state and Federal regulations. The responsible person may request to use the kitchenette, which includes a sink and refrigerator.

Furniture Moving, Custodial and Hospitality Services:

Library staff does not provide these services. The responsible person must perform these services themselves or may hire others at their expense to do so. The responsible person assumes all liability for actions undertaken by themselves and hired persons.

Clean-up: A list of cleaning and furniture storage requirements for each room is posted in the room and must be reviewed by the responsible person prior to use of the space. The responsible person must ensure their meeting room is left in a clean condition after use, and that all trash is removed to designated disposal. In cases where the kitchenette is used, this space must be left in a clean and sanitary condition. All food brought in must be removed from the refrigerator, and all trash removed to designated disposal. Failure to remove food and clean the kitchenette will result in a \$50.00 fee charged to the responsible person.

Users of the Main meeting room are responsible to stack and move all chairs to the perimeter of the room following conclusion of the meeting. Failure to do so will result in a \$50.00 fee charged to the responsible person.

No Lighted Candles or Open Flames: Use of lighted candles or other open flame is prohibited by State Fire Code. Electric or battery-powered candles may be used.

Exits: All exits must always have a clear 3-foot wide unobstructed path.

Release of Children to Parents/Guardians: When a meeting involves children, the responsible person must assure all children remain in the meeting room until parents or other authorized persons arrive to pick them up. Library staff assumes no responsibility for children attending meetings.

Ending time: The Library must be vacated by 10:45 PM. Occupancy after this time will trigger an alarm and result in Police response. In the event the alarm system is triggered, the responsible person must remain in the Library to meet the responding Police officers. A \$100 fee is charged if the alarm is triggered and police and library staff are summoned.

Lights: Upon exiting a meeting room, the lights must be turned off. Failure to do so will result in a warning for the first incident. A \$50 fee is charged for subsequent incidents.

Failure to comply with these regulations will restrict the group's ability to use Library meeting space in the future and may result in fees being charged to the responsible person.

Parking: Groups using Library meeting room space must observe all parking signs and restrictions. Groups who ignore signs and restrictions may have meeting room privileges suspended.

Exceptions: Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director, in consultation with the Board of Library Trustees, as they deem in the best interest of the Library and the community.

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