

MEETING/CONFERENCE ROOM POLICY

The mission of Fort Bend County Libraries is to provide an environment for lifelong learning and enrichment for the entire diverse community, through responsive service and access to timely and accurate resources.

Policies and Procedures for the use of meeting rooms in the Fort Bend County Libraries have been developed in accordance with its mission and are hereby established. Responsibility for implementing the policy rests with the Administrative Secretary at George Memorial Library or with the Manager in charge of a branch library. The County Librarian retains authority for enforcing this policy.

1. General Rules

- Library activities and programs are given first priority for scheduling of meeting rooms.
- All meetings must be open to the public and to the media.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- No lighted candles or open flames may be used.
- No items may be affixed to the walls (e.g., banners, posters, decorations).
- No animals will be allowed in meeting rooms unless they are an integral part of a scheduled program or are in the service of a disabled person. Such animals must be leashed or caged at all times.
- The length of time that a meeting room is reserved must include time for setting up and for returning the room to good order.
- Groups of high school age and under must be sponsored by and their meetings attended by an adult.

2. Meeting rooms may not be used by:

- Groups whose use of a meeting room would interfere with regular library functions; or
- Groups whose activities involve more than normal wear and tear on meeting rooms; or
- Groups meeting for private and/or social activities such as showers, birthday parties, weddings, and recitals; or
- Groups that have flagrantly or repeatedly violated library meeting room policies.

3. Publicity must neither state nor imply that the library is either sponsoring or endorsing a program or meeting unless such is the case; neither shall publicity state or imply that attendance is limited to group members. (*Publicity must NOT give out the library's phone number as information contact.*)

4. No admission fees are allowed.

5. Applications for use of meeting rooms

- Applications for meeting-room use at George Memorial Library are to be received from and returned to the Administrative Secretary. Applications for meetings at branches are to be returned to the Branch Manager. Application forms may be returned in person, by mail, or by fax. The person responsible for making a meeting-room application will be considered the official contact person for the group.
- A completed *Application for Use of Meeting Room* form must be received by the Administrative Secretary or Branch Manager at least one week prior to the meeting date. Rooms may be scheduled up to three months in advance. Applications will be accepted and scheduled in the order received. In order to encourage the most-equitable use of meeting rooms, only one meeting at a time may be scheduled; following a meeting a group may schedule another, if the room is available at the desired time.

6. The library reserves the right to change or cancel reservations if an emergency occurs, or if a special library program intervenes. In such case, 48 hours notice will be given. In either case, the group may be assigned to another location, or, if no other accommodation is available, the meeting room commitment will be canceled. A guest group may postpone or cancel a scheduled meeting, but must notify the Administrative Secretary or Branch Manager at least 48 hours in advance. The meeting may be rescheduled if a room is available.

7. Choice of hours

- Meeting rooms may be used, as available, during regular library duty hours (i.e., when library staff is on duty). Evening meetings must be concluded 30 minutes prior to regular library closing time, and the room must be vacated by closing time.
- Any group that fails to vacate library premises at closing may be denied future use of meeting room.

8. Room set-up

- The number in attendance at a meeting must not exceed the seating capacity of the meeting room. Open aisles must be maintained within the seating arrangements to provide clear access to exits.
- Set-up for the meeting room (tables, chairs, etc.) is the responsibility of the group reserving the room.

9. Library-owned equipment: Use of library owned equipment must be requested at the time of application. Changes in requirements can be requested no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting and are subject to availability of the equipment. At the time of the meeting, no additional equipment may be requested, nor will library staff be available to assist with equipment. An individual, to be named by the group, must be instructed in the use of library owned equipment (e.g., audiovisual equipment) prior to the meeting by the Audiovisual Services Department or by branch library staff. Groups failing to abide by library-equipment policies may be denied future use of meeting rooms.

10. Group-owned equipment

- Groups providing their own equipment or display materials are responsible for transportation to and from the meeting rooms. Library staff should not be asked to assist.
- The library is not responsible for equipment, supplies, or other materials owned by a guest group and used in the library. The library cannot supply storage for equipment and/or materials and supplies belonging to guest groups.

11. The person reserving a room will be responsible for maintenance of order. This person must:

- Be responsible for the group's compliance with library rules and protection of library property.
- Notify the building manager when the meeting room has been cleared.
- Assure that the room is left in good order.

12. If refreshments are served, sack lunches and finger foods are suggested, but catered meals may be permitted if special arrangements are made when a room is reserved. Alcoholic beverages may not be served. Food is to be served only in the scheduled room, and group members must not carry food or drink throughout the building.