

# MEETING ROOM

---

## POLICY

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees July 13, 2016

Revised and approved September 11, 2019

Revised and approved January 12, 2022



BEAUFORT COUNTY  
**LIBRARY**  
For Learning ♦ For Leisure ♦ For Life

# MEETING ROOM POLICY

## Beaufort County Library System

Meeting spaces (including Meeting Rooms and Conference Rooms) are available throughout the Beaufort County Library System (hereinafter referred to as "Library") for non-commercial, non-profit oriented meetings, presentations, information sharing, etc. These handicapped-accessible meeting spaces support the Library's mission to "serve and support the community for learning, for leisure, for life."

Mixed-use facilities (such as the South Carolina Room at the Hilton Head Library Branch and the Computer Labs at the St. Helena, Bluffton, and Hilton Head Library Branches) are reservable under the direction of the Library Branch Manager to ensure that the requested function is consistent with the facility's overall character and use. Meeting size must be at least 5 attendees. Mixed-use facilities necessarily will have limited availability as other uses - public access, study times - will take preference, but can be requested subject to scheduling and overview by the Library Branch Manager. Study rooms are available for public use on a first-come-first-served basis.

Users must have a Beaufort County Library card to reserve meeting spaces. Non-reserved use is available to Library cardholders only. Out-of-County residents who wish to use the Library meeting spaces must purchase a Non-Resident Library card. An application must be completed prior to non-reserved use. Completed reservation requests for specific dates and times will be considered on a first come, first served basis.

The Library reserves the right to cancel or amend a reservation if necessary.

Beaufort County Library and Beaufort County Government functions take precedence for use of meeting spaces and are not subject to this policy.

A meeting space is available for use only during the operating hours of the Library facility in which the space is located.

Meeting spaces are available at no charge; however, the Library reserves the right to charge the Applicants for damages to Library property resulting from said Applicants' use of Library meeting space.

All meeting spaces are available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups (hereinafter referred to as "applicants") requesting their use. Permission to use a Library meeting room does not advocate or endorse viewpoints of meetings or meeting room applicants.

The Library allows the use of its facilities with the understanding that the Library accepts no responsibility for the personal safety of any person, either inside or outside a Library building. The Library is not responsible for damage, loss, or theft of personal property.

## RESERVATIONS

Applicants must submit a completed *Meeting Room Application*. Out-of-County residents must purchase a Library card to reserve these meeting spaces.

A Meeting Room Application must be signed by an individual at least 18 years of age who has a Beaufort County Library card account in good standing.

Applications may be submitted up to 6 months in advance of the desired date of use.

Groups may have up to two reservations at one time; no additional reservations may be made until after the date of the initial reservation has passed. This regulation may be waived for groups acting in partnership with the Library. Partnership must be approved by Library Director. Reservations may be made for up to six (6) partnership events with the Library Director's approval.

Reservation periods must include sufficient time for applicants to set up the meeting space and return it to its original arrangement at the conclusion of its use.

The meeting room will not be considered scheduled until the Meeting Room Application is approved.

The Library reserves the right to cancel a reservation when the Applicant is not present within 15 minutes after the reservation start time. The failure of an Applicant to provide adequate notice of cancellation within twelve (12) hours preceding a reservation's start time may result in the denial of future meeting space use.

All meeting space reservations are subject to any policy revisions upon acceptance/approval by the Library Board of Trustees.

### **Non-Reserved Use**

On a first-come, first-serve basis, Library cardholders may use meeting spaces that are not reserved. The time increment for non-reserved use of Branch Library Conference Rooms is determined by Branch Managers based on local demand.

### **Conditions of Use**

Because the Library is a public facility, privacy cannot be guaranteed except for lawful executive sessions of governmental bodies.

Use of meeting spaces is subject to all applicable federal, state, county, and municipal laws and regulations and the Library's Code of Conduct.

All meetings must be open to the public.

At least one Applicant must be present in a meeting space during the entire period of use.

Occupancy limits for meeting spaces are determined by local Fire Marshals and may vary per Library location. Occupancy information for meeting spaces is available from staff or the Library's website.

The Library reserves the right to have a representative attend any meeting held in its facilities to ensure that no unlawful activities or activities contrary to this policy or the Library's Code of Conduct are occurring.

Meeting spaces must be vacated **no less than 15 minutes** before Library closing. Applicants must inform Library staff when they are through with a meeting space.

### **Prohibited Use**

Meeting spaces may **not** be used for the following purposes:

- Private social gatherings or parties
- Fundraising, sales or any other profit-making activities except on behalf of the Library
- Non-Library-related groups soliciting or actively selling items or services
- Users may neither solicit nor collect donations of money, donor forms, pledge forms or other property from meeting participants. No fundraising activities may be held except by the Library, the Friends of the Library, and the Public Library Foundation.

- Religious services (however religious study groups are permitted)
- Library facilities may not be used for commercial purposes. Users may neither sell or exchange goods or services nor promote sales by samples, pictures or descriptions. Recruitment of agents/customers through the distribution of samples and/or collection of personal information and/or orders from attendees is prohibited.
- Classes conducted by instructors for their profit
- The Library facilities are not available for political meetings and other campaign-related purposes. Any politically-related event whether partisan or bi-partisan, must be approved by the County Administrator.
- Any group whose beliefs espouse racial discrimination by reason of gender, race, ethnicity or other socially unacceptable philosophies, groups who espouse hate philosophies or political agendas, which are not in accord with the orderly decorum in the safe operation of the Beaufort County Library System.

## **Violations**

Violations of this policy or the Library's *Code of Conduct* may result in the denial of meeting spaces use and/or the assessment of fees.

## **Denial of Meeting Room Use**

An individual, group, or organization may appeal the denial of a meeting room reservation request. An appeal must be submitted to the Library Director within ten days of notification of the denial. The Library Director's decision will be submitted in writing within ten (10) days of notification of the decision to the Chair of the Library Board of Trustees. The appeal will be considered at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

## **Publicity**

Users may neither claim endorsement by the Beaufort County Library nor imply that the Library is sponsoring their meeting. Meeting publicity should clearly state that the event is not a Beaufort County Library-sponsored program, but may include Library address/location information for attendees. Users should not include Library telephone numbers in meeting publicity. Users must confine meeting activities and distribution of literature and signage to the meeting space reserved.

## **ROOM RULES**

### **Meeting room must be restored to its original state upon completion of use.**

- Neither tape nor adhesive of any kind may be posted directly on the walls of the meeting room or in the halls.
- No candles, canned liquid cooking fuel or other incendiary materials may be lit or burned in the Library.
- Lights must remain on, and windows/doors may not be covered when those rooms are in use.
- Any meeting with 15 or more individuals under the age of 18 in attendance must have at least one responsible adult present in the meeting for every 15 persons younger than 18 years of age.

### **Food and Beverages**

- Refreshments may be served; however, applicants are responsible for removing their leftover food and/or beverage items, etc. from the Meeting Room and placing trash in containers provided. Refreshment preparation facilities, with limited equipment are available in some facilities. Supplies, such as coffee, napkins, etc. are not provided.
- Counters and kitchen floor are to be cleaned.
- Alcoholic beverages and smoking are not permitted on Library property.

## **Furniture and Equipment**

The Library does not provide the set up and take down of furniture and/or equipment in Meeting Rooms. Users may rearrange furniture and/or equipment within a Meeting Room as long as exits are not blocked. Furniture may not be removed from its assigned space. Applicants' supplies and/or equipment may not be stored in the Library. Users must return any furniture and/or equipment to pre-meeting locations and remove all meeting materials or place them in trash containers provided.

Users are responsible for leaving meeting space in the original condition they found it. If Library staff finds that a Meeting Room has not been returned to its pre-meeting condition, future use of Library meeting space may be denied or conditioned upon receipt of payment in an amount that the Library determines will cover the cost to clean the room.

Users must report any damages to Library property and/or equipment occurring during or in connection with their meeting. Each Applicant's Library card account may be charged for the cost of repairs and/or replacement of Library equipment resulting from said Applicants' use of the meeting space. Future use of Library meeting space use may be denied.

## **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance is provided to meeting space users by Library staff by request. Technical Assistance is defined as assistance given by Library staff to meeting space users beyond general instruction, regarding the set up or operation of any Library equipment.

To view policies and forms mentioned in this document, please visit [www.beaufortcountylibrary.org](http://www.beaufortcountylibrary.org).

*Revised September 2008, Approved 9/8/08*

*Revised June 2009, Revised April 2012, Approved 5/9/12*

*Revised June 2016, Approved July 13, 2016*

*Revised and Approved March 8, 2017*

*Revised and Approved March 13, 2018*

*Revised and Approved July 10, 2019*

*Revised and Approved September 11, 2019*

*Revised and Approved January 12, 2022*