

Meeting Room Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure an orderly, peaceful, and efficient use of the Hirsch Community Rooms and the Penzel Conference Room and their equipment so as to accommodate and provide equal access to as many groups and organizations as is reasonably possible. The fact that a group is permitted to meet at the public Library does not constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs and meeting room users are expected to fully comply with all applicable provisions of law.

The Library Director or a designee authorizes use of the meeting rooms and maintains the schedule. If a question is raised as to the objectives and activities of any organization or group requesting use of the community room, the Cape Girardeau Library Board of Trustees has the final authority in granting or refusing permission for the use of the Hirsch Community Rooms and Penzel Conference Room.

The following regulations apply to the use of the meeting rooms and any departure therefrom may be made only by the written authorization of the Library Director:

- 1. Qualifying Applicants*
 - a. Federal, State, County or City agencies, and non-profit organizations*
 - b. Cape Girardeau businesses who provide proof of paid property tax that supports the Library district. Reservations will be confirmed after receipt of the application and a copy of the paid property tax receipt.*
 - c. Personal events, such as birthday parties and bridal showers, are not allowed.*
- 2. Availability*
 - a. Library programs and Library related programs have priority in the use of the meeting rooms.*
 - b. The meeting rooms are available for use by organizations of a civic, cultural, or educational character, but not for social gatherings, money-raising events (except for those benefiting the Library Foundation), or commercial purposes. Commercial programs listed or presented as informational, educational, or instructional must remain so, and presenters shall make no direct solicitation of attendees to secure clients or customers for their commercial purpose.*
 - c. Businesses that are located within the Library district boundaries may reserve the rooms for any hours the Library is open Monday – Saturday and with the understanding that all meetings are free and open to the public.*
 - d. Children or teenage groups, where the majority of them are under the age of 18, may use the Youth Services Program Room provided that they are supervised by an adult. The adult supervisor will be responsible for any damage.*
 - e. Meetings which may disturb regular Library functions shall not be scheduled.*
- 3. Scheduling*
 - a. A completed application is required before a meeting may be scheduled. Businesses must also provide a copy of their paid property tax receipt.*
 - b. Application for permission to use the meeting rooms shall be made at least a week in advance and not longer than one year prior to the scheduled meeting. For those organizations that use the meeting rooms on a regular monthly basis, the application must be updated annually. Businesses may place a reservation 60 days in advance.*
 - c. In general, meeting rooms will be reserved only during hours when the staff is regularly on duty, and must be concluded 30 minutes before closing.*

- d. Recurring reservations for non-profit groups will be accepted for no more than 12 months at a time. It is the responsibility of the organization to check on advance registrations.*
 - e. Generally, no group or organization may use the meeting rooms more than once a month. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.*
 - f. In the event of a Library building emergency or inclement weather, meetings may be cancelled by Library staff. Every effort will be made to notify the party responsible for the booking; however, it is the person's responsibility to check with the Library to confirm the Library's closing.*
- 4. Use of Kitchen Facilities*
 - a. Organizations may use kitchen facilities to prepare light refreshments or light luncheons.*
 - b. Alcoholic beverages and those with red dye are not permitted.*
 - c. Organizations are required to leave the meeting rooms clean and orderly. Organizations will be charged a minimum cleaning fee of \$100 for any carpet stains that will require professional cleaning. Any stain-causing spills must be reported to the Administrative Assistant immediately.*
 - d. Consumable items such as coffee, cups, and sugar are not provided by the Library.*
 - e. For catered meals, the group scheduling the rooms is responsible for arranging for delivery and pickup of leftover food and equipment at the end of the meeting.*
 - f. Failure to comply with any of these regulations will result in loss of privileges to use Library meeting rooms.*
- 5. Responsibility for Equipment and Facility*
 - a. Organizations are responsible for setting up and taking down tables and chairs for their own meetings. Failure to return furnishings to their designated storage will result in loss of privileges to use Library meeting rooms.*
 - b. No signs, displays or exhibits may be attached to the wall in any manner without written permission from the Library Director or designee.*
 - c. Use of the Library's audiovisual equipment must be arranged at the time the room is booked. Arrangements for training on how to use equipment must be made in advance.*
 - d. By applying for use of the meeting rooms, an organization agrees to accept responsibility for the repair or replacement of damaged or missing equipment or the building interior, and the individual making the application agrees to be held personally liable for the same.*
 - e. No materials, equipment, or furniture belonging to groups or organizations may be stored on the Library premises. The Library will not assume responsibility for any items left on the premises.*
 - f. Organizations that plan to work on potentially messy craft projects must lay tarps down on the designated work area. Hazardous materials including, but not limited to, paints, solvents, and explosives are prohibited. Candles or open flames, except sterno for chafing dishes, are prohibited.*
 - g. Organizations are responsible for thoroughly cleaning Library tables and chairs if they have served food or worked on craft projects. Failure to do so will result in loss of privileges to use Library meeting rooms.*
- 6. General Regulations*
 - a. The Library reserves the right to change or cancel reservations for meeting rooms. If changes or cancellations are necessary, the Library will provide the affected group with as much notice as possible. The Library reserves the right to relocate a group to a different meeting room.*

- b. Meetings must be open to the public, except that a public governmental body may hold a closed session pursuant to the provisions of RSMo 610.*
- c. No soliciting or selling of products or services not directly connected with the Library can take place.*
- d. Neither the name nor address of the Cape Girardeau Public Library may be used as the official address or headquarters of an organization, other than the Friends of the Cape Girardeau Public Library Foundation.*
- e. Admission fees or collections are prohibited. The only exceptions are in the case of paid registration which is necessary to cover expenses for formal workshops or institutes or a fee to cover actual cost of a Library sponsored program.*
- f. The Library Director or designee is authorized to terminate the meeting of any group that becomes disorderly or objectionable and to deny subsequent use of the meeting rooms to groups that violate policies and regulations.*
- g. The Library does not assume liability for injuries to individuals or damages to personal property which occur as a result of actions of the sponsors or participants in activities in its meeting rooms.*
- h. Library staff are not available to accept or relay messages and/or to page meeting room attendees except in an emergency situation.*
- i. The Library reserves the right to refuse future bookings to groups that fail to appear on two scheduled meeting dates without prior notification or do not abide by Library policies.*
- j. The Library reserves the right to take photographs of events for its own records and for future promotional materials.*
- k. Due to the public nature of meeting rooms, booking requests shall not be protected as a Library circulation transaction, but treated as public documents.*
- l. Any meeting at which a group intends to have security personnel present shall not be scheduled or held at the Library. The Library Director and the Board of Directors reserve the right to cancel any room reservation for any group meeting if the meeting gives rise to a security concern for Library patrons or otherwise disrupts Library functions. This paragraph does not apply to meetings featuring a government official accompanied by his or her security staff.*
- m. Groups using the meeting rooms are responsible for assigning an age-appropriate designation for their scheduled event as required by 15 CSR 30-200.015 of Missouri State Regulations. This age-appropriate designation must be listed at the time of application for the use of the room as well as affixed to any promotional materials for said event. Failure to designate the age-appropriateness of an event held in the public meeting rooms can result in the cancellation of the reservation and revocation of permission for future use. Additionally, the public has the right to challenge or object to the age-appropriate designation assigned to a reservation. Members of the public can file official objections by filling out a Request for Reconsideration form. See the Library's Request for Reconsideration policy for more information.*

Approved by Library Board of Trustees April 27, 2000; Amended 9/25/2008; Amended 10/22/2015; Amended 6/23/2016; Amended 8/24/2017; Amended 11/30/2017; Amended 6/30/22; Amended 6/6/2023.