

Meeting Room Use Policy

Policy Statement 1

To promote civic interaction and cooperative efforts, the Fort Worth Public Library (FWPL) welcomes the use of its meeting rooms by the public.

Regulations

1.1 FWPL has multiple locations with designated meeting rooms. These locations are Diamond-Hill/Jarvis Branch Library, Summer Glen Branch Library, East Regional Library, Ella Mae Shamblee Branch Library, Southwest Regional Library, Northwest Branch Library, Northside Branch Library, Golden Triangle Branch Library and the Central Library, which has three rooms for rental: the Chappell Meeting Room, Tandy Lecture Hall, and Discovery Theater.

1.2 In addition to Library-sponsored activities, the meeting rooms are available at no charge to the Library's support organizations: The Fort Worth Public Library Foundation and the Library Advisory Board. Furthermore, currently serving City Council members, City of Fort Worth departments, and neighborhood associations registered with the City of Fort Worth may use the rooms free of charge.

1.2a Organizations that contribute financial support to the Library through special programs managed by the Library's support organizations will be allowed free use of the meeting rooms, based on the terms of the agreement.

1.3 The Library rents its designated meeting rooms to members of the public for a fee.

1.4 Use of Library meeting rooms will not be permitted to groups that practice, profess, or have as their policy (official or unofficial) discrimination against any person on the basis of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin; nor shall access be permitted to groups affiliated with organizations which practice, profess or have a policy of such discrimination.

1.4a The Library reserves the right to consider all relevant sources of information in arriving at a determination of such discrimination, including articles of incorporation, constitution and bylaws, and published materials of the applicant or of the organizations with which it is affiliated.

1.5 The Library reserves the right to have a member of its staff present at each scheduled meeting or event.

1.6 A rental agreement, though confirmed, may be canceled by the Library in the event of a conflict with a request from local, state, or federal election officials for use of the room as a balloting location, or in the case of inclement weather or natural disaster. A full refund will be provided. Furthermore, the Library reserves the right to cancel reservations for cause at the discretion of the Library Director.

1.7 Use of the Library's meeting rooms for non-Library sponsored programs does not constitute endorsement on the part of the Library or the City of Fort Worth.

1.8 Any materials promoting an event or meeting held in a library meeting room (for example, flyers or poster) may list the Library as the location but may not imply Library sponsorship.

1.9 Any and all publicity must be approved by the Library management at the hosting location prior to distribution at the library location. (Refer to the “Distribution of Non-library Materials Policy” for details.)

1.10 Reservations for meeting rooms will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. All applicants must adhere to the following:

1.10a Online reservation requests may be submitted at least 10 days and no more than 90 days in advance of the reservation date.

1.10b Online reservations must be completed and electronically signed by an adult, 18 or older, representing the group requesting use of the meeting room.

1.10c A picture I.D. is required to verify the identity of the renter on day of rental.

1.10d All inquiries concerning a meeting room reservation will be referred to the person signing the application.

1.10e Approval for non-profit rates will be based upon a review of proper documentation. To qualify for the non-profit rate, the applicant must provide a copy of the organization’s tax-exempt status.

1.10f Reservation is not confirmed until approved by the library. You will receive notification of approval or denial within 3 business days (Monday – Friday) of the reservation. If the reservation is approved, payment will be due within 72 hours. Check or credit card payments must be made online.

1.10h An online reservation is required for each date and time requested.

1.10i Multiple reservations may be made within the 90-day time frame. However, the Library reserves the right to limit the number of meetings held by any one applicant, group, or organization in order to make space available for as many different programs and events as possible. Any on-going program, defined as more than once a month, must be approved by the hosting library’s manager.

1.10j. Reservations can be cancelled by applicants but there will be a fee for cancellation. Cancellation requests made at least 10 business days in advance of the scheduled event will result in cancellation fee that is 25% of fees paid. Cancellation requests made less than 10 business days in advance of the scheduled event will result in cancellation fee that is 50% of fees paid. No cash refunds will be provided. All refunds will be processed within 45 days. Failure to comply with cancellation procedures will result in the loss of fees paid.

1.11 Use of Library meeting rooms by any applicant, group, or organization implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of this policy, as well as accepting responsibility for conducting orderly programs and ensuring that attendees do not interfere with regular library services or endanger Library employees, patrons, or property. Failure to comply will result in the termination of the meeting and the possible rejection of future rental requests.

1.11a All individuals using Library meeting rooms and facilities must comply with health, safety, fire, noise, and occupancy codes and ordinances of the City of Fort Worth.

1.11b Meeting room preparation may begin no more than 30 minutes before the event. All events must be completed and the room vacated by the time designated in the agreement; otherwise, an additional hourly fee will be charged. Alternate arrangements are possible at Central Library, but at the sole

discretion of Library Administration. Contact Fort Worth Public Library's Facility Supervisor for times and applicable rates.

1.11c Attendance at meetings or events will be limited to the capacity of the hosting Library's facilities. Please refer to online reservation website for specific locations and their capacities.

1.11d Meetings and events need not be open to the general public.

1.11e Meetings or events involving minors must be supervised by an adequate number of adults, 21 years of age or older. Two adult chaperones are required for a function of 30 or fewer minors, with one additional chaperone required for each additional group of 15 minors.

1.11f Neither the Library, nor its employees, is responsible for the property of any applicant or attendee. Library facilities are not equipped to store equipment, literature, or other items. Any items left behind will be subject to the Library's Lost & Found policies.

1.11g No physical changes to the room are allowed except for furniture rearrangement. Applicants are responsible for leaving the room as found.

1.11h Activities involving more than normal wear and tear will not be permitted. Users will be held responsible for all damages.

1.11i Decorations shall be freestanding and fireproof. No candles or open flames permitted.

1.11j Applicants requiring use of the kitchen must make their needs known at the time of application. Applicants must limit their use to manager-defined areas of the kitchen for those locations with a kitchen.

1.11k Soliciting, direct marketing, or actively selling items or services is strictly prohibited. Fund-raising activities or events are also prohibited, with the exception of those directly benefiting the Library.

1.11l Gambling, lotteries, games of chance, bingo, drawings, or raffles shall be prohibited except as provided by state law and approval by the Library Director or her designee.

1.11m Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the use of tobacco products are not permitted in the Library's meeting rooms.

1.11n Rental of facilities for Political Activities – Only groups that have not endorsed a candidate or a function concerning a legislative issue, ordinance, policy, etc. will be permitted to rent facilities for a political activity. Therefore, neutral third parties (e.g. neighborhood, business, and civic organizations) are allowed to rent library meeting rooms to hold candidate forums, provided that ALL candidates are invited to these events and have an equal opportunity to participate. We would not, however, allow any individual candidate or any group affiliated with a candidate, to rent space at our libraries for partisan political activity.

1.11o The Library is not responsible for providing security for the applicant, group, organization, or their attendees. Each group is responsible for its own security needs.

1.11p The Library can furnish a limited number of tables and chairs for the meeting or event. However, the Library cannot provide staff to set up or arrange the furniture. Setting up the room is the sole responsibility of the renter.

1.12 All applicants, groups, or organizations shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Fort Worth Library and the City of Fort Worth, its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, suits, and actions of any kind, arising, resulting, and accruing from any negligent act, omission, or error of applicant, group or organization resulting or relating to personal injuries or property damage arising from the applicant, group, or organization's use of the Library's facilities.

1.13 If there is a complaint about the Meeting Room Policy or the content of a program or event, it should be directed to the hosting librarian in charge of the building. If there is a need or request for further discussion the citizen with the complaint will be directed to Library Administration.