Meeting Room Policy

Florence County Library System
Approved by the Board of Trustees May 6, 2019

Purpose

The Florence County Library System welcomes public use of meeting rooms by community groups and organizations whose aims are educational, civic, charitable or cultural.

Eligibility

- Library and library-related events have scheduling priority over other meetings held in meeting rooms.
- Meeting rooms may be used by non-profit groups, civic and service organizations, and educational, charitable, or cultural community groups. Groups using meeting rooms should include at least ten (10) or more individuals. The use of meeting rooms does not imply endorsement by the Florence County Library System of the group's purpose or activities.
- Meeting rooms **may not** be used for:
  - Political rallies or campaigns for specific candidates or specific partisan political issues
  - Social events including but not limited to showers, wedding receptions, birthday parties, or sorority and fraternity parties
  - Advertising, selling, or soliciting products and services

The library reserves the right to withdraw permission or cancel meeting rooms reservations for any reason, including:

- Unanticipated building or weather conditions
- Misrepresentation of the group's or meeting's purpose in the meeting room application
- Failure to comply with the Meeting Room Policy
- Damage to room, carpet, equipment, or furniture in a previous meeting
- Disturbing regular use of the library by patrons

A group may appeal the denial of a meeting room reservation request by submitting a written statement to the Library Director within ten (10) days of notification of denial. The Library Director will submit the appeal for consideration by the Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be the final decision.

Reservations

- All applicants must submit a completed Meeting Room Application Form, including the name of a contact person who is at least eighteen years of age, a Florence County resident, and will be present at the requested meeting. Group members will not be allowed into the meeting room until the applicant is present. Applications will be approved by the Library Director or the Director's designee.
- An organization or group can make up to three (3) reservations at a time. Reservations should be made at least one month in advance. Reservations for the Florence location can be made by calling (843) 413-7074 during operating hours; reservations for branch locations can be made by calling the desired location.
- A deposit of $100.00 (cash or check made payable to Florence County Library only) is required upon arrival for groups using meeting rooms. This deposit will be refunded if the meeting room is left in a clean and orderly condition.
- Groups using meeting rooms may not charge entry or rental fees to attendees. Charges such as registration or materials fees for workshops, or membership dues to an organization, are not considered entry or rental fees.
- Reservations and meetings are public information and may be posted publicly at the library. Groups may not assign their reservations to other groups or individuals.
- Neither the name nor address of the library may be used as the official address or headquarters of an organization. Meeting publicity may not include the library's phone number.
- Notice of cancellation should be made as early as possible. Failure to provide notice of cancellation on multiple occasions may result in denial of future meeting room requests.

Use

Meeting room users are responsible for arranging tables and chairs for their own meetings.

Entry and setup:
- All meetings must take place within normal operating hours of the library. The library reserves the right to have staff representatives observe or attend any meeting held in the facilities.
- Meeting room users are not allowed in staff areas of the library. Users must enter the room and transport equipment, supplies, etc., through the library's public entrance.

Food and drink:
- Light refreshments (coffee, punch, finger foods, etc.) may be served in the meeting rooms. Food and beverages may not be taken from meeting rooms to other parts of the library.

- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products are permitted in meeting rooms or on library grounds.

Audiovisual and other equipment:
- Requests for use of audiovisual equipment at the Florence Library must be made at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled event. Personal computers may not be connected to the audiovisual system; presentations and other media must be prepared on a USB flash drive or be accessible online through email, etc.
- Library staff may not be able to provide audiovisual, technical, or other assistance during meetings.
- Meeting room users are responsible for supplying all meeting materials, including flip charts, paper, copies of handouts, writing implements, and any kitchen supplies. The library does not provide storage space and is not responsible for items left in its facilities.
- No signs or decorations may be affixed to any wall, window, column, door, ceiling, or any other surface in the room unless expressly approved by the Library Director.

Safety:
- All meeting attendees must comply with the library's Code of Conduct. Meeting activities may not infringe upon patron use and staff operations within the library.
- The applicant and sponsoring organization are responsible for safety and order during meetings. Group members will not be allowed into the meeting room until the applicant is present.
- Organizations using meeting rooms must comply with all applicable state and local laws including fire codes, occupancy limitations, and noise ordinances.
- No candles or other incendiary materials may be used. No electrical appliances may be used in the meeting room or kitchen except for coffee pots.

Exceptions

The Library Director may approve exemptions or exceptions to items in this policy, including the residency requirement for applicant; waiver of the deposit fee; use of rooms outside library hours; staff assistance during meetings; sale of books or other materials during a library-sponsored author event.

Other Rooms

The Meeting Room Policy also applies to the Computer Classroom and Study Rooms, with the following additions and exceptions:

Computer Classroom (Florence location only)

- Food or drink of any kind is prohibited in the Computer Classroom.
- Computer Classroom users may not move furniture or make any alterations to computer equipment or software without prior permission from the Library Director.
- Computer Classroom users must enter and exit through the rear door of the classroom into the public area of the library. The front exit of the classroom is for staff use only and may only be used by classroom users during an emergency.
- Technical assistance must be coordinated with Information Technology staff **at least one week prior to the meeting**. The library will not assume responsibility for failure of equipment to work properly if this assistance is not coordinated.

Study Rooms (Florence and Lake City locations only)

- Food and drink of any kind is prohibited in Study Rooms.
- Study Rooms are available to individuals or small groups on a walk-in basis. Applications and reservations are not required, but reservations may be made in advance by contacting the appropriate location.