

Red Hook Public Library Meeting Room Policy

The primary purpose of Library space is for Library activities including programming and staff activities. However, Red Hook Public Library may grant the use of its space, when available, to small outside groups in the spirit of connecting people with information and each other.

Any gathering at RHPL must be free and open to the public. No group may exclude, malign, harass, or harm any other groups or individuals while using Library space. The Library can impose reasonable conditions for the use of its meeting rooms to ensure that public or private property is not damaged through use of its facilities, and to ensure that the safety, welfare and comfort of the public is not disturbed.

The fact that an organization is permitted to meet at the Library does not constitute an endorsement of the organization's beliefs by the Library, its staff, or its Board of Trustees.

Guidelines for Meeting Room Use

Reservation Requests

1. Library space is extremely limited and priority use is for Library staff training, Library programming, and for Library-sponsored events. There is no meeting space in the Library dedicated solely for public use.
2. Reservation of Library space is to be coordinated with Library administration, and no guarantee is given space will be available for reservation.
3. Meeting room use may not be used by groups that discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or other characteristics protected by law.
4. Preference will be given to groups that serve Red Hook residents.
5. Meetings should be consistent with the Library's mission.
6. The Library reserves the right to limit time in a meeting space.
7. Meeting rooms are available during the Library's regularly scheduled hours. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Director.

Rules for Use of Library Meeting Space

1. Meeting room programs must not interfere with Library operations.
2. Attendance may not exceed the room's maximum capacity designation.
3. All group gatherings must be free and open to the general public and will be listed on the library calendar. Organizations conducting business meetings may limit public comments, but not public attendance.
4. Commercial use of Library meeting rooms is generally not allowed. However, an exception may be made for a commercial entity or professional to use a library meeting room to provide a beneficial education program related to his or her field of expertise. During such a program, no attempt may be made to sell a specific product or service offered by the entity or practitioner or any other commercial interest. The individual or organization may not solicit personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses etc.) from the program participants, during the program.
5. Political meetings are acceptable but may not be used for campaign purposes, party caucuses, or meetings closed to the public.
6. Any publicity for a meeting, including brochures, flyers, radio and TV announcements, social media announcements, newspaper ads, etc., must carry the name and contact information of the individual or organization sponsoring the meeting. Neither the name nor the address of the Library may be used as the official address or headquarters of an organization. The Library cannot be listed as the sponsoring organization. The Library telephone number may not appear on the publicity.
7. The Library cannot guarantee an open wifi internet connection in its meeting rooms. Direct connections to the Library's network are not available.

8. The Library will not provide storage space and assumes no responsibility for equipment or personal articles belonging to applicants and their guests.
9. All meetings must be completed fifteen minutes before the Library closes unless prior approval is given by the Director or their designee.
10. Light refreshments may be served, but groups may not prepare food on library property without express permission from the Director or their designee.
11. Groups and organizations which use the Library meeting rooms shall arrange for and provide their own special equipment needs.
12. No smoking, vaping, or alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Library or on Library property without express permission of the Director or their agent.
13. Groups using meeting rooms are responsible for set-up and cleanup. Groups must return the room to the original arrangement at the completion of the meeting.
14. The individual or group reserving the meeting room shall be responsible for any damage to or loss of Library property (e.g. damage to walls due to unauthorized tacks or nails). If Library property is either damaged or lost the Library Director will obtain estimates for the repair of the damage or the cost of the replacement of the lost property. The individual or group will be responsible to pay that amount to the Library.
15. It is up to parents or guardians if they wish to send their children to events under the care of other adults. It is never the Library's obligation to supervise children.
16. Groups of children under the age of 16 and/or developmentally disabled adults attending a program, meeting, or event, must be supervised by one adult for every six children and/or developmentally disabled adults at all times.
17. No group or organization can transfer use of the meeting room to another organization.
18. Only the Library, or approved collaborators of Red Hook Public Library, may use meeting rooms for fundraising events.

Reservation of Rights

1. The Library reserves the right to refuse meeting room space to patrons with an outstanding Library bill.
2. The Library reserves the right to collect fees for the use of its meeting rooms.
3. The Library reserves the right to review all material presented and/or distributed at meetings.
4. The Library assumes no liability for theft or damage to property brought onto Library property or for injuries which occur as a result of actions of sponsors or participants in activities in meeting rooms.
5. Individuals or groups using the community room/meeting room(s) shall secure any required performance licenses and indemnify the Library for any failure to do so.
6. The Library reserves the right to attend any meetings held in its facilities (except lawful executive sessions of government bodies).
7. The Library reserves the right to end gatherings that violate the terms of this policy or other Library policies.
8. The Library reserves the right to request Proof of Liability Insurance of any group requesting to reserve the meeting room.

Rescheduling Meeting Room Events

1. If it is necessary to cancel a meeting, the group is responsible for notifying participants and the Library as soon as possible. Ultimately, the group is responsible for calling the Library to verify the Library is open.
2. An attempt will be made to reschedule a canceled meeting, based on space available.

Initiating a Reservation Request

Meeting room use requests may be made by contacting the Director, by email at director@redhooklibrary.org or phone, by calling 845-758-3241.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

April 15, 2021