

MEETING ROOM USE POLICY

MGT-10

The primary purpose of meeting rooms at the Montclair Public Library (MPL or the Library) is to support Library programs and activities. Library-sponsored programs and the programs of Library-affiliated organizations will always be given first priority in the reservation of meeting room space.

The Montclair Public Library makes meeting rooms available as part of its service to the community. The Library Board of Trustees recognizes that the Library's facilities belong to the community and permits established groups and organizations based in Montclair Township to use the Library's meeting room facilities for civic, cultural, educational, intellectual, or charitable purposes.

Regulations

1. This policy is subject to change at any time.
2. The Library shall not be held liable for any injury sustained or damage done that is related to the use/misuse of equipment or Library facilities.
3. Failure to comply with the terms of this policy may result in a forfeiture of meeting room privileges as determined by the Library Director.
4. A customer or organization, whose privileges have been suspended or revoked under this policy, may request to have the decision reviewed by the Library Board of Trustees.
5. The Board of Trustees endorses the American Library Association "Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights." (Attached)
6. As used in this policy, "meeting" shall refer to any type of meeting, gathering, event, etc., for which an organization requests to reserve and use a room at the Library.

Reservations and Scheduling

1. Library, Library related, and Library sponsored or co-sponsored programs have priority in the use of Library facilities.
2. This policy applies to the following rooms, which are available for reservation:
 - a. Classroom (Main Library)
 - b. Auditorium (Main Library)
 - c. Conference room (Main Library)
 - d. Classroom (Bellevue Avenue Branch)
 - e. All other spaces in the Library are not available for reservation.
3. Outside organizations and individuals representing said organizations, shall not be permitted to reserve a public meeting room more than twice in any month. The Library Director may grant exceptions.

Eligibility and Permissible Uses of Meeting Rooms

1. Library facilities may only be reserved for civic, cultural, educational, intellectual, or charitable purposes. Meetings of an infomercial nature (including promoting or selling a product or service and/or soliciting customers), and any commercial ventures, are not permitted.
2. Meetings that may disturb regular Library functions shall not be permitted.
3. The Library may restrict meeting room reservations to non-commercial, non-profit organizations based in Montclair Township.
4. The Library may require an organization to submit evidence of non-profit status, such as by providing a copy of its 501(c)(3) certificate or State of New Jersey non-profit Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, prior to accepting or approving a reservation request.
5. Government entities, agencies, and elected officials seeking to use a meeting room for a non-partisan governmental purpose, may request space for public meetings at no cost.
6. Library facilities may be reserved during normal library hours.
 - a. The Auditorium may be reserved outside of normal operating hours at the discretion of the Director.
7. All meetings of outside organizations in Library meeting rooms shall be open to the public.
8. All organizations wishing to reserve a meeting room must be represented by a qualified individual applicant, who must be age 18 or older.

Application Procedures

1. Applicants must submit a separate completed application form (attached and available on the Library website) to Library Administration for each date requested. For more information, call 973.744.0500, ext. 2221.
 - a. Applications must be received at least four (4) weeks in advance, but not more than two (2) months prior to the requested reservation date.
 - b. Applications received beyond the two (2) month limit, or that are incomplete or include multiple date requests, will not be accepted, returned or retained.
 - c. With the exception of Library programs, meeting rooms are available on a first come, first served basis based on the date the Library receives the application.
2. The application must be made by an authorized representative.
3. Meeting room applications will be reviewed and approved or denied without regard to the viewpoints, beliefs, affiliations or policies of the organization(s) seeking to use a meeting room.

3. Written approval of reservations will be sent to the applicant. Reservations are not considered confirmed until the Library distributes written confirmation approving the request.
 - a. Upon approval of the application, the applicant or sponsoring group is expected to meet with an authorized Library representative to review facilities to be used.
4. Meeting rooms shall only be scheduled for use during the Library's regular hours of operation, including the total time involved (from setup to vacate).
 - a. Meeting rooms must be vacated at least fifteen (15) minutes before the close of the Library's regular hours. Any exception must be requested in writing and approved in advance by the Library Director or Assistant Director.
 - b. If a meeting runs late, the sponsoring organization's meeting privileges may be suspended thereafter.
5. Cancellations without 24-hour notice, or failure to show for a reserved room, may result in suspension of the applicant's meeting privileges.
6. Any application may be rejected, or any previously granted permission may be withdrawn, at the discretion of the Library Director.
 - a. The Library may cancel any approved reservation in accordance with Library policies for temporary closures or emergency procedures.
7. All requirements for room setup and amenities shall be stated in the application at the time the application is submitted.
 - a. Organizations wishing to use Library-supplied audiovisual equipment must make that request at the time of application.
 - b. Library staff will set up the room according to approved application indications only.
 - c. Last minute changes in setup or amenities will not be accepted.
8. The Library may require proof of insurance for organizations seeking to use the Library meeting rooms.

B. Guidelines and Restrictions on Use of Meeting Rooms

1. Permission to meet at the Library does not in any way constitute the Library's endorsement of any organization's viewpoints, beliefs, policies, or affiliations. The reservation of a specific meeting room, or portion thereof, does not entitle the applicant to exclusive use of any other room in the Library.
2. Library staff will only unlock a room for an authorized representative of the organization who made the reservation.
3. The authorized representative of the applicant shall:
 - Be responsible for care in the use of the property. If damage to Library property occurs, the applicant is responsible for paying for all repairs, supplies and labor.
 - Be in attendance at all times during the use of facilities.

- Supply all personnel and equipment necessary except for those specifically listed on the application.
- See that the premises are vacated promptly at the time specified on the application.
- Be responsible for leaving the facility in the same condition as prior to its use.
- Be responsible for payment of any fees within 30 days.

Publicity

1. No organization may use the Library's name for any purpose other than to indicate the location of the meeting. No organization may use the Library's logo for any purpose, without the prior written consent of the Library Director.

a. No organization may use the name, address, telephone or logo of MPL as the address, information contact source, headquarters or logo for any organization, including any organization using the Library for meeting purposes, the only exception being the Montclair Public Library Foundation, Inc., and the Friends of the Montclair Public Library.

2. Any publicity regarding meetings held at the Library must contain the following statement: "This program is neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Montclair Public Library."

3. Any publicity designed for an audience beyond the members of the sponsoring organization must be approved by the Library Director prior to distribution.

4. The sponsoring organization must make program attendees aware of the Library's policy and its regulations.

Attendance at Meetings Held in a Library Meeting Room

1. The registration of participants for a meeting held in Library facilities is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization, not the Library.

2. The Library prohibits admission charges. Nonprofit groups may charge membership dues and fees for learning materials or course credits, but not a fee to attend.

3. All users of Library facilities must agree to comply with all applicable laws and local ordinances.

Conducting Meetings in Library Meeting Rooms

1. Literature may be distributed during the meeting, but commercial advertising, including but not limited to, coupons and testimonials, will not be permitted

2. The Library prohibits the sale of merchandise and other fundraising activities for non-Library purposes on Library property. The only merchandising and fundraising activities permitted are sponsored sales or activities by the Library, Montclair Public Library Foundation, or either of the Library Friends groups. Any exception must be requested in writing and be approved in advance by the Library Director.

3. Food is permitted during a meeting but no cooking facilities are available. The sponsoring organization is responsible for cleanup and must bring its own supplies (coffee cups, napkins, etc.). No food containing nuts should be served.
4. The consumption of alcoholic beverages in the Library or on Library property is prohibited without advance written approval of the Library Director.
 - a. Organizations who wish to serve alcoholic beverages must restrict attendance to adults over 21 years of age.
 - b. The sale of alcoholic beverages requires that the sponsor obtain a permit from the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (the "DABC") and present the permit to the Library Director (or designee) at least seventy-two (72) hours before the meeting.
 - c. A request to serve alcoholic beverages must be made with the initial request to use library space.
5. Taping, stapling or tacking of materials to the walls or other furnishings is prohibited.
6. The meeting room and surrounding area must be left in the same condition it was prior to the meeting. If special cleaning or re-arranging of the meeting room is needed for any reason, the sponsoring organization listed on the meeting room application may be charged a minimum cleaning charge of \$50.
7. Use of any kind of equipment, including electronic equipment, not supplied by the Library is prohibited, without the prior written approval of the Library Director or the Assistant Director.
8. Directions for use of Library-provided technology will be provided in the meeting room. Library staff will provide basic technology assistance, within reason, with Library-provided equipment.
9. All groups using a room must be under adequate adult supervision with one or more adults in attendance at all times. The supervising adult(s) must accept responsibility and will be held accountable for the repair or replacement of any damaged facilities or equipment, in the event the sponsoring organization fails to cover these expenses.
10. The Library, including all meeting rooms, is a smoke free environment.
11. Guns, weapons, or guard dogs are not allowed in the Library or on Library property. Governmental law enforcement officers are exempt; private security guards are not exempt.
12. Meeting room capacity is indicated on the application form. The supervising organization and responsible adult(s) shall ensure strict compliance with capacity limits and/or Montclair Fire Department occupancy regulations.
13. No tipping or other payment or compensation to Library personnel is permitted.

Suggested Donations

Nonprofit organizations can apply to use Library rooms free of charge. Businesses and individuals may make donations to use the space. The Trustees deferred deciding about the recommended amount of those donations.

Disclaimer

The individual or organization to whom the use of premises shall assume full liability for damage to any property. The user shall also assume full liability for the preservation of order at all times on the premises and for the observance and enforcement of all regulations, herein stated or as posted on the premises.

The Library is not responsible for loss or damage of equipment, supplies, materials or any personal property owned by those sponsoring or attending meetings at the Library. In addition, the MPL Board of Trustees, the Township of Montclair, its officers, agents and employees are not to be held liable for any and all claims of injuries, including death, damage or loss, which may arise in connection with a meeting held on Library property.

It is also understood that these provisions shall not be construed as imposing any liability upon the Montclair Public Library or Montclair Township for any injury to persons sustained in connection with the use of Library property as granted in their application.

Approved: June 29, 2023
Montclair Public Library Board of Trustees