

# **CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY AND HENRIETTA HANKIN BRANCH MEETING ROOM POLICY**

Meeting rooms at the Chester County Library and its Henrietta Hankin Branch (Library) are used for Library and County purposes and are also provided to the public for cultural, civic and educational purposes. Meeting rooms will be made available to the public on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use. Permission to meet at the Library does not constitute an endorsement of that group's policies or beliefs. Attendance at meetings is limited by order of the Fire Marshall.

Meeting rooms can be used by individuals, non-profit or for-profit organizations for private or public meetings or workshops. (See Restrictions for sales activity, membership drives, admission fees, etc.)

Meetings sponsored by the Library and the County will take precedence; therefore, it may be necessary in unusual circumstances to preempt the booking of another individual or organization. When this happens, the Library will contact the individual or organization as soon as possible and any rental fee will be reimbursed.

## **AVAILABILITY**

Meeting rooms are available during regular Library hours, including weekends.

Set up of meeting rooms may not take place outside of regular Library hours unless approved by the Library Director and/or Branch Manager.

Programs & meetings must be concluded, and room takedown be completed at least thirty minutes prior to Library closing.

Walk-in and same day reservations are available for all spaces except the Robert G. Struble Room or Henrietta Hankin Branch Annex.

## **SCHEDULING AND ELIGIBILITY**

Requests for use of meeting rooms will be made through the Online Room Reservation system available on the Library's website at [www.chescolibraries.org](http://www.chescolibraries.org). Room reservations are generally reviewed within 48 hours of being submitted and may be made up to three months in advance. An organization that meets regularly (i.e. monthly) may contact the Library to request to book reservations more than three months in advance within the current calendar year, with the understanding that any of their reservations will be adjusted or cancelled in the event it conflicts with a County or Library meeting. If approved, booking fees for all reservations must be paid in full prior to the first meeting date.

Submitting a room request through the Online Room Reservation system signifies the individual or organization's agreement to comply with and be bound by the Library's Meeting Room Use Policy. Applicants must be age 13 or older to reserve Small Meeting Rooms. Applicants must be age 18 or older to reserve Public Meeting Rooms. Providing incomplete or incorrect information on the Meeting Room booking request form may result in your booking being cancelled.

An individual or organization's reservation will not be confirmed until the online room request has been approved.

## **FEES AND CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE**

A fee is charged for meeting room use. Fee must be received by the date of use. The Chester County Library reserves the right to waive the fee. The small study rooms located at the Chester County Library Center are available at no charge on a walk-in basis or for a fee if you wish to reserve the space in advance.

Please see Appendix A for occupancy limits and fee schedules.

Organizations must provide a Certificate of Insurance on an annual basis. Individuals who are reserving the room for a gathering where total attendance will exceed 20 people must provide a Certificate of Insurance for their event(s.) The Certificate of Insurance must be a minimum of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence with \$1,000,000.00 aggregate. The Chester County Library and the County of Chester must be listed as Additional Insureds. Certificates of Insurance must be provided two weeks in advance of a booking request being approved. Failure to do so will result in the booking being cancelled.

Failure to provide Certificate of Insurance and payment will result in the booking being cancelled. It is the responsibility of the individual or organization to notify its attendees of the cancellation.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

In the event of an emergency or weather closing, the Library will not remain open for meeting room use and the rental fee will be reimbursed. If the Library closes due to an emergency or weather, every effort will be made to notify the individual or organization's contact person. Closings will be posted on our website at [www.chescolibraries.org](http://www.chescolibraries.org) and on the Library's main phone numbers. It is the responsibility of the individual or organization to notify attendees of the cancellation.

Cancellations and transfers must be made with a minimum of 7 days' notice prior to the original date booked in order to receive a refund, or transfer the fee to a new date. Rescheduling a meeting room is subject to availability. Any cancellations or transfer requests made less than 7 days prior to the original date booked will not be reimbursed.

## **USE OF PUBLIC MEETING ROOMS AND PUBLICITY**

The individual or organization sponsoring the meeting must adhere to the meeting room occupancy limits and refuse entrance when the room has reached capacity. Please see Appendix A for occupancy limits and fee schedules. The Library reserves the right to monitor the number of attendees.

Publicity for a meeting must clearly identify the sponsoring individual or organization. Publicity cannot state or imply that the Library is a sponsor or co-sponsor of a meeting, nor use the Library's image in any promotions. The Library's phone number and e-mail address are not to be included in any publicity promoting the meeting. The individual or organization may not list the address of the Library as its official address. Publicity for a meeting must clearly identify in which room the meeting will be held.

The Library will not publicize an individual or organization's meeting. The individual or organization may post directional signage advertising its meeting outside the meeting room during the program as long as the Person-In-Charge is notified.

Persons attending meetings or using Library meeting spaces are subject to all Library rules and regulations.

Failure to abide by Library rules, regulations and policies, or to cooperate with Library staff, will result in cancellation or refusal of future room use privilege. Use of the premises may be terminated at any time if the conduct of the group, or any member of the group, violates Library policies, rules, and regulations. Please see the section Suspension/Termination of Meeting Room Privileges below for more information.

The individual or organization using a room is responsible for its own actions and that of its guests. Those using a room are cautioned that children under the age of thirteen (13) may not be left unattended in the Library.

Individuals or organizations using the meeting rooms must observe the public accommodation provisions of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act under which it is unlawful "to discriminate against any person in the full use and enjoyment of such public accommodation, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, handicap or disability, use of guide or support animals due to blindness, deafness, or physical handicap or because the user is a handler or trainer of guide or support animals."

## **RESTRICTIONS**

The following are strictly prohibited in the Library and meeting rooms: alcoholic beverages, smoking, gambling and controlled substances.

Admission fees must not be a requirement for attending the meeting, nor are non-members to be solicited for money at the meeting.

Meeting rooms cannot be used for private social functions (e.g. private parties, receptions, etc.), direct retail or wholesale sales activity, membership drives, fundraising, nor can admission be charged, with the exception of activities sponsored by the Library or the County.

No items may be taped, tacked or nailed to the doors, windows or walls. An individual or organization must remove any display or handout materials from the meeting room after a meeting. Literature with a business name may be provided (for attendees to pick up if desired).

Individuals or organizations may not use the emergency doors as an entrance or exit. These doors are on a 24-hour alarm and are for emergency purposes only.

Permission to use meeting rooms is not transferable to another individual or organization.

## **USE OF INTERNET**

Wireless Internet service is available in all meeting spaces.

## **FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT AND EQUIPMENT**

The Library will not set up the meeting room. Tables, chairs, and a podium are available. Arrangements for use of these items must be made in advance through the Online Room Reservation system. The individual or organization will be responsible for setting up the room for their meeting and returning it to the condition when they arrived. In the event that the room is not returned to its original setup, an additional fee of up to \$50 may be charged. No future room use will be approved until that fee is paid.

The Library has limited audiovisual equipment available. Any requested audiovisual equipment, such as microphones, sound equipment, computers, projectors or screens must be requested and confirmed in advance.

Individuals or organizations bringing in equipment (audiovisual, computers, coffee pots, etc.) for a program or event will submit, on their room request, a complete listing of such equipment. All equipment must be removed at the conclusion of the program or event.

### **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

Those using the Meeting Room may bring refreshments. Food should not be prepared on site. Catering service, foods requiring temperature maintenance (ex. sterno warmers, etc) and delivery must be approved in advance by the Library. Individuals or organizations must provide their own coffee service or equipment. Use of the Library kitchenettes (if available) is allowed. Food/refreshments may not be carried into other parts of the building. Individuals or organizations must properly dispose of trash in the containers provided by the Library. If staff is required to clean up after the event, an additional fee of up to \$50 may be charged. No future room use will be approved until that fee is paid.

### **PARKING FACILITIES**

Handicapped parking is available at both facilities.

### **DAMAGES**

The individual or organization making a request for use of meeting rooms assumes all responsibility for damage to Library property and for leaving the room in the same condition in which it was offered. Damage to the facility or equipment will be billed to the individual or organization responsible for the room. Any damage must be reported to the Person-In-Charge promptly.

### **SUSPENSION/TERMINATION OF MEETING ROOM PRIVILEGES**

Failure to abide by this policy and all related library policies will result in the organization/individual being reminded by library staff of this policy and which specific section they are violating. Multiple offenses on the same day will result in the room rental being terminated for the day. The organization/individual will be given 30 minutes to clear the room of attendees and put furniture away. An Incident Report will be filed.

Repeat violations will result in the following:

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	The Individual/Organization will be reminded of the policy and an incident will be filed. A warning letter will be sent to the person booking the room.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	The Individual/Organization will be prohibited from booking meeting rooms for 30 days. Any existing bookings in that time period will be cancelled and any fees paid will not be refunded.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense	The Individual/Organization will be prohibited from booking meeting rooms for 1 year. Any existing bookings in that time period will be cancelled and any fees paid will not be refunded.
4 <sup>th</sup> Offense	The Individual/Organization will be prohibited from using Library meeting rooms.

## **DISCLAIMERS**

The Chester County Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to change this policy as necessary.

The Chester County Library, County of Chester, their employees and agents, and the Chester County Library Board of Trustees do not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of any individuals or organizations using the Library's meeting rooms.

The Library is not responsible for damage to or theft of equipment used or left in the room, including but not limited to damage by viruses to software on computers. The Library assumes no responsibility for materials left on the premises, and will not store or maintain materials or files. The Library will contact the individual or organization regarding equipment or materials to be removed. After 15 days, they will be disposed of at the discretion of the Library.

The Library reserves the right to disallow or revoke permission granted to individuals or organizations for use of the meeting rooms on a case-by-case basis if that individual or organization has previously violated these rules, or been notified of a suspension of use, or if it is believed by the Library that use of the meeting rooms will interfere with Library operations, adversely affect public safety or cause public disturbances.

Individuals or organizations which do not fulfill their obligations as enumerated in this policy may be denied use of meeting facilities in the future. If the individual or organization wishes to appeal the refusal, it may submit a letter of appeal to the Library Board.

The Chester County Library, County of Chester, their employees and agents, and the Board of Trustees shall not be liable to any group, organization, or person attending a meeting. Any group, organization and person, jointly and severally, hereby agrees to, and shall indemnify and hold harmless the Chester County Library, County of Chester, their employees and agents, and the Board of Trustees from any and all claims, suits, damages, losses or injuries which they may sustain, or are alleged to have sustained, while using the meeting room, including, but not limited to, use of a meeting room, kitchen facilities, rest room facilities and means of egress and ingress to the Library building and the meeting room.

*Approved February 17, 2004  
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