

**Montgomery County Memorial Library System
Policy Manual
Group Services**

GRP-1 Meeting Room Policy

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Montgomery County Memorial Library System provides meeting space to the community as a public service with the following intended purposes: the exchange of ideas; to access and share information, and for patrons to participate in programs created for the enjoyment of families and the community. The meeting space may be used by organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual or charitable activities. Meeting rooms are not available for purely social purposes or for the benefit of self-promotion of individuals or commercial concerns.

II. REGULATIONS

The Library's meeting space is intended for use primarily by the Library for Library-sponsored or co-sponsored programs, and priority use will be given to these programs. When the meeting room is not in use by the Library, it will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis to qualified outside organizations, subject to cancellation at any time.

A. Eligibility to Use Meeting Space

1. In order to reserve the meeting room, applicants must be at least 18 years old and are subject to any applicable rental fees listed in the attached **Fee Schedule**.
2. Only meeting rooms listed on the meeting room application are available for reservation by the public.
3. Meeting rooms are not available for individual use. The applicant must be a member of a group or organization. Any exceptions must be authorized by Library Administration. Study rooms are available for individual use; please see the **Study Room Policy** for more information.
4. The Applicant must be in attendance for the duration of the scheduled meeting.
5. Personal events including, but not limited to, birthday parties, wedding receptions, baby showers, and reunions are not considered appropriate use of Library meeting rooms.
6. Religious-based study groups will be permitted providing other policy criteria is met. Monetary offerings cannot be collected in Library meeting rooms.

7. The meeting space is not available for political campaign or rally events. Community groups with political affiliations are permitted to meet provided they are not engaging in campaign promotion.
8. Recruitment or hiring for business ventures is not allowed in Library meeting rooms or on Library property, except as part of a Library-sponsored job fair or other partnership.
9. The meeting room facilities may not be used for any commercial purposes, including but not limited to, the sale of goods or services, executing fee-for-service agreements or contracts to perform services elsewhere, accepting membership dues, selling raffle tickets, and collecting fees for tutoring.
10. Outside organizations may not conduct fundraising events on Library property without first establishing a concession agreement with the County, the proceeds of which will go to the direct benefit of the Library. Not-for-profit fundraising organizations may reserve a meeting room for planning purposes only, provided the fundraiser itself will take place outside of the Library. Fundraising activities conducted by the Friends of the Library groups are allowed, including book sales and collecting membership dues.
11. For-profit business organizations that conduct training are permitted and subject to applicable meeting room fees, provided the training is free and open to the public.
12. Commercial programs listed or presented as informational, educational, or instructional must remain so, and presenters shall make no direct solicitation of attendees to secure clients or customers for their commercial purpose.
13. Activities in the room must not disrupt regular Library operations including, but not limited to, soliciting or conducting surveys, making loud noises, blocking entries, fire lanes or walkways, etc.
14. The use of the Library parking lot or other outdoor spaces as an extension of the meeting room requires Commissioner Court approval. Facility use forms may be obtained from Library Administration.
15. Due to liability issues, permission to use the Library meeting rooms will be denied to any group whose primary purpose involves physical activity or exercise, including but not limited to, cheerleading, dance class and martial arts.
16. Health organizations conducting free clinic-related activities in Library meeting rooms must provide proof of current liability insurance prior to reserving a room. At the discretion of Library staff, proof of insurance may remain on file with the organization's meeting room application as long as it is up-to-date. Clinic-related activities include vaccinations, blood drives, health screenings, massage, alternative medical treatments, etc. No clinic-related activities that require a charge will be permitted on Library property.

17. The Library Meeting Rooms are not private. All functions in Library meeting rooms must be free and open to the general public. Library staff must have free access to meeting rooms at all times.

B. Applying to Use Meeting Space

1. Requests for the use of meeting spaces will be approved according to the following priorities:
 - a. Library sponsored or related meetings and programs.
 - b. County or other government sponsored meetings, and activities associated with the Friends of the Library.
 - c. Educational or training programs and meetings associated with a public agency.
 - d. Community oriented groups.
 - e. Training or outreach programs associated with a for-profit or corporate organization.
2. A current, signed application must be on file before reserving the meeting room.
3. Meeting space requests must be submitted at least **7 days prior** to the requested meeting time. Only Library study rooms are available on a walk-in basis. Please see the **Study Room Policy** for details.
4. Groups should reserve the meeting room well in advance of the date needed but may not reserve a space more than 90 days in advance.
5. To give all organizations an opportunity to use the room, reservations shall **not exceed 2 meetings per month at any one branch** or a maximum of 3 meetings system wide.
6. Meeting space will be available only when the Library is open. This includes time allotted for set-up and clean-up.
7. No standing reservations are permitted for regularly occurring meetings. Each meeting reservation is handled as a separate request, pending approval by a Library staff member. Library meeting rooms cannot be advertised as the primary or regular meeting place of any group or organization, except Friends of the Library groups.
8. For groups using more than one meeting room at the same time, the second room counts as the second meeting of the month. If an organization requires extensive set-up time, then they may reserve the meeting room the day before a scheduled meeting, and the set-up session would count as an additional monthly meeting subject to any applicable fees.
9. All meeting room usage is subject to the attached **Fee Schedule**. Library sponsored programs or activities associated with the Friends of the Library are exempt from meeting room charges.
10. For-profit businesses and all non-cardholders must pay rental fees listed in the **Fee Schedule**. Not-for-profit organizations should be prepared to furnish documentation upon request.

11. The Applicant accepts financial responsibility for any fees incurred by the organization, including room use fees and penalties.
12. Any organization with outstanding penalty fees will not be able to reserve future meetings until all fees have been paid in full. Access to the meeting rooms for any existing reservations will be denied until all fees are paid.
13. The Library Director shall be the final authority in granting or refusing permission for use of the Library meeting spaces.

C. Before Scheduled Meeting:

1. Notification of cancellation must be received prior to the scheduled meeting time. Any cancellations will be noted in the account and will not count against the number of meetings scheduled for the month. No-shows, i.e. not showing up and not giving notice, will result in a 90- day suspension of meeting room privileges.
2. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to schedule time needed to test any reserved audio-visual equipment, prior to the scheduled meeting. Training sessions are free for all meeting room users and would not count against the Organization's total number of meetings per month. Technical assistance for A/V equipment will not be available during a scheduled meeting.
3. The Library will not advertise or publicize scheduled meetings.
4. All advertisements from outside organizations must include the following disclaimer: **This event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Montgomery County Memorial Library System.**
5. For groups composed primarily of minors, the applicant agrees to have one adult in attendance in a supervisory capacity for every ten minors. All meetings involving children must comply with the Library's **Minor Child Policy.**
6. Due to the public nature of meeting rooms, the meeting room schedule may be made available to the public.

D. Day of Scheduled Meeting:

1. Applicant must check in at the front desk and sign the **Meeting Room Checklist** prior to gaining access to the meeting room.
2. Any applicable fees must be paid at time of check-in. Payments will not be accepted more than half an hour before meeting room start time. The Library does not accept credit cards. Exact change is required—**cash or check only.**
3. No early access to meeting rooms will be permitted prior to library opening hours. Meeting rooms must be vacated at least 30 minutes prior to library closing.

4. Room arrangement and cleaning of the room following the meeting are the responsibility of the organization requesting the room. The Library does not provide equipment or staff to assist in moving materials or furniture.
5. The group accepts financial responsibility for any and all damage caused to the room, building, or equipment beyond normal wear. The Applicant will be responsible for any charges incurred by the group.
6. Penalty fees listed in the **Fee Schedule** will be assessed where staff intervention is necessary as a result of a scheduled meeting. These penalties may include the following:
 - a. **Cleaning Fee**—to be charged when additional cleaning is necessary to return the room to its original condition. Vacuums or other cleaning equipment can be provided to groups who wish to avoid this charge.
 - b. **Room Configuration Fee**—to be charged when tables, chairs and other equipment are not properly put away after a meeting.
 - c. **Late Fee**—to be charged when groups exceed scheduled meeting ending time
 - d. **Damage Fee**—to be charged when a scheduled meeting results in damage to the library meeting room, building, and/or equipment.
7. Meeting room users who have deliveries to the library must have a representative from the organization present to accept the delivery.
8. Alcoholic beverages may not be dispensed or consumed in any part of the library or on library property.
9. The Library cannot store materials for meeting room users. The Library is not responsible for items lost, damaged, or stolen.
10. Library staff cannot provide unfiltered access to the Internet within a Library meeting room, whether on Library computers or those of Library customers. The Library is not responsible for any failures in the Wi-Fi connection during scheduled meetings. Wireless Internet use inside Library meeting rooms is subject to the Library's **Internet Use Policy**.
11. The Library does not provide telecommunication services for meeting room users, including but not limited to, receiving or sending faxes, telephone calls or emails. Photocopying and public access computer terminals are available for self-service use.
12. Organizations using the meeting space must bring their own supplies, including but not limited to, coffee supplies, pens, pencils, paper, etc.
13. All meetings must adhere to posted maximum occupancy.
14. The use of hazardous materials, including materials that give off fumes or are highly flammable, are prohibited. Open flames are prohibited in library meeting rooms and on library property.
15. Animals, insects and other living organisms may not be brought into the library without prior written approval by the Library Director. Animals may be used in Library programs, but only under certain conditions that

address the safety of guests and care of the facility. Trained guide animals are allowed.

16. No refunds will be given. In the event of an emergency library closure occurring after the fees have been paid, the money received will be applied toward a rescheduled meeting.
17. At the conclusion of a scheduled meeting, Applicant must check out at the front desk.