

## Meeting Room Policy

### **Mission**

The Orange County Public Library offers programs and services that bring people together, foster creativity and encourage lifelong learning. Our libraries are committed to enriching lives through collections, programs, and technology.

### **Background**

One of the primary functions of public libraries is to provide a place for community members to meet. Orange County Public Library strives to make its meeting rooms available to community members for this purpose. To provide the agencies, organizations, clubs, and other groups in the county with a place to meet or hold public gatherings, the Orange County Public Library and its locations will make available its meeting rooms under the following conditions and guidelines:

### **Meeting Room Reservations:**

- Groups wishing to use a meeting room shall make a written application through the library. Online applications are available for convenience.
- Applications will be considered on a first-come/first-served basis, with Orange County Public Library activities taking priority over any other application. Second priority will be given to other agencies and departments of the county, state, or federal government and organizations receiving funds from the county, state, or federal government. Previously scheduled meetings may be canceled if a Library activity conflicts. The applicant will be notified in advance should their reservation be canceled.
- At registration, each organization's representative will receive a copy of the meeting room's regulations. It is the responsibility of each organization that its members understand and obey the regulations.
- Groups may schedule meetings on a recurring schedule not to exceed six (6) months. Groups are responsible for renewing their recurring reservation as needed with the meeting room coordinator for that library branch or by doing so online.
- The meeting room may be scheduled for use by an organization during regular Library hours and up to one hour after closing without charge. Government and government sponsored programs are exempt from this restriction.
- A regularly recurring group may only use the meeting room once per week. The library administration may waive this requirement such as for a multi-session class or for a limited duration series of programs. Government and government sponsored programs are exempt from the twice a month restriction.
- Meeting rooms may be reserved for a maximum of six (6) months in advance.
- There is no cost for meeting room use during regular hours. A refundable deposit is required for after-hours usage (see Before/After Hours Usage).

## **Meeting Room Usage**

- The meeting rooms will be available for civic, cultural, educational, or political groups but cannot be used for commercial or money-raising activities. The meeting rooms will not be available for the benefit of private social events such as, but not limited to, parties or showers.
- Groups and organizations reserving the meeting room may provide information regarding their services and/or business in the form of handouts or business cards upon request of an attendee, however, the meeting may not be held for purely commercial benefit.
- Tutors through the local school system, colleges, literacy volunteers, or similar non-profit organizations may use the room for tutoring sessions even if a fee is involved. Similarly, paid contractors working on behalf of government agencies such as facilitating family visitations, conducting background checks, or providing healthcare outreach services are permitted.
- Groups and organizations are prohibited from requiring the purchase of goods or services as a requirement of program participation.
- Organizations may charge fees to cover the expenses of the meeting (lecture fees, supply costs, etc.). No direct sales will be permitted in the meeting rooms, except for local authors under the auspices of a library support group.
- Due to the nature of the library as a public facility, privacy cannot be guaranteed. Library staff may enter the meeting room during events.
- Loud amplification or noise that interferes with the normal operation of the library or any adjacent agencies co-located in the building is prohibited.

## **Before/After Hours Usage**

- Participants of meetings before or after library hours are not permitted in areas of the library beyond the meeting room, vestibule/hallway and public restrooms.
- Main Library: usage outside of library-controlled hours for the main meeting room space is booked through the Orange County Office on Youth and is subject to different rules and regulations guided by their agency's mission.
- Wilderness Branch: usage after closing is allowed provided the individual or group arrives and checks in with library staff during open hours and complies with instructions to secure the facility when their use is completed.
- Gordonsville Branch: usage outside library open hours is allowed. A refundable key deposit and obtaining of a key in advance are required if the individual or group will not arrive during regular library hours. If the key is not returned within 24 hours, the deposit

is forfeited and can be used to defray costs to rekey the building.

### **Legal Disclaimers**

- Upon adequate notice and for appropriate reasons, the Orange County Public Library reserves the right to deny or revoke permission to use the meeting rooms.
- The Orange County Public Library is not responsible or liable for damages caused to the users or their property while using Library facilities.
- While using the meeting room, organizations may not engage in any activity that could be physically harmful to the facility or to any individual, i.e. lighting candles, using paint without protective coverings.
- Organizations and individuals will assume full responsibility for any damage to the room, its contents, or any part of the library that results from their use of the meeting room. After their meetings, organizations and individuals are responsible for leaving the meeting room neat, clean, and returned to its original set-up. Individuals or groups which damage library facilities or equipment may be denied future use of the meeting room.
- The Orange County Public Library reserves the right to have law enforcement officers present at any meeting.
- Use of the Library's meeting rooms does not constitute the Orange County Public Library's, or the County of Orange's endorsement of viewpoints expressed by participants in any program. Any group using the library's meeting room agrees to add this statement to any publicity in print or social media they use to promote their event: "The Orange County Public Library does not endorse this program or any viewpoints expressed by its participants. The library is providing space in accordance with its mission to offer services and programs that bring people together, foster creativity and encourage lifelong learning."
- The capacity of a meeting room will be determined by the Fire Marshall and the Code of Orange County and may not be exceeded. Limits are posted in each meeting space.
- The Orange County Public Library reserves the right to require liability insurance for activities.
- The Orange County Public Library reserves the right to assess a cleaning fee should the meeting room be left in a state requiring cleaning after an outside group has used it.

(Approved by the Library Board of Trustees 6/2005; 10/2010;8/2016; 8/2020; 3/2024; 12/2024)