



## **Austin Public Library Policy and Procedures Manual**

**Subject:** Meeting Room Policy

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**Department Director's Approval:** *Brenda Branch*

The Austin Public Library welcomes public use of its meeting facilities in keeping with the Library's mission "to provide a wide range of information and services to enrich the lives of all members of our community."

The Meeting Room Policy establishes rules and procedures for the use of the Library's meeting facilities. The librarian in charge of the building where the meeting room(s) is located is responsible for implementing this policy and for maintaining reservation lists.

Use of Library meeting rooms by any group signifies acceptance of the terms of this policy.

### **General Guidelines**

Meeting rooms at the APL are designed to meet general, non-commercial, informational, educational, cultural, and civic needs including activities such as discussion groups, panels, lectures, conferences, and seminars.

To be eligible to use a meeting room, any group or organization must be not for profit and should include three or more individuals.

There is no charge for meeting room use.

Use of the Library's meeting rooms does not constitute Library or City of Austin endorsement of viewpoints expressed by participants in the program. Advertisements or announcements implying such endorsement are not permitted.

Non-library sponsored meetings must be open to the public at large and may not be restricted to the membership of the sponsoring organization. This means that any member of the public that sees a meeting taking place may enter and participate in the meeting.

Commercial uses of meeting rooms are prohibited; this includes solicitations, admission or other charges, money-raising activities, and/or sales.

Meeting rooms may not be used for social gatherings such as showers, birthday parties, dances, etc.

Meeting rooms may not be used for political rallies or campaigns for specific partisan political issues or candidates (however, forums and study groups are permitted).

Noise levels from meeting rooms must not disturb library patrons or staff.

All meeting rooms must be completely vacated prior to the Library's closing time. Exact times may vary by location.

City or Library needs may preempt any other scheduled event.

Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Smoking, alcoholic beverages, open flames, burning incense, and lit candles are not allowed.

### **Reservations**

Requests for use of a meeting room may be made online, in person, by telephone, or in writing. Requests will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis.

Reservations will only be held for 10 days until signed reservation form is received. If your planned meeting will take place in less than 10 days and the meeting room is available, a reservation will be tentatively accepted with the signed form due at least 3 days prior to the meeting.

When making a reservation, please provide:

- Name of organization
- Name, address, and telephone number of the responsible person
- Total number of persons expected to attend

Reservations may be made for the current calendar year.

To provide an opportunity for all groups to use the meeting rooms, a group may use a meeting room only once each month, and may reserve only one meeting room for use at the same time.

Notice of cancellation should be made to the library's Branch Manager or Assistant Manager as soon as possible. After 30 minutes a group may forfeit its reservation if it fails to appear as scheduled.

If a group fails to show for two meetings in a row and does not call to cancel, all future reservations are forfeited until the group calls to reschedule.

Meetings will not be scheduled before or after Library hours. Group representatives may not enter Library buildings, nor will deliveries be accepted, before the regular opening time.

Groups may not assign or transfer their reservations to other groups.

An individual library customer may, upon request, use a meeting room which is not in use until the next group's reservation time. Please sign in at the circulation desk for individual use. If other individuals want to use the room at the same time, they may do so; consistent with APL's policy of having the room open to all.

### **Care and Use of Facilities**

Please leave meeting rooms as they are found. If the furniture is rearranged, it should be returned to the original arrangement at the end of the meeting.

The Library cannot provide AV or other equipment.

Furniture and/or equipment from the main area of the Library may not be brought into meeting rooms.

Personal furniture or equipment may be provided by a group with prior approval. Arrangements for the use of any personal furniture or equipment should be made at scheduling time. In order to ensure easy removal of equipment after the meeting, the appropriate staff member (either Library Security or the Branch Librarian) should be notified when the equipment is brought into the building.

Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored or left in Library meeting rooms before or after use.

Keep all exits unlocked at all times. Open aisles must be maintained within the seating arrangement to provide clear access to exits.

Public entrances are to be used for all access to and from the building, including all deliveries.

Any announcements or notices to publicize an activity should not be posted or distributed on library premises without prior approval from the librarian in charge.

Attendance at meetings will be limited to the capacity of the individual meeting rooms as listed at the end of this policy. Seating and/or supplementary furniture are not allowed in corridors outside the meeting rooms.

Refreshments need to consist of individually packaged items and drinks, or baked goods; for other food, a City permit is required. Contact the City of Austin Health Department, (512) 972-

5673 Kitchen facilities or equipment will not be provided by the Library. (Minimal kitchen facilities are available at Carver Branch and the Austin History Center with permission from the librarian in charge.)

All trash resulting from the serving of refreshments must be removed by the organization.

The individual making the reservation, as well as the group as a whole, will be held responsible for any and all damages that may occur as a result of the use of the facilities.

Permission to use Library meeting rooms may be withheld from groups that have failed to comply with the Meeting Room Policy and from any group that damages the room, carpet, equipment, or furniture, or causes a disturbance.

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request.

Questions not covered in this policy should be addressed to Library Administration, 512-974-7449.

[Information About Meeting Room Capacities](#)

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