

Natchitoches Parish Library

Meeting Room Policy

Meeting Room Use

The Natchitoches Parish Library makes available its meeting rooms for use by individuals and groups for cultural, informational, educational, intellectual and civic purposes. Room availability is contingent on there being no conflict with library programs or meetings, which have first priority, at all times. The Natchitoches Parish Library reserves the right to determine use of the room and to cancel or reschedule all arrangements, at its discretion, with or without cause or reason, and without liability.

Failure to abide by this policy and the related regulations will result in cancellation or refusal of reservations.

An individual or organization requesting use of the meeting room must complete the Natchitoches Parish Library Meeting Room Application (*see appendix*) and agree in writing to observe this policy and regulations. The Library Board of Control/Director of the Natchitoches Parish Library is the final authority in approving meeting room requests in accordance with this policy. **The meeting room is not considered booked until the application is reviewed and approved.**

A. Who Can Use the Meeting Room?

Library programs receive first consideration in scheduling the use of the meeting room. Upon adequate notice (three days) and for appropriate reasons, the library reserves the right to deny or revoke permission to use the meeting rooms. Individuals or groups canceling their room reservation are asked to give three days advanced notice. The Library maintains a calendar listing of confirmed meeting dates.

Library meeting rooms are available for public gatherings civic, cultural, informational, or educational character when rooms are not being used for their primary purpose: library related activities. Such use of the meeting room shall take place in a responsible manner, without undue cost to the Natchitoches Parish Library, and without undue interference with Library activity.

All meetings and programs must be **free of charge and open to the public** and follow the open meeting guidelines. Individuals and groups may use the meeting rooms for non-commercial purposes: staff training, informational presentations on issues of public interest, etc., but not for sales presentations, billable services, etc. No admission charge, collections (except for regular club dues), or other money-exchanging activities may be attached to any meeting room use. Private parties or functions, such as wedding or baby showers or family reunions, are not permitted.

Political debates and forums, involving all sides of issues and most or all candidates for an office, are permitted.

In adherence of the Louisiana Constitution, Article XII, §4, and Louisiana RS 18:1465, individuals or groups desiring to use the meeting room for political purposes or political activities are required to pay in advance of the use, a rental fee of \$25.00 per hour; max \$100 per day. Political activity or political purpose is defined as a meeting in which the purpose is the promotion of, or opposition to, a candidate for political office or the advancement of, or opposition to, a proposition which will or may be submitted for public debate or voter consideration. If the user of the meeting room fails to disclose that the purpose

of the meeting is political, or fails or refuses to pay the user fee, the Library Director or Board of Control may refuse to allow the user or applicant from utilizing the meeting rooms thereafter.

The Library reserves the right to review any or all applications and may demand sufficient time to make proper investigation before granting approval.

The Library reserves the right to deny applications for any use that is potentially disruptive, or that may pose a threat to the health and community welfare. This is based on the availability of space, the number of users as specified in the application, the potential for disruption of library operations, potential health hazards, security threats, or frequency of use.

B. Guidelines for Meeting Room Use.

Meetings may not interfere with Library operations.

Individuals or groups requesting the use of a meeting room must designate an authorized contact, over the age of 18, who will ensure that all policies are followed.

Only light refreshments (such as, such as cookies, sandwiches, sack lunches, salad plates, coffee, tea, and soft drinks) may be served. Arrangements must be made for leaving the room clean and in order. No alcoholic beverages are allowed. Smoking is prohibited in the Library.

The Library cannot be responsible for setting up or taking down chairs or tables. Individuals or groups using a meeting room may rearrange furniture but must return the room to its original condition prior to the end of the scheduled room use.

Waste should be placed in the proper receptacles and utensils cleaned and put away. The Library reserves the right to charge a fee if facilities must be cleaned.

The Library cannot supply storage space.

Preschool children cannot be left unattended outside meeting rooms.

Restrooms are available at all times.

C. Times of Use and Liabilities

Meetings may be held during the library's normal operating hours. Use of meeting rooms is free of charge.

Individuals or groups using a meeting room need to end the meeting, clean up, move tables and chairs (as needed), and exit the meeting room 15 minutes before the Library's closing time.

No exceptions will be made.

Meeting room capacity, determined by the State Fire Marshall, is set at: Main Branch – 69; Northeast Branch – 86.

Library staff have the authority to terminate any meeting which is disruptive of the quiet and orderly functions of the library. Failure to observe meeting room policies may result in denial of meeting room privileges. If any group or individual violates any of these policies, the Library Director or Board of Control retains the right to cancel subsequent use of meeting rooms by the individual or group.

Payment of fees for education courses conducted by established educational institutions are subject to Natchitoches Parish Library Board of Control approval. Consideration cannot be assured unless application is received in time for presentation at a Natchitoches Parish Library Board of Control regular called meeting.

Payment shall be made for any damage to or loss of Library property.

The Library is not liable for injuries to people or damage to property or organizations using the meeting rooms.

Individuals or groups requesting use of the meeting room shall be responsible for the costs of any and all security measures required to ensure the protection of program attendees, the public, and Library assets or staff. These costs will include, but are not limited to, security personnel or other measures necessary for the protection of the Library. The type and amount of security required will be determined by the Library Director or Board of Control. If it is determined that additional security is necessary for a scheduled meeting, the individual or organization using the meeting room shall be required to prepay the estimated security costs. If the scheduled event appears to be controversial in nature, the individual or organization requesting use may be responsible for providing the Library with an additional security bond.

D. Reservations and Cancellations

In order to prohibit any one individual or group from dominating the use of a library meeting room, reservations for *regularly* scheduled meetings will be accepted no more than one month in advance. One-time programs or meetings will be scheduled no more than one year in advance. Informal, on-the-spot use of the meeting room by individuals must be approved by Administration.

The Library reserves the right to limit the frequency of use of its facilities.

The needs of the Library take precedence over other individuals or groups. The Library reserves the right to cancel prior meeting room reservations with at least 48 hours' notice, or with less notice in case of emergency (weather-related closing, etc.).

E. Publicity

The name, address, or phone number of the Natchitoches Parish Library may not be used as the official address or headquarters of any organization except those affiliated with the Library.

The use of a meeting room by a non-library individual or group shall not be publicized in such a way as to imply Library sponsorship of the individual or group's activities.

The fact that an individual or group is permitted to meet at the Natchitoches Parish Library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies and beliefs. Advertisements for meetings held in the Library may not be displayed in such a manner as to suggest Library sponsorship.

Please return completed application by email to info@natlib.org, fax to: (318) 357-2449, or drop off at either library location.

APPLICATION FOR USE OF MEETING ROOM
Natchitoches Parish Library

Organization: _____

Purpose of Organization: _____

President's Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Purpose of Meeting: _____

Name of Person Applying: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Approximate Size of Group: _____

Location: Main Branch, Natchitoches _____ Northeast Branch, Campti _____

Single Meeting: _____ Date: _____ Time: Start _____ End _____

Recurring Meeting: _____ Date: _____ Time: Start _____ End _____

Anyone under the age of 18 attending: Yes _____ No _____

NOTE: Each group is responsible for arranging the meeting room: setting up and taking down chairs and tables. It is understood that the meeting room should be left in the order and as clean as found. Meetings are limited to occupancy levels set by the Louisiana Fire Marshall. All meetings must end, and room vacated 15 minutes prior to the library closing. Library hours are: Main Branch, Natchitoches – Monday-Friday, 9:00AM to 6:00PM and Saturday, 9:00AM to 5:00PM; Northeast Branch, Campti – Monday-Friday, 10:00AM to 6:00PM and Saturday, 10:00AM to 2:00PM.

I have read and agree to abide by the meeting room rules as established by the Natchitoches Parish Library of Control.

I verify that the group applying is a non-profit organization whose purpose in requesting use of the Natchitoches Parish Library meeting room is non-commercial, cultural, informational, educational, intellectual, or civic.

Applicant

Date

Approved by

Date