

WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

POLICY: USE OF MEETING ROOMS

The Williamsburg County Library System maintains meeting rooms for library-sponsored or cosponsored programs that support the library's mission. The library also welcomes the use of its meeting rooms by non-library groups or individuals for activities of a civic, cultural or educational nature and for the discussion of current public questions. Activities of the Library and its recognized Friends of the Library groups (including programs, meetings, literacy tutoring, etc.) will have priority. "Cosponsored" means that the Library participates with community groups in planning and presenting programs of an educational and cultural nature.

The Library's meeting rooms are available for use by eligible groups or individuals based or residing in Williamsburg County. They will be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of beliefs or affiliations of the groups or individuals requesting their use. By making its meeting facilities available, the Library does not necessarily endorse the purpose or policies or the viewpoints of the groups using them. Groups using the meeting rooms may not imply Library sponsorship or approval without the prior written approval of the County Library Director.

Meeting rooms are not available for purely social or religious purposes, for the benefit of private individuals or commercial concerns, nor where, in the judgment of the County Library Director, disorder may likely occur. Since meeting rooms are for the use of nonprofit organizations, profit-making organizations are not eligible to schedule the meeting rooms. Duly constituted continuing political groups may use the rooms, but temporary committees for the advancement of an individual's success in a political campaign shall be denied such use.

It is understood that all meetings held in the Library's meeting rooms must be open to the public (within the limits of safety) should anyone wish to attend, except for organized clubs which may restrict their meetings to members only.

The meeting rooms of the Williamsburg County Library System will be made available to groups and organizations on a first-come, first-serve basis. Meetings must be under the auspices of an organization, which assumes responsibility for the meeting. Responsibility for any damage to Library property must be assumed by the group using the meeting room. The Library does not assume liability for injuries to individuals or damages to personal property, which assumes responsibility for the meeting. Responsibility for any damage to Library property must be assumed by the group using the meeting room. The Library does not assume liability for injuries to individuals or damages to personal property, which occur as a result of actions of the sponsors or participants in meetings held in meeting rooms.

The use of the Library's meeting rooms will normally be limited to adult groups. When a meeting room is to be used by organizations with members under 18 years of age, application for the use of the room must be made by adults and the adult in charge should arrive before the room is made available to the young people and must remain until the departure of all the young people.

Reservations for the use of the meeting rooms should be made as far in advance as possible to ensure obtaining a desired date. Groups wishing to use the meeting room on a regular day and time must schedule EACH meeting in advance. The Library will NOT automatically book meeting rooms. Reservations may be made by telephone. Groups meeting for the first time must have a representative complete a meeting room application. The Library System does not encourage nor guarantee CONTINUOUS scheduling of the meeting rooms by the same group. The Library does not permit the use of its meeting rooms without the express permission of a library staff member at the site of the particular meeting room to be used.

The Library retains the right to cancel a reservation for a meeting room. If cancellation is necessary, the Library will notify the group, which has reserved the room for the time in question. Groups holding reservations are requested to notify the Library of any cancellation at the earliest possible date in order to free the meeting room for other groups. With a two-week notice, the Library may request any group to reschedule a meeting if the County Library Director determines that such rescheduling is necessary in the Library's interest.

The Library has the duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of South Carolina and reserves the right to decline to accept reservations for activities, which could cause a constitutional violation.

Upon adequate notice and for adequate reasons, the County Library reserves the right to revoke permission to use any meeting room. The Library reserves the right to monitor meetings and to revoke the privileges with just cause. The County Library Director is authorized to deny further use of a Library meeting room to individuals or Groups who disrupt the use of the Library by others or who do not comply with Library policies and procedures.

Ordinarily, only during the hours when the library is open to the public will groups be permitted to schedule meetings in the meeting rooms; and then those meetings must end fifteen (15) minutes before closing time. The scheduling of the Library's meeting rooms during hours the Library is not open to the public is discouraged. Meetings may extend beyond the closing time of the Library in which the meeting room is located ONLY if the organization which plans to use the meeting room has received prior approval from a Library staff member at the site of the meeting room and has been given assurance that a Library staff member will be able to stay to close the building. In no case will a meeting room at any location in the Library system be scheduled for use beyond nine (9:00) p.m. Arrangements for late use of any of the Library's meeting rooms must be made at least two weeks in advance to ensure staff availability for supervision of the meeting room after the Library has closed.

There will be no fee charged by the Library for the use of its meeting rooms.

The following rules and regulations will apply to any group using the Library's meeting rooms:

1. No admission fees to the meeting may be charged by the group. No requests for donations can be made for any functions and neither sales transactions nor solicitations can occur. The only exceptions are in the case of paid registration at conferences or institutes, held in cooperation with the Library or payment of tuition or fees for regularly scheduled education courses sponsored by nonprofit organizations and approved in advance by the County Library Director. In addition, organizational dues may be collected.
2. No product or service may be permitted to be sold, except in the case of payment for materials required for educational or group discussion use.
3. No printed materials may be distributed on Library property by a group without the permission of the County Library Director, or the Branch Manager as authorized by the County Library Director. Requests for permission to display exhibits will be treated in like manner.
4. No tacks, nails or scotch tape are to be placed in or on doors, walls or furniture.
5. Light refreshments requiring no cooking may be served; but organizations are required to provide their own utensils and containers. Serving of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in all meeting rooms.
6. No smoking is allowed in any part of the Library, including the meeting rooms.
7. Organizations requiring audiovisual or other special equipment will make their own arrangements for such. The Library does not provide this, although each meeting room does have a large projection screen installed in the ceiling which organizations will be permitted to use.
8. Any organization or group using the meeting rooms will be responsible for setting up the rooms according to its own needs. The Library staff will bear no responsibility.
9. The Library will not be responsible for the security of an exhibit or other items brought to a meeting room by the using organization and its members nor can the Library provide porter service to load and unload the group's materials or equipment.
10. The Library will not be responsible for lost or stolen articles of any member of an organization or group which meets in a meeting room.

11. The organization or group using a meeting room must leave the furniture and all its facilities in the clean and orderly condition in which they were found.
12. No programs in meeting rooms of the Library may be broadcast or televised without the permission of the County Library Director.
13. All publicity (for example, posters, brochures, throwaways, and radio or TV announcements) must carry the name of the organization sponsoring the meeting. The Library may not be identified as sponsor. Neither the name nor the address of the Library in Kingstree or in Hemingway may be used as the official address or headquarters of the organization.
14. If a hearing-impaired person so requests at least one week before a meeting, the group or organization using the meeting room must provide a sign-language interpreter.
15. Youth organizations using the Library's meeting rooms (that is, organizations made up of individuals under 18 years of age) must have at least one adult (21 or over) present at all times. These children and youth groups must be adequately supervised by adults as determined by the Library System Code of Conduct.

NOTE: Exceptions to these policies are possible only by permission of the County Library Director and /or the County Library Board of Trustees.

ADOPTED BY THE WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MARCH 16, 1999.