

Meeting Room Use Policy

Category: Facilities

Effective: October 1, 2024

Last Review Date: September 26, 2024

Next Review Date: September 1, 2025

City of Fort Worth Public Library meeting rooms are primarily built and will be utilized mainly for educational and recreational programs promoted, sponsored, and co-sponsored by the Fort Worth Public Library (FWPL). The meeting rooms in libraries are secondarily available for private reservations when not in conflict with FWPL programs or operations in accordance with the City of Fort Worth, Texas, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 19.

Libraries are considered public facilities and can be used as shelters during a natural disaster or local emergency (including power grid failures.)

All policies and procedures are subject to change if federal, state, or local government guidelines are mandated.

Definitions:

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| Adult | Any person 18 or over |
| City | The City of Fort Worth |
| Fort Worth Public Library Foundation | The Foundation's support of the Fort Worth libraries delivers accessible programs and resources for the entire community – ensuring these services remain free to all the residents of Fort Worth. |
| FWPL | Fort Worth Public Library |
| Homeowners' Association | An organization formed to make and enforce rules that apply to multiple-unit buildings like condos, townhomes, and single-family planned communities and are registered with the City of Fort Worth. |
| Library Advisory Board | Group of Fort Worth citizens that are appointed by City Council Members to represent their Council District. The Board recommends to the City Manager and the City Council plans for development of Library facilities and services to meet the needs of the City. It reviews and comments on the annual operating budget and capital improvement request. |
| Minor | Any person under the age of 18 |
| Neighborhood Alliance | An umbrella organization of neighborhood associations created to foster communication and/or advance common interests and initiatives among the member neighborhood associations and are registered with the City of Fort Worth. |
| Neighborhood Associations | An organized group of residents or property owners who advocate to organize activities within a neighborhood and are registered with the City of Fort Worth. |
| Nonprofit Organization | An organization that has filed for and received tax exempt status from the U.S. government. |
| Ongoing Reservation | Any ongoing meeting or reservation defined as more than once a month. |
| Online Reservation | Reservations made using the city's web-based reservations software. |

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| Political Activities | Any activities directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for public office, or ballot measure. |
| Renter | An organization or individual reserving library facilities for meetings or events. |

Purpose:

To promote civic interaction and cooperative efforts, FWPL welcomes the use of its meeting rooms by the public.

1. Reservation Policy

- A. The City reserves the right to enforce reasonable and content-neutral time, place, and manner restrictions on the reservation and use of library meeting rooms.
- B. City-sponsored events or uses shall take priority over all other types of events, followed by use of Libraries as voting places. All other reservations will be approved on a first-come-first-served basis with the understanding that, to make the rooms available to as many different groups as possible, FWPL limits the number of ongoing reservations for any one person or group to two (2) reservations per month.
- C. Reservation requests will not be granted or denied based upon the viewpoint of the proposed renter, however, events or speech constituting a violation of law, incitement to violate the law, obscenity, defamation, harassment, or those deemed disruptive to library operations will be prohibited.
- D. **The City’s approval of a reservation does not constitute endorsement by the City of a renter’s views, beliefs, or activities, and no event shall be publicized or advertised in such a way as to imply City sponsorship or endorsement without the explicit prior written approval of the City. All promotional/advertising materials for any rental must include the following statement in an easily readable font size and type: “This event is not endorsed or sponsored by the City of Fort Worth.” Failure to include such disclaimer on promotional/advertising materials may result in cancellation of the reservation.**
- E. Renters are responsible for ensuring that event attendees comply with all City policies at all times, and any failure to do so may result in immediate termination of a reservation. Individuals, groups, or organizations failing to comply with any part of this Policy or any other City policy, or any local, state, or federal law, or who provide false or incomplete information during the application process, may be denied use of meeting rooms. The City reserves the right to have City staff present at all events to ensure compliance with City policies. All events must be contained within the rented room (not in hallways, entryways, or adjacent spaces) so as not to disrupt library operations.

2. Rules and Restrictions

- A. FWPL does not allow any individual candidate, or any group affiliated with a candidate, to rent space for political or election-related activity.
- B. Use of FWPL meeting rooms by any renter, group, or organization implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of this policy, as well as accepting responsibility for conducting orderly programs and ensuring that attendees do not interfere with regular library services or

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- endanger FWPL employees, customers, or property. Failure to comply will result in the termination of the meeting and the possible rejection of future rental requests.
- C. All individuals using FWPL meeting rooms and facilities must comply with health, safety, fire, noise, and occupancy codes and ordinances of the City of Fort Worth.
 - D. All individuals using FWPL meeting rooms and facilities must comply with the Library's Rules of Behavior.
 - E. Attendance at meetings or events will be limited to the capacity of the hosting Library's facilities. Please refer to online reservation website for specific locations and their capacities.
 - F. FWPL reserves the right to have a member of its staff present at each scheduled meeting or event.
 - G. All promotional/advertising materials for any rental must include the following statement in an easily readable font size and type: "This event is not endorsed or sponsored by the City of Fort Worth." Failure to include such disclaimer on promotional/advertising materials may result in cancellation of the reservation.
 - H. Meetings and events are not required to be open to the general public.
 - I. Meetings or events involving minors must be supervised by an adequate number of adults, 21 years of age or older. Two adult chaperones are required for a function of 30 or fewer minors, with one additional chaperone required for each additional group of 15 minors.
 - J. Neither the Library, nor its employees, are responsible for the property of any renter or attendee. Library facilities are not equipped to store equipment, literature, or other items. Any items left behind will be subject to FWPL's Lost & Found policies.
 - K. No physical changes to the room are allowed except for furniture rearrangement. Renters are responsible for leaving the room as found.
 - L. Activities involving more than normal wear and tear will not be permitted. Users will be held responsible for all damages.
 - M. Decorations shall be freestanding and fireproof. No candles or open flames permitted.
 - N. Soliciting, direct marketing, or actively selling items or services is strictly prohibited. Fundraising activities or events are also prohibited, with the exception of those directly benefiting the Library.
 - O. Gambling, lotteries, games of chance, bingo, drawings, door prizes or raffles shall be prohibited except as provided by state law and approval of the Library Director or their designee.
 - P. Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the use of vaping and/or tobacco products are not permitted in FWPL meeting rooms.
 - Q. All renters, groups, or organizations shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless FWPL and the City of Fort Worth, its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, suits, and actions of any kind, arising, resulting, and accruing from any negligent act, omission, or error of renter, group or organization resulting or relating to personal injuries or property damage arising from the renter, group, or organization's use of the Library's facilities.
 - R. If there is a complaint about the Meeting Room Use Policy or the content of a program or event, it should be directed to the person in charge of the building. If there is a need or request for further discussion, the complaint will be directed to Library Administration.

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3. Rental Fee Schedule

- A. FWPL rents its designated meeting rooms to members of the public for a fee.
- B. All deposit and reservation fees are set and approved by City Council.
- C. Fees may vary based on location and type of renter. Nonprofit organizations may qualify for special rates.
- D. Approval for non-profit rates will be based upon a review of proper documentation. To qualify for the non-profit rate, the applicant must provide proof of the organization's tax-exempt status.
- E. If the reservation is approved, payment will be due within 3 business days after the approval.
- F. All payments must be made online. Credit cards and electronic checks are the only approved forms of payment.
- G. FWPL meeting rooms are available at no charge to:
 - i. The City of Fort Worth
 - ii. FWPL's support organizations:
 - Fort Worth Public Library Foundation
 - Fort Worth Public Library Advisory Board
 - iii. Tarrant County Election Administration for the purposes of voting and election-related activities
 - iv. Neighborhood Associations, Homeowners' Associations, and Neighborhood Alliances registered with the City of Fort Worth
 - v. Organizations sharing a mission similar to FWPL may be granted use of the meeting room free of charge at the discretion of Library Administration.

4. Reservations

- A. Reservations for meeting rooms will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis. All applicants must adhere to the following:
 - i. Meeting rooms may be rented in 1-hour increments. Partial hour rentals are not available.
 - ii. Reservations must start on the hour or the half-hour.
 - iii. Online reservation requests must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the event, but no more than 90 days in advance of the reservation date.
 - Online reservations must be completed and electronically signed by an adult, 18 or older, representing the group requesting use of the meeting room.
 - A picture ID is required to verify the identity of the renter on day of rental.
 - All inquiries concerning a meeting room reservation will be referred to the person signing the application.
 - Reservation is not confirmed until approved by FWPL. The requestor will receive notification of approval or denial within 3 business days (Monday – Friday) of the reservation.
 - Online reservations are required for any meeting room use. Reservation requests may include multiple dates.
 - Multiple reservations may be made within the 90-day time frame. However, FWPL will limit the number of meetings held by any one applicant, group, or

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organization to two (2) reservations per month in order to make space available for as many different programs and events as possible.

- Library programs take priority over reservations.

5. Cancellations

- A. Under certain conditions, the City of Fort Worth may be forced to cancel a reservation prior to the event. Possible reasons for cancellation include, but are not limited to, a declared state of emergency, unsafe environmental or health conditions, a request from local, state, or federal election officials for use of the room as a polling location, interrupted utility services, or due to falsified information given at the time of reservation. In such an event, the renter agrees the City of Fort Worth shall not have responsibility for any damages the renter may suffer or incur due to such a cancellation. The city will attempt to notify the renter as soon as possible if such a cancellation occurs. All fees paid to the City by the renter shall be refunded to the renter if such a cancellation shall occur; however, rental fees may not be refunded if the event is canceled on the day of or during the event due to negligence or unsafe conditions caused by the renter, or due to falsified information that would typically be grounds for cancellation or non-approval of the event.
- B. Reservations can be canceled by applicants, but the following fees will apply:
 - i. Cancellation requests made at least 10 business days in advance of the scheduled event will receive a refund of 75% of fees paid.
 - ii. Cancellation requests made less than 10 business days in advance of the scheduled event will receive a refund of 50% of fees paid.
- A. All cancellation requests must be received in writing from renter. This can be done via email.
- B. No cash refunds will be provided. The refund will be issued to the original source of payment as a credit card refund or a check.
- C. All refunds will be processed within 45 days.
- D. Failure to comply with cancellation procedures will result in the loss of fees paid.

6. Usage

- A. Meeting room preparation may begin no more than 30 minutes before the event. All events must be completed and the room vacated by the time designated in the agreement, otherwise, an additional hourly fee may be charged.
- B. Applicants requiring use of the kitchen must make their needs known at the time of application. Applicants must limit their use to manager-defined areas of the kitchen for those locations with a kitchen. Not all locations have kitchen access.
- C. FWPL can furnish a limited number of tables and chairs for the meeting or event. However, the library cannot provide staff to set up or arrange the furniture. Setting up the room is the sole responsibility of the renter. Renters are responsible for leaving the room as found.

7. Locations

- A. FWPL has multiple locations with designated meeting rooms. These locations are:
 - i. Diamond-Hill/Jarvis: 1 room
 - Meeting Room

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- ii. Clifford Crossing: 1 room
 - Conference Room
- iii. East Regional Library: 2 rooms
 - Meeting Room
 - Conference Room
- iv. Ella Mae Shamblee: 2 rooms
 - Meeting Room (includes a kitchen space)
 - Conference Room
- v. Golden Triangle: 4 rooms
 - Meeting Room A
 - Meeting Room B
 - Full Meeting Room (A & B combined)
 - Conference Room
- vi. Northside: 1 room
 - Meeting Room
- vii. Northwest: 1 room
 - Meeting Room (includes a kitchen space)
- viii. Reby Cary Youth Library: 1 room
 - Meeting Room
- ix. Southwest Regional: 1 space
 - Meeting Room
- x. Summerglenn: 1 room
 - Meeting Room
- xi. Vivian J. Lincoln (4 rooms)
 - Meeting Room A
 - Meeting Room B
 - Full Meeting Room (A & B combined)
 - Conference Room

Reference Documents:

City of Fort Worth health, safety, fire, noise, and occupancy codes and ordinances

Distribution of Non-library Materials Policy

Lost and Found Policy

Rules of Behavior

Voter Registration and Election Policy

Policy Owner: Assistant Director, Public Services