



## **BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY MEETING ROOM POLICY**

*The library's mission includes developing and maintaining the library as the cultural and meeting center of Bedford.*

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The meeting rooms in the Bedford Public Library are provided to further the mission and goals of the Bedford Public Library as adopted by the Library Board of Trustees. All activity in the meeting rooms shall comply with established Library policy.

The meetings rooms in the Library are intended for library programming and for public gatherings of a civic, cultural or educational nature. The Bedford Public Library offers meeting room space during the library's normal hours of operation as a service to the community. All meetings are to be open to the public and the rooms cannot be reserved for personal use.

The intent of this policy is to make the library's limited meeting room space available on an equitable basis for the community.

### **DISCLAIMER**

The Library subscribes to the tenets of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Article VI, which states in part, "libraries which make meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use". Permission for a group to use library space does not constitute an endorsement of the group, its beliefs, or its speech.

### **PRIORITIES FOR USE OF THE MEETING ROOMS**

The meeting rooms of the Bedford Public Library are available to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, civic, religious, or political activities in Bedford.

All events held in the Library meeting rooms must be open to the public. "Event" is defined as any meeting, program, gathering, or performance.

Any group not based in Bedford requesting use of a meeting room must show substantial connection to the Town of Bedford through its stated mission, service area, and membership. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to make a final decision if questions arise concerning use of the meeting rooms.

Exceptions:

Individual use is permitted by Bedford high school age students for the limited purpose of presenting or practicing to present to fulfill educational requirements.

Priorities for room use are as follows:

- Library programs or library sponsored programs and meetings, including Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library and Library Foundation meetings.
- Town of Bedford governmental departments and boards as needed on an occasional or regular basis.
- Non-profit or not-for-profit groups engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, civic, religious, or political activities, and that are based in Bedford or primarily serving Bedford residents or can show substantial connection to the Town through its stated mission, service area, and membership.

Meetings and events that interfere with patrons in their customary use of library facilities, impede staff in the performance of their duties, or endanger the library building or collections are not allowed.

## **RESERVING THE MEETING ROOMS**

Groups meeting the above criteria that wish to use a meeting room should contact the Library Director or Assistant Director to obtain an application and verify room availability. The applicant requesting the reservation for the group must be a Bedford resident or taxpayer aged 18 or older.

Personal or family parties such as birthday parties, play dates, baby showers, etc. cannot be hosted in the meeting rooms.

Applications must be made by an adult resident or taxpayer of Bedford in writing on the approved form. Applicants will review the Meeting Room Policy, the Child Safety Policy, and the Behavior Policy prior to submitting the request. Submitting a request form does not guarantee use of the meeting room or the date and time requested.

The person reserving the room shall be present for the entirety of the meeting and is responsible for the use and condition of the room. This person must ensure that attendees comply with library policies and that the program/event ends at the designated time.

Reservations may be made up to one year in advance for up to twelve (12) meetings annually. Reservations shall be accepted, subject to the provisions of this policy, in the order received.

Library programs will have priority; use of the rooms for library staff events or events sponsored by library affiliates shall be permitted.

Once a room is reserved, the group is not permitted to allow a third party to use the space in their stead.

### **CAPACITY OF ROOMS**

Attendance at meetings will be limited to the capacity of the individual meeting rooms as follows: McAllaster Room – seats 75; Richmond Room – seats 20. Seating and/or supplementary furniture are not permitted in the gallery or the corridors outside the meeting rooms.

### **FEES**

No fee will be charged to Bedford residents or Bedford based organizations for use of a meeting room. There will be no commercial use of the meeting rooms. Meeting rooms may not be used for social gatherings or fund-raising functions except for library related events. No fees, sales of any kind, or solicitation of funds will be allowed for any non-library sponsored function. Events sponsored by the Library (programs, meetings, seminars, courses) may involve a fee and sale of literature.

### **TIMES WHEN MEETING ROOMS MAY BE RESERVED**

The meeting rooms are available for use during the library's normal weekday operating hours; reservation times include setup and breakdown time. Access to meeting rooms begins after the library opens at 9:00 a.m. All members of the meeting must exit the library by 8:30 p.m.

Use of the meeting rooms shall not conflict with customary library operations and may not disturb the use of the library by other patrons. Weekends are reserved for library programs and special events.

### **ROOM USE SET UP**

Arrangement and set up of the furniture is the responsibility of the group using the room. Groups are required to leave the room in a neat and orderly condition. Restoration or repair of any damage is expected. No tacks, nails, or adhesive tape are to be placed in or on doors, walls, or furniture. Lighted candles or flames are not to be used within the building. The library is not responsible for any articles left at the library. Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored or left in the library meeting rooms or kitchen before or after use of the meeting room.

## **USER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The individual making the reservation, as well as the membership of 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. Failure to comply with this policy may result in revocation of room use privileges.

Failure to comply with these policies may lead to immediate termination of the meeting, exclusion of individuals from library premises pursuant to the Behavior Policy, and/or loss of future meeting room privileges.

The user is responsible at all times for the observance of fire and safety requirements including but not limited to maintaining all aisles, doorways, and exits free and clear of all obstructions to permit unimpeded emergency access. Users must comply with staff instruction regarding fire and safety requirements.

The presenter, not the Library, is responsible for obtaining all rights and clearances regarding copying, performance, display, or distribution of materials for the event.

The application for the group/organization shall not contain material falsehoods or misrepresentations.

Fliers, brochures, or other printed information should remain in the meeting room and be removed from the room at the end of the meeting/event.

Smoking, vaping, alcohol, drug use of any kind, and candles are strictly prohibited.

## **KITCHEN FACILITIES**

Light refreshments only may be served. A small kitchen is shared by both rooms with a sink and small refrigerator.

## **ROOM CLEAN UP**

Before leaving:

1. Unplug all appliances, including coffeemakers
2. Turn off the stove
3. Wash and put away any library dishes
4. Remove all debris from the room, including articles that have been dropped on the floor
5. Place all garbage and recycling in the appropriate containers in the kitchen

## **MINORS**

Youths must have an adult sponsor and one adult in attendance for every 10 young people present. A caregiver attending an activity in a meeting room may not leave a child or children aged 0-7 unattended in the library. Please refer to the Library's Child Safety Policy which is posted in the library.

## **PUBLICITY**

No group may expressly or implicitly suggest in any publicity that the library has sponsored or supported its meeting.

The Library logo and branding may not be used on non-Library organizations' publicity.

Any promotional materials, either written or electronic, of a meeting or event being held in the library must identify the sponsoring organization, including a contact name and phone number or email address, and must state legibly "This meeting/event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Bedford Public Library."

## **EQUIPMENT**

The Richmond Room and the McAllaster Room are equipped with a wall mounted screen and a ceiling mounted LCD projector and wireless internet access. The McAllaster room has a sound system; microphones are available upon request. Additional equipment may be available with advance notice. Individuals or groups providing their own laptop and who wish to connect to the Library's network, display, or sound system are strongly encouraged to test their device for compatibility ahead of time, either before the event begins or by making an appointment ahead of time. Technical assistance may be limited in the evenings. The LCD projector is programmed to work with library equipment only and is operated using the touch screen mounted on the wall. Those using the meeting room may not plug in or unplug any cables from the LCD projector.

## **CLOSINGS and CANCELLATIONS**

If the library is forced to close as a result of storms or other extraordinary circumstances, the closing will be posted on WMUR and on the library web page. It is each organization's responsibility to notify those who would be attending any meeting. The library is not responsible for any cost incurred by any organization as a result of such closing. Please notify the library if the reserved meeting time is changed or the meeting is cancelled. The Library reserves the right to cancel any event due to inclement weather, building emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. The Library will do its best to reschedule the event on a mutually agreed upon date.

The Library reserves the right to reclaim the use of the meeting room for Library programming with advance notice to the user whenever possible.

### **APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR THE USE OF LIBRARY MEETING ROOMS**

If you believe that you meet the guidelines outlined in the Bedford Public Library Meeting Room Policy and that your application was not given proper consideration, you may submit an appeal.

A separate appeal form must be submitted for each of these steps. Appeal forms are available online. You will be notified as soon as a decision is made regarding your appeal.

- Any applicant denied an agreement to use a room or denied a waiver of any condition of use may appeal the decision to the Library Director within five business days, stating in writing the reasons why the denial of the license or waiver was erroneous.
- A decision will be rendered within 30 days following receipt of the written appeal.
- If applicant does not receive satisfaction with response, the appeal may be raised to the Board of Trustees.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, April 1998

Revised July 7, 2016

Revised September 18, 2023