

**A. PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees of the Elkhart Public Library invites any group of community members to meet in Library facilities designated for this use.

**B. DEFINITION(s)**

For the purposes of this policy, a meeting facility is defined as a designated room or area of the Library available, by prior arrangement, for public use.

**C. POLICY****1. Availability and Acceptable Use**

- a. Meeting rooms of varying capacity may be requested and reserved, subject to availability, using the Library's application process.
- b. An educational, civic, cultural, or charitable organization may use the Library meeting rooms for non-commercial and non-profit purposes.
  - Businesses engaged in employee or organizational activities may be permitted to use the meeting room at the discretion of the Library Director.
  - Government units located within the Library servicing district and engaged in non-partisan or bipartisan activities may also be permitted to use the meeting rooms at the discretion of the Library Director.
  - Sale or marketing of goods or services by individuals or groups is prohibited.
  - Fundraising which does not benefit the Library is prohibited.
  - Meeting rooms may not be used for social events, including, but not limited to, weddings, receptions, parties, and showers.
- c. Meeting rooms may be available to groups whose intended audience members are 17 years or younger with adult supervision, maintained at a ratio of one adult per five persons under 18 years of age.
- d. Library programs requiring the use of meeting rooms have priority over outside group applications.

**2. Reservations and Cancellations**

- a. Application for the use of meeting rooms must be made in advance of the meeting as prescribed by Library management.
- b. The individual who signs the meeting room application must be at least 18 years of age and have a Resident Card in good standing from Elkhart Public Library or Goshen Public Library. Special Use and Temporary card holders are ineligible to reserve meeting rooms. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Library Director.
- c. One week's advance notification is expected for meeting room cancellations.
- d. Library events/programs will have precedence over non-library events, and the Library reserves the right to cancel any reservation, with at least one week's advance notice, if a Library event/program needs the room.
- e. The Library reserves the right to cancel any reservation without notice in the event of an emergency, such as snow closings or unsafe building conditions, or for disciplinary action in the event of inappropriate or disruptive activities among the reserving group attendees.

- f. Due to high demand for meeting rooms, groups that cancel reservations three consecutive times, or do not appear for their scheduled meeting for three consecutive occasions, will be prohibited from reserving meeting rooms for a period of six months.
3. Hours of Use
  - a. Meeting rooms are available during open hours of the Library or as amended by Library management.
  - b. Programs must end 15 minutes prior to Library's scheduled closing time. However, the Library reserves the right to require programs to end earlier. The room(s) must be returned to its original condition and vacated by the Library's scheduled closing time.
4. Fees
  - a. The Library does not assess a fee for the use of the meeting rooms.
  - b. Groups or individuals may not charge or solicit an admission-type fee for any event or program held in the meeting rooms.
5. Equipment and Furniture
  - a. The applicant must request the use of any Library equipment and furniture for a reserved meeting room at the time of application. Library equipment may not be removed from the meeting room.
6. Conditions of Use
  - a. Groups or individuals using the meeting rooms may not disrupt others' use of the Library. Persons attending the meeting are subject to Elkhart Public Library's Code of Conduct, which is attached to the meeting room reservation form.
  - b. The number of attendees shall be limited to the posted maximum occupancy.
  - c. Food and drink are allowed in designated meeting rooms. Alcohol is strictly prohibited. Cleaning up food and drink debris, spills, etc. will be the responsibility of the group reserving the room. A fee may be assessed if additional cleaning by Library staff is necessary.
  - d. Meetings are bound by state and federal Open Door laws where applicable. The responsibility to comply with such laws is incumbent on the group reserving the meeting room. A group may restrict attendance to a limited or designated audience except where these laws apply. The Library is not responsible for assuring compliance but will provide appropriate space for groups to post any such required notices.
  - e. The Library Director, or delegated representative of the Director, is authorized to deny the use of the meeting rooms to any group that is disorderly or has a history of disorderly and abusive conduct, or that violates this policy.
7. Liabilities
  - a. The Library allows the use of its facilities with the understanding that the Library accepts no responsibility for the personal safety of any person, either inside or outside the building, during that use.
  - b. The Library is not responsible for damage, loss, or theft of personal property.
  - c. The individual who signs the meeting room application shall be responsible for the conduct of the group and for protection of Library property in connection with the meeting. The Library shall be promptly reimbursed by the signing party for any expense or damage resulting from the use of the facility.
  - d. Groups and individuals will indemnify and hold harmless the Elkhart Public Library, the Library Board of Trustees, the Director, and all Library employees and volunteers, from any loss, damage, liability, costs and/or expense that may arise during or to be caused in any way by such use of the Library facilities.
8. Disclaimer

- a. The Library maintains a Meeting Room schedule that may or may not be posted publicly. Groups may opt to not have their meeting listed on the schedule, by indicating their choice on the Meeting Room Application form.
- b. The Library does not assume any responsibility to publicize or promote any outside group meeting, and will not publicize outside groups' meetings on the Library's website or social media. Reserving groups may not post signage on library property.
- c. Use of meeting rooms does not imply endorsement, support, or co-sponsorship by the Library for the activities that take place in the meeting rooms nor the beliefs or views of the groups sponsoring the events.
- d. EPL recommends promotion of meetings at the Library contain the following disclaimer:  
*This meeting is neither sponsored by nor endorsed by the Elkhart Public Library.*

9. Disputes

- a. Questions regarding the interpretations of the policy will be resolved by the Library Director or delegated representative of the Director.

D. ADOPTION

1. Adopted by the Elkhart Public Library Board of Trustees: March 21, 2023
2. Supersedes Meeting Room Policy dated December 20, 2016
3. Supersedes Meeting Room Policy dated January 20, 2015
4. Supersedes Meeting Room Policy and Regulations adopted June 27, 2011
5. Supersedes Meeting Room Guidelines and Procedures dated September 6, 1983