

# **Meeting Room Policy**

Approved 9/5/23

## **I. Introduction and Purpose of Policy**

The mission of the Highland Township Public Library (“Library”) is to provide quality Library services that support the cultural, educational, and informational needs and interests of the community. In keeping with this mission, the Library provides facilities for Library programs as well as Library business meetings. When certain Library space is not scheduled for Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events, it may be used by the public within the parameters set by this Meeting Room Policy (“Policy”). The restrictions of this Policy relating to Applications and Scheduling do not apply to Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events.

## **II. Application and Scheduling of Meeting Room**

- A. General Use. Any person, group or organization residing in Highland Township may use the Meeting Rooms, pursuant to the requirements of this Policy (“Users”). The Meeting Rooms are available during regular Library hours.
- B. Specific Meeting Rooms. The following are a list of specific meeting rooms or meeting areas (“Meeting Rooms”). The regulations contained in this Policy apply to all Meeting Rooms, unless otherwise specified:
  - 1. Community Room: This room has a capacity of up to:
    - 55 people with tables/chairs
    - 80 people with only chairs
    - 110 people standing (no tables or chairs)
  - 2. Main Level Group Study: This room has a capacity of up to eight (8) people each.
  - 3. Lower-Level Study Rooms: This room has a capacity of up to eight (8) people.
  - 4. Center Room: This room has a capacity of up to ten (10) people. This room must remain open to traffic, thus is not considered a private space.
  - 5. Small Study Rooms: These rooms have a capacity of four (4) people.

C. Scheduling.

1. Applications for use of the Community Room and Lower Level Group Study shall be accepted on a first-come-first-serve basis, with (a) Library business, (b) Library-sponsored or Library-co-sponsored events or (c) uses governed by contract with the Library having first priority.
2. The Library may ask Users to reschedule meetings in the event the Library Board needs to schedule a special Library Board meeting or other Library-sponsored or Library-co-sponsored events.
3. Reservations
  - a. The Library will not accept reservations for the Community Room for non-Library sponsored or co-sponsored meetings and events until the Library programming has been completed. The group representative applying to reserve the Community Room must be a Highland Township Library card holder in good standing who is 18 years old or older.
  - b. For the LL Group Study Room, Users may reserve the room no earlier than one week ahead of date of use. The person reserving this space must be a Highland Township Public Library card holder in good standing. Walk ins are welcome if a Study Room is free (check with Library Staff).
  - c. The Center Room and other study rooms are available on a first-come first serve basis as mentioned above.
4. The Library is responsible for scheduling use of the Community Room and Lower Level Group Study. The Center Room and all other Study Rooms are available to anyone using the library and are first-come first serve. The current program and meeting room schedule can be viewed online.
5. Time Limit
  - a. For the Community Room, each non-Library sponsored or co-sponsored event shall be scheduled for a time any day not to exceed seven (7) hours, unless otherwise specifically permitted. A late fee of \$25 will be charged if the event goes 15 minutes over the scheduled time. Any event to end after normal library closing hours must be approved by the

library director, an additional fee of \$25 per hour will apply.

- b. For the Lower-Level Group Study, the use shall not exceed one 4 hour block in a day.

D. Application Process for the Community Room.

1. The library will accept applications for meetings and private social events in the Community Room. Any person 18 years or older with a library card in good standing may fill out an application for the Community Room. The Community Room requires an application to be completed no less than 3 days before use date.
2. The Fee, for Community Room use, must be paid on or before the day of the event.
  - There is no fee for non-profits based in Highland Township.
  - Fee of \$50 for meetings for a business or group located in Highland Township
  - Fee of \$100 for a private social event for a group or individual in Highland Township
4. If you need to cancel the Reservation, you must provide the Library 24 hour notice. Failure to do so may result in your being denied future use of the room.
5. At the time of application, the Applicant must agree to all Rules and Regulations for Use of the Meeting room and sign the application to indicate agreement.

E. Reservation Process for the Lower-Level Group Study

1. To reserve the Lower Level Group Study, any person over the age of 13 with a Highland Township Public Library card in good standing may reserve no earlier than one week before date/time of use.

**III. General Guidelines Affecting all Library Meeting Rooms**

- A. Smoking and Fire. No smoking, candles, matches or any other use of fire shall be permitted in the Meeting Rooms.
- B. Use by Persons Under the Age of 18. Users of the Community Room must be under adequate supervision by adults 18 years of age or older. The reservation form requires the listing of an adult who will be in charge of the group, as well as being financially responsible for any damages that may occur. This listed adult must be on site during the reserved meeting time. In addition, there must be adequate supervision of minors. For the Center Room and Study Rooms, Users must be at least 13 years old.
- C. Tobacco, Marijuana, Alcohol and Controlled Substances Prohibited. The Library prohibits the use of tobacco, marijuana, alcohol and the illicit use of controlled substances in the Meeting Rooms.
- D. Food and Beverages. Users of the Community Room may serve light refreshments, but kitchen use is limited to storing food in refrigerator and heating of food. No food may be cooked or prepared on site per Health Department regulations. It is the responsibility of the User to observe all health codes when serving light refreshments. Users may not use sterno or flames to heat food. Users should be aware that there is no kitchen or sink available for use in any of the Meeting Rooms. Covered beverages are allowed in the study rooms, no food is allowed.
- E. Disruption Prohibited. Users making excessive noise that disrupts normal Library functions or other patrons' use of the Library may be asked to leave. This includes conducting the meeting or any part of the meeting outside of the Meeting Rooms.
- F. Equipment Requests. Requests for use of audio or visual equipment, tables, chairs and any equipment owned by the Library must be made at the time the venue is scheduled. The Library does not guarantee the availability of any equipment.
- Whiteboard
  - Projector
  - Laptop
  - Microphone
  - Podium
- G. Clean Up. It is the User's responsibility to leave the room in the condition in which they found it. The User must remove leftover food, containers, beverages and all other personal or group-owned items. Failure to clean up may result in forfeiting the privilege of using the room in the future and the user may be charged \$75 clean-up fee. Users must include time to

clean up and set up within the scheduled time and must end meetings at least 15 minutes before the Library closing time.

- H. Library Policies. Users shall observe all rules of conduct and policies applicable to Library patrons.
- I. Occupancy. Users shall permit no more persons than is stated by occupancy requirements identified in Section II. B above.
- J. No Raffles and Contribution Requests. Users shall not sell tickets, raffles or any objects or solicit contributions from persons located anywhere in the Library or on Library property.
- K. Private Literature. Users shall not distribute personal or group literature, brochures, and other materials to Library patrons outside of the Meeting Rooms. Users shall not leave printed materials on Library property without prior approval of the Library Director or in accordance with Library Policy.
- L. Use of Walls and Other Surfaces. No decorations or other materials may be attached or affixed to the walls, doors, windows or other surfaces unless approved by the Library. At no time, shall any materials or other documents be displayed in the windows. If such approval is granted, any such material must be removed at the close of the scheduled time.
- M. Open and Accessible Use. Users of the Meeting Rooms must understand the nature of the public setting. The Library staff will not monitor or enforce exclusive use of the room. All activities in the Meeting Rooms must be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and must be free of admission fees, other charges or requests for donation; provided that meetings in the Study Rooms are not required to open to the public and may be privately reserved.
- N. Room Access. Users may not enter the Library before opening hours and should allow adequate time to set up.

#### **IV. Fees**

- A. Fees. The fees for use are identified in Section II.D.2 above.
- B. Clean Up and Damage Fee. The \$75 Cleaning fee may be charged to the Highland patron who made the reservation if the Meeting Room is not cleaned up as required by this Policy. Users shall pay for any actual damage to the Meeting Rooms.

V. **Library Disclaimer**

- A. **No Endorsement.** Use of the Meeting Rooms does not constitute the Library's endorsement of an individual's or group's policies or beliefs by any of the staff or Board members. Any publicity for any event held in the Meeting Rooms must state that "The Highland Township Public Library does not sponsor or endorse this event."
- B. **Right to Cancel.** If necessary, the Library reserves the right to cancel the use of the Meeting Room or move the meeting to a different Meeting Room, including but not limited to inclement weather or other unexpected building closures. The Library shall use its best efforts to notify the patron who has made reservations if the Library intends to cancel the use of the Meeting Room. In the event of inclement weather or other area emergencies, please contact the Library before the meeting to confirm that the building is still open.
- C. **Hold Harmless.** The Highland Township Public Library is released and held harmless from any and all claims for personal injury or property damage.

VI. **Violation and Appeal Section**

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities, including the Library Program Rooms, by immediately dismissing the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to Library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. **Damages:** If the User violates the policy by causing damage to Library property, the User shall be assessed the actual costs.
- B. **Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges.** Unless otherwise provided in this policy, (see Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
  - 1. ***Initial Violation:*** Library patrons observed violating this policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If he or she refuses, the police may be called.
  - 2. ***Subsequent Violations:*** The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges

if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.

- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security: Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
1. *Initial Violation*: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate one (1) month suspension of Library privileges. The Incident Report shall specify the nature of the violation.
  2. *Subsequent Violations*: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director or the Director's authorized designee, may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- D. Incident Reports. Library Staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions, in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- E. Reinstatement: The User whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Library Director or the Director's designee to review the Policy before their privileges may be reinstated. The Library reserves the right to reinstate with reasonable conditions.
- F. Right of Appeal: Users may appeal a decision in writing to the Library Director within 10 working days of the date of the letter stating why Library privileges should be restored.

The Library Director or a designee will respond to the appeal in writing within 10 working days of the date the appeal was received. Any person may appeal the Library Director's decision by sending an appeal in writing to the President of the Library Board within 10 business days. The decision of the Library Board is final.

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